Indian Ocean

37. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers[1]

Washington, June 24, 1969.

SUBJECT

Congressional Hearings on Diego Garcia Information Memorandum

Representatives of the Defense Department will testify before the House Armed Services Committee on June 30 regarding plans to construct communications and refueling facilities on the island of Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean. Because of current debate on Capitol Hill regarding bases and overseas commitments, the Pentagon is concerned that during congressional hearings on the Diego Garcia project a leak from foreign sources might prove prejudicial to approval.

Diego Garcia is one of a number of Indian Ocean islands included in the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). We have an agreement (1966) in principle with the British to construct facilities in these islands.[2] Diego is attractive because of its location in the middle of the Indian Ocean, it is British territory, and the only inhabitants are non-indigenous copra workers imported from Mauritius and the Seychelles. In the event of U.S. Government approval of the project, the British are obligated at our request to remove these workers. Their repatriation to Mauritius and the Seychelles could cause political problems for the British because of unemployment in those areas.

The Pentagon is proposing the construction of a dredged anchorage, fuel storage, an 8,000 foot runway, and a communications facility

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 15 IND–US. Secret. Drafted by Grant E. Mouser (NEA/INC); cleared in draft in J/PM and AF/AFI; and cleared in H, EUR/BMI, NEA/INC, and NEA.

[2] The Anglo-American BIOT Agreement of December 30, 1966; 18 UST 28. Its salient points were summarized as follows. "Purpose: BIOT available for defense purposes of both governments. Terms: BIOT remains UK territory; agreement in principle on each undertaking; detailed agreement between designated administrative authorities (i.e., USN and RN); each government bears cost of its own sites; and initial period of agreement 50 years—provision for 20 year extension." (Attachment to a memorandum from Spiers to Irwin, January 3; Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, Unfiled Material, Country "Cy–E" 1953–1977, Diego Garcia)

at an estimated cost of $26 million. Equipment for the communications facility will eventually raise the price by $11 million.

NEA has supported this project from the beginning—despite some potential problems with the Indians who say they are opposed to great power activity in the Indian Ocean—because of Diego's obvious value to the United States and the absence of many of the political liabilities which afflict other bases and facilities. We and the British feel that there is a good chance to contain negative Indian reaction if New Delhi is informed in timely fashion of our plans. The Indians know already of our general agreement with the British and they also know that some progress towards a decision has been made. We have stressed to them that no base is envisaged and the Indian Government has taken this line effectively in reply to Parliamentary questions.

We had originally planned to tell the Indians, Mauritians and others on the same day we went to the Congress. This has now slipped to July 3 per agreement with the British. (The Mauritian Prime Minister will be in London on that date.) We have felt that neither the Indians nor the Congress should first hear of Diego through a leak from the other. We still feel that we have a good chance to mitigate Indian reaction, though the Government may feel compelled to state its formal opposition. However, Indian reaction would probably be much harsher if they heard indirectly through a leak which resulted in press stories. This bureau believes that while the decision is difficult, the balance seems to lie in favor of July 3 notification.

Pentagon concern over Congressional reaction has led to increasing nervousness there, including some talk of deferring notification further. We now await confirmation from the British that they still are firm regarding notification on July 3.[3]

[3] The British notified regional governments, such as Mauritius and India, of the BIOT agreement on July 3. (Telegram 5310 from London, July 4, and telegram 9494 from New Delhi, July 4; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 15 IND–US)

38. Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Departments of State and Defense[1]

London, July 9, 1969, 1546Z.

5406. DOD for OSD/ISA. Subj: Diego Garcia: Stewart/Singh Discussion.

1. Singh[2] saw Foreign Secretary Stewart this morning and in course of conversation raised question of Diego Garcia. Singh complained at some length that the American plans as explained to GOI threatened to introduce big power competition into the Indian Ocean area, and his govt was "very unhappy" at the prospect. Singh mentioned that the Chinese were already showing interest in the Indian Ocean, and that the Russians had been asking for refueling facilities "from certain countries." Introduction of an American base was certain to result in unwanted rivalry between big powers.[3]

2. Replying Stewart emphasized the modest nature of the facility envisaged, denied that the term "base" was accurate description, and stated that US has the right under the BIOT agreement to establish such facility. He said this plan in no way constituted a threat to the area or to GOI.

3. Singh said he questioned that the Americans had any need for the base. Stewart responded that the US has obligations in the Far East and that the Indian Ocean facility was needed for refueling and communications in order to carry out these obligations. Singh retorted that if the USG has Far Eastern obligations then let them use the territory of Far Eastern countries to discharge them. What we were now proposing would bring the US into a new area where it had no present obligations and where competition with other major powers would be the inevitable result. He said the GOI was certain other Asians would also oppose the project.

4. Singh inquired about the present status of the proposal within the USG. Stewart said that it was still being considered on a confidential basis by the Congress, and that his personal estimate was that Congressional approval was likely but not certain.

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 15 IND–US. Secret; Immediate. It was repeated to New Delhi, Port Louis, Tananarive, CINCPAC, CINCLANT, and CINCSTRIKE.

[2] Indian Minister of External Affairs Dinesh Singh.

[3] Singh passed on a similar message of concern to Nixon in their July 10 meeting. The memorandum of conversation of their meeting is in *Foreign Relations,* 1969–1976, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 26. Background material for this meeting is in a memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger, July 10. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1236, Saunders Files, Indian Ocean)

5. In closing Stewart reminded Singh that we had notified GOI on confidential basis and hoped that this would be respected. Singh acknowledged the point but made no promises.

6. Preceding is summary taken from FonOff telegram to UK Embassy in Washington giving full and detailed report of conversation. UK Embassy has been requested to pass complete text to Dept immediately upon receipt.

Annenberg

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39. Paper Prepared in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (Moorer)[1]

Washington, February 11, 1970.

Diego Garcia—Background and Status

The Navy has long recognized the strategic importance of gaining a modest logistics support capability in the Indian Ocean. In recognition of this need a Navy Strategic Island Concept was developed in 1959 and approved by JCS in 1960. In essence it calls for a stockpiling of islands for contingency use of the U.S. Pursuant to this concept a bilateral agreement was signed in December 1966 between HMG and USG which granted the U.S. base rights in the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). The BIOT was formed in 1965 and comprises the Chagos Archipelago (includes Diego Garcia), Aldabra, Isle des Roches and Farquhar. The selection of these islands was based on unquestioned UK sovereignty and a negligible native population. The islands were formerly part of the Mauritian and Seychelles groups.

The agreement with the British provides for U.S. use for 50 years with an option for an additional 20 years. The cost of the agreement to the U.S. was one-half of the detachment costs ($14 M) which was funded by offsetting British Polaris R&D charges.[2]

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US. Secret. The paper was submitted to U. Alexis Johnson under a February 1 covering memorandum from Moorer.

[2] The British Foreign Office expressed considerable doubt about making information on the details of BIOT financing available to the U.S. Congress. The Foreign Office felt that "having well and truly cooked its books vis-à-vis Parliament on BIOT financing," it was vulnerable to any exposure. (Telegram 1318 from London, February 18; ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 726, Country Files, Europe, United

The Navy first proposed the establishment on Diego Garcia of an austere naval facility in 1966. The proposal was approved in principle by the Deputy Secretary of Defense on 15 June 1968.[3] The first increment of funding ($9.6 million) became the Navy's number one priority in the FY 70 Military Construction Program. Funding for the project was omitted from the FY 70 Military Appropriations Bill by joint Senate–House Committee action during the latter stages of Congressional deliberation on the Bill.[4] The concept of the proposed facility would have provided for modest logistic support at a total construction cost of approximately $23 million. Although it enjoyed enthusiastic support from both House Committees concerned with military construction, it failed to win final approval due to apparent misunderstandings of two key senators.

Subsequently, Secretary of Defense Laird indicated that he would continue to support the facility but that the importance of the communications portion must be emphasized. Accordingly Navy submitted a modified proposal which is designed to close the gap in reliable communications coverage which exists today in the central Indian Ocean-Bay of Bengal area. Communications services would include the equipment necessary for entry into the Defense Communications System, minimum ship-to-shore radio, a time-shared single channel high frequency rebroadcast facility to serve U.S. shipping and an air-ground flight service. Personnel would be limited to 164 with no facilities for dependents. Support facilities would include an 8,000 ft. runway, minimum waterfront facilities, personnel support buildings, utilities, POL storage to support the requirements for the facility and dredging to provide a channel and turning basin for deep draft tanker/oiler supply. The proposal has not yet been acted on by SecDef.

Senator Russell,[5] one of those in opposition, indicated that he might be persuaded to support the concept of the Diego Garcia project but that he would like to "hold the British feet to the fire" in order to force them to shoulder more of the burden of security in the

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Kingdom, Vol. II) The Department's response was that the British Foreign Office should not involve itself in the detailed arrangements regarding the flow of information between the administration and Congress, and that the Congressional hearings would be in executive session. (Telegram 41669 to London, March 21, telegram 85099 to London, June 3, and telegram 111351 to London, July 13; all ibid.)

[3] See *Foreign Relations,* 1964–1968, volume XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 48.

[4] In Joint State–Defense telegram 211245 to London, December 22, 1969, the United States had notified the Embassies in London and Indian Ocean countries that Diego Garcia was not included in the FY 70 Military Construction Bill, and would be resubmitted for FY 71. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF IND–US)

[5] Senator Richard B. Russell (D–GA).

Indian Ocean area. This concern by U.S. leaders is not new, of course. Until the devaluation of the pound in November 1967, British participation was made a prerequisite for DOD secretarial approval. The subsequent British decision to withdraw all military presence from East of Suez does not now appear to be negotiable under their present government.

In fact, the British have cooperated with us from the beginning on the project and have invested $14 million as their half of the detachment costs, for a project which to date only promises U.S. access to the islands of the BIOT. They have agreed to fly their flag and a small British liaison staff will be present at the facility. It thus appears that Diego Garcia will be the instrument for keeping a small British presence in an area where they would otherwise not be at all. It could even provide a basis for greater British activity in the future.

The Navy recently has had informal conversations with the Royal Navy about the possibilities of increased participation. The Royal Navy indicates that it is improbable that more than the minimum presence already agreed could be achieved. The Navy has entered into conversations on a joint intelligence effort which might result in increasing the number of UK personnel on the island.

Senator Mansfield also opposed the funding of the project but on grounds that the facility would mean a visible U.S. commitment in a new area. The Navy already operates in the Indian Ocean area. The Diego Garcia facility would provide low-profile support to make those operations more economical and efficient. If conditions in the Middle East require us to move out of our Naval Communications Station in Asmara, Diego Garcia is the only foreseeable site in which we can relocate these facilities and preserve our ability to exercise command and control in the Indian Ocean and the Middle East.

The support provided by Diego Garcia would enable us to operate Polaris/Poseidon submarines under the same positive command and control now possessed in the Atlantic and Pacific, and would cause the Soviets to cope with a nearly 360° defense problem. This cannot be construed as increased involvement, but rather, gives us an additional option for our vital sea-based strategic forces.

Senator Symington[6] was not present when the Appropriations Committee decided to omit the project from the FY 1970 Budget. He has since indicated that he supports the project. During one of the hearings of his Subcommittee on U.S. Security Agreements he said with reference to the project "Unfortunately I was away at the time (of the Committee decision) on personal business, but I am confident that the

[6] Senator Stuart Symington (D–MO).

Senate will reverse its position. The Navy wants this base and I think the Navy should have it." Senator Symington has also indicated that he would discuss the project with Senator Mansfield in an effort to get him to change his position. Senators Jackson and Thurmond[7] have also been briefed on the project and have indicated support.

In the House, Representative Sikes[8] has been a strong proponent of the project and has been responsible for House acceptance. Because of his efforts, the project was only defeated by Senate opposition after extensive House–Senate conferring on the Appropriations Bill. With Senator Symington and Representative Sikes spearheading support we are hopeful of favorable Congressional action for inclusion of the project in the FY 1971 Budget.

[7] Senators Henry M. Jackson (D–WA) and Strom Thurmond (D–SC).
[8] Congressman Robert L.F. Sikes (D–FL).

40. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Nutter) to Secretary of Defense Laird[1]

I–21269/70 Washington, March 17, 1970.

SUBJECT

Diego Garcia

The purpose of this memorandum is to identify precisely the nature of your decision regarding the proposed US communications facility on Diego Garcia.

Although the attached Navy recommendation[2] emphasizes communications, ISA believes that it constitutes a considerably larger installation than is politically advisable at the present time. So long as the Cam Ranh Bay Naval Communications State is in operation, there is no requirement for a strategic communications facility on Diego Garcia to link Asmara and Northwest Cape, Australia. CINCMEAFSA

[1] Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–067, Box 73, Indian Ocean 1970. Secret.
[2] Not attached. The proposal is in a memorandum from Chafee to Laird, January 31. (Ibid.)

contingency operations are so unlikely that expenditure of funds to support them would not be warranted now.

Second, the proposed deep-water anchorage dredging would immediately be associated with the potential use of Diego Garcia by Polaris submarines and carrier task groups. Although obviously desirable in the event of general hostilities, this would be highly provocative at the present time. Both in public statements and privately with the UK, we have consistently denied any intention to establish a "Polaris base" at Diego Garcia. Even the appearance of doing so now would inevitably generate a drumfire of criticism from Indian Ocean littoral countries as well as in the UN, which could serve to reinforce Congressional opposition, and possibly defeat the project entirely.

Accordingly, I again recommend that you consider limiting the project on Diego Garcia to tactical communication for ships and aircraft transiting or operating in the area, [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. In our view, it should include only such airstrip, waterfront and POL storage facilities as are necessary for construction, and for support of these two activities. Even though the Senate proves willing to fund the entire Navy proposal, which appears doubtful, I believe that a strategic communications capability and anchorage dredging should be eliminated from any work actually undertaken there. Presumably this would result in appreciable cost and personnel reductions as well.

Even our reduced proposal would have significant foreign policy implications, and State should therefore have an opportunity to review the matter fully. Moreover, State Department support could help significantly in overcoming the opposition of such Congressional figures as Senators Mansfield and Proxmire,[3] who have reservations from a foreign policy standpoint. In light of the foregoing, we would appreciate an indication of your own desires regarding Diego Garcia, before we officially approach State and advise the British regarding DOD plans.

G. Warren Nutter

Approve Navy 31 January recommendation, including strategic communications and anchorage dredging.

Approve ISA alterative, limited to tactical communications [*less than 1 line not declassified*], plus supporting airstrip and POL storage.

Other[4]

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[3] Senate Majority Leader William Proxmire (D–WI).

[4] There is no indication on the memorandum of Laird's action.

41. Editorial Note

President Nixon and British Prime Minister Edward Heath met on October 3, 1970, at Chequers. During their discussion, Heath stated:

" 'One advantage of our presence in the Far East is to keep Australians in Singapore.' The President said he hoped this would be so because he wanted to continue to cooperate. Prime Minister Heath responded, 'We are concerned with the Indian Ocean. The Soviets are building up. Our strength from Simonstown is not too great. We will help you via communications equipment and personnel for Diego Garcia. The problem that concerns us is a blackmail situation vis-à-vis us and Europe. No one suggests war is likely, but a blackmail capability along the vital routes around the Cape is serious enough.'

"Prime Minister Heath therefore said he believes the Simonstown Agreement should be maintained. He continued that the U.K. was having a major problem with the black African countries about this agreement, but that its position would not change. The President replied that the U.S. would do nothing to embarrass the U.K.

"Prime Minister Heath continued, 'The disagreements do not seem to me to be enough for other countries to leave the Commonwealth. We do not ask your support but if your Ambassadors could (1) tell the Africans that Heath is not a racist and (2) that they shouldn't leave the Commonwealth on this issue, it would be a big help.' The President said the U.S. would do that. Heath said he thought that Apartheid was breaking down for economic reasons." (Memorandum of conversation, October 3; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 727, Country Files, Europe, United Kingdom, Vol. IV) The Simonstown Agreement referred to is a mutual naval cooperation agreement between Great Britain and South Africa, which involved the British sale of arms to South Africa and the use of the Simonstown Naval Base.

In an earlier meeting on September 23, British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home expressed to Secretary of State Rogers "his concern about the possibility of the Indian Ocean's becoming a Soviet sea. He said that Britain cannot do anything about that problem at a reasonable cost. If South Africa could do something, it would be regarded as a Western presence in the area. He also noted that Nyerere of Tanzania was probably the only leader of the Commonwealth who might insist on leaving if Britain made arms available to South Africa. He also observed that, if Nyerere took such action, he might start a procession.

"The Secretary replied that, if Britain started arms sales to South Africa, there would undoubtedly be a considerable amount of critical comment in the U.S., with contributions from those who had something to gain politically. He said that the U.S. Government would be quite restrained and would try to strike a note of understanding.

"The Foreign Secretary suggested that the U.S. might talk to other countries interested in the security of the Indian Ocean, such as Australia and Singapore. He wondered whether we might consider it useful to talk to India, although he observed that the Indians might repeat their traditional argument and say that a Western presence in the Indian Ocean would incite a Soviet presence.

"Secretary Rogers said we might be in a better position to discuss this matter after the President's trip. The President is, of course, concerned about the Soviet naval buildup and he might wish to talk to the Prime Minister about this." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL UK–US)

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42. National Security Study Memorandum 104[1]

Washington, November 9, 1970.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT

Soviet and Friendly Naval Involvement in the Indian Ocean Area, 1971–1975

The President has asked for an assessment of possible Soviet naval threats to U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean area and the development of friendly naval force and basing alternatives consistent with varying judgments about possible threats and interests over the 1971–1975 period.[2] He has asked that special attention be given to possible U.S. cooperation with British and other friendly forces in the area.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret. A copy was sent to Moorer. In a November 9 covering memorandum, Kissinger stated that the NSSM emerged from an understanding reached between President Nixon and Prime Minister Heath on October 3; see Document 41.

[2] According to a September 17 memorandum from Chafee to Packard, Nixon called for more information about Diego Garcia and the Reindeer Station Project after Admiral John S. McCain, Jr. (CINCPAC) informed him on the matter. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–067, Box 73, Indian Ocean 1970)

The study should:

—Specify U.S. interests involved in the Indian Ocean area, including political considerations, commercial and trade interests, communications and logistics requirements under current and possible contingency conditions, surveillance needs, and strategic force issues.

—Survey current and projected possible Soviet involvement in the Indian Ocean area and assess the possible threats to U.S. interests.

—Assess the current and possible future roles of British, Australian, South African and other forces in the Indian Ocean area, giving special consideration to possible basing requirements.

—Consider how the political, commercial and other interests of Japan, Australia, India, Indonesia, and other countries in the area affect the options for Soviet and U.S. naval involvement in the Indian Ocean area.

—Develop alternative U.S. force and basing arrangements (specifying the costs of each) consistent with differing views of U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean area, giving special attention to the associated roles of British and Australian and other friendly naval forces and joint housing arrangements.

This study should be carried out by an Interdepartmental Group under the chairmanship of the Department of Defense. It should be completed by December 1, 1970, and submitted to the Chairman, NSC Senior Review Group.

Henry A. Kissinger

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43. Telegram From the Commander-in-Chief, Strike Command (Throckmorton) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff[1]

November 18, 1970, 2350Z.

STRJ5–ME 08916. Subj: Soviet and Friendly Naval Involvement in the Indian Ocean Area, 19/1–19/5 (C).

A. JCS–J5 5942, DTG 161659Z Nov 70 (U)[2]

1. (S) Although CINCSTRIKE is not charged with responsibility for the Indian Ocean Area, Middle East Force does operate throughout the

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean). Secret. It was repeated to CINCLANT and CINCPAC.

[2] Not found.

area and therefore CINCSTRIKE is interested in available basing and support arrangements for US fleet units.[3]

2. (S) The Soviet naval threat is not a "possibility," it is a present, real, direct, immediate danger. The Soviet naval forces deployed to the area, while numerically small, are a modern, powerful and flexible force. They are already vastly superior in quality and numbers to US naval forces deployed there. The Soviet naval force, since March of 1968, has visited almost every major port in the Indian Ocean littoral, leaving behind favorable impressions of Soviet naval power, national determination, and "goodwill." The most direct threat is in the possible use of Soviet naval forces to influence events during times of political crises. Soviet gunboat diplomacy can maintain shaky, hostile regimes and discourage formation of friendly governments. Relatedly, the Soviet Union is trying to create a market for its arms. Soviet naval forces represent a direct threat to traditional US/Western arms markets.

3. (S) There is ample evidence of Soviet interest in obtaining at least modest shore-based support facilities. Not only does their acquisition of such support increase their threat, it denies these ports to US naval and commercial shipping. Even in ports where the Soviets do not have special rights or privileges, their visits tend to close these ports to US ships. The combination of changes in regimes and Soviet naval visits have resulted in a drastic reduction of the number of ports in which US ships are welcome. The downward trend is expected to continue. We may soon be forced to operate out of small ports in weak countries and almost invisible islands such as Diego Garcia.

4. (S) The Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean has already seriously undermined US influence in this important area. This presence should be regarded as the cutting edge of a concerted, determined Soviet effort to dominate the Indian Ocean littoral; and to destroy the US position in this area.

5. (S) It seems that the US has only two choices: compete with the Soviets and best them at their own game or face eventual expulsion from this area through lack of support facilities. For instance, follow-

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[3] CINCPAC, which had responsibility for the eastern portion of the Indian Ocean, upheld this assessment by CINCSTRIKE (or CINCMEAFSA), whose area of responsibility included the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. CINCPAC concluded its assessment of the Soviet threat to the Indian Ocean by recommending that the "Friday Guest" concept plan, a flexible naval deployment, be followed. Moreover, it recommended that the development of Diego Garcia go forward as "the only satisfactory means of assuring continued operations in the Indian Ocean area which will be unfettered by political, logistic or other constraints likely to arise at any time." (Telegram 210228Z from CINCPAC to JCS, November 21; National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean))

ing the June 67 Arab-Israeli War, MIDEASTFOR's only source of oil was from Ethiopia's meager stocks. The rapid drawdown of this resource raised the real possibility that MIDEASTFOR ships might be forced to withdraw from the Indian Ocean for lack of fuel.

6. (S) It seems appropriate for the US to actively seek basing arrangements, either as sole user but preferably on a joint use basis with UK, French, Australian or independent countries in such locations as Diego Suarez, Malagasy; Port Louis, Mauritius; Victoria, Seychelles; Diego Garcia, Chagos; and Keeling (Cocos) Island. Mainland bases in Kenya or Ceylon are not likely to be available in the foreseeable future. Likewise, Indian or Pakistani bases are unlikely although port visits to these countries may be permitted to continue. Base facilities obtained should include not only ship fueling, but also provisions for land-based aircraft in support of US naval forces in the area.

7. (S) MIDEASTFOR ships should continue to homeport at Bahrain. Bahrain is also recommended as an advanced supply and repair base for any US Indian Ocean naval forces. In this context, it would seem desirable to settle soonest on the joint US/UK use of facilities at HMS Jufair, including the potential for berthing, resupply, and repair of increased numbers of US ships.

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44. Editorial Note

On November 25, 1970, the United States Senate approved the FY 1971 Military Construction Appropriations Bill, completing Congressional action on the bill. This included funding for the modest BIOT communications facility (Reindeer Station). (Telegram 194511 to London, November 28; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104, and airgram CA–6087, December 11; ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US) The United States and Britain were to share the task of informing concerned countries. Clarification on the overall strategic situation in the Indian Ocean, and the "nature and extent of any Soviet threat in Indian Ocean," was expected at the upcoming Anglo-American talks in December. (Telegram 195870 to Indian Ocean Embassies, December 2; ibid., RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean))

News of the plans for Diego Garcia were already rumored in the world press, causing concern, such as in Tananarive, New Delhi,

and Colombo. (Telegram 1391 from Tananarive, December 2; ibid., telegram 205482 to New Delhi, December 17; and telegram 205666 to Colombo, December 17; ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US)

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45. Memorandum From K. Wayne Smith of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)[1]

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

NSSM–104 SRG Meeting on December 9, 1970

Attached at the indicated tabs are:

—your talking points,[2]
—an analytical summary,[3]
—NSSM–104,[4]
—the full NSSM–104 report tabbed separately.[5]

I recommend you read the analytical summary first then the talking points. You may want to thumb the pages of the NSSM–104 report, although the analytical summary covers it fully and makes several additions.

Considering the short time available, the NSSM–104 study is a first-rate contribution. I believe the result proves that your decision to give DOD responsibility for the study was the correct one.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret.

[2] Smith amended the language of the attached talking points "in light of the fact that John Thomson will be attending tomorrow's meeting." Thomson was British Prime Minister Edward Heath's Emissary on Indian Ocean Affairs. Smith's changes involved addressing if the United States would "be accused of an imperialistic racist policy if we cooperate with the U.K. and Australia?", if it were "possible that the U.K. is seeking our involvement in the Indian Ocean area to justify a resumption of arms sales to South Africa?", and whether "the Australians and the U.K. [will] do more if we do more or will they do less?"

[3] Document 46.

[4] Document 42.

[5] See footnote 2, Document 46.

The study was intentionally focused on the naval threat in the Indian Ocean and possible U.S. and Allied responses. Thus, it does not give detailed consideration to all the instrumentalities of our presence or the Soviet presence, e.g., military and economic assistance.

While it is true that we could respond to increased Soviet involvement by increasing non-naval activities, the utility of such responses in this case is limited by:

—the fact that we are concerned with an ocean and the threat involved is a naval threat;
—the likelihood that projecting a naval presence is one of the best ways to maximize the contributions of our allies;
—our desire to pre-empt Soviet use of naval facilities such as Singapore because this may be the best way to deny the Soviets low-cost, high-benefit opportunities;
—the limited flexibility we have in our use of other foreign policy instruments such as military assistance in the area. This condition results from the already large Soviet role, our limited economic assistance funds, and, in many cases, hostile political circumstances.

In summary, NSSM–104 is a useful exercise in sub-optimization.

The State Department has been a willing and constructive participant in this study. I have no information that would suggest they will denounce it for its narrow focus. I suspect they will stress the political implications of the activities contemplated, but that is their job.

I have given CIA advanced warning that they will be asked to respond to specific questions on the threat (although I haven't told them what the questions will be). State and DOD have been asked to be up on the plans and wishes of the U.K., Australia, Singapore, etc.

46. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff[1]

Washington, December 8, 1970.

NSSM 104

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

NSSM 104 develops four alternative U.S. force and basing packages for 1971–75 consistent with varying views of U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean area and the threats to U.S. interests, particularly the Soviet naval threat.[2]

It assesses these alternatives in terms of:

—each's consistency with friendly plans for the area, particularly those of the U.K.

—the presence of U.S. and friendly forces compared with Soviet forces and possible Soviet reactions.

—possible reactions from neutral countries.

—costs and naval force availability.

NSSM 104 does not treat broad alternative U.S. strategies for the Indian Ocean involving trade-offs between different ways of protecting U.S. interests, e.g. MAP, economic assistance, and political actions. The focus is on one instrumentality: naval forces and basing. While NSSM 104 focuses on the relationship of the various postures with allied plans, it does not develop a political program for implementing whatever option is chosen that would encompass the U.S. diplomatic and public relations posture.

Interests and Threats

Interests—Relative to the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean areas, U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean area are modest:

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret.

[2] NSSM 104 is Document 42. The December 3 response to NSSM 104, entitled "Soviet and Friendly Naval Involvement in the Indian Ocean Area, 1971–1975," was submitted to Kissinger on December 4 by Pranger, Chairman of the Interdepartmental Group. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104) The CIA's contribution to the response to NSSM 104 included three papers: the first, November 17, was entitled "U.S. Economic Interests in the Indian Ocean"; the second was a November 19 paper from the Office of Research and Reports, entitled "Soviet Involvement in the Indian Ocean"; and the third was a November 19 paper from the Office of Science and Technology, entitled "Assessment of the Soviet Threat in the Indian Ocean." (Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–T01315A, Box 2)

—The U.S. has an interest in insuring open commercial transit through the Indian Ocean and to the Persian Gulf, because of the importance of oil and other supply lines between Europe, the Persian Gulf, Japan, and Australia.

—While the U.S. has no reason to control the Indian Ocean area, it has an interest in denying control of the area or a dominant portion of it to the Soviet Union and other potentially hostile powers.

—Because of the large share of the world's population residing in Indian Ocean countries such as India and Indonesia, the U.S. seeks to encourage their political and economic progress and their friendly participation in international affairs.

U.S. commitments in the Indian Ocean area reflect U.S. interests and include: CENTO (Pakistan, Iran); SEATO (Pakistan and Thailand); an air defense agreement with India, and ANZUS (Australia).

The current U.S. presence in the area is small, reflecting the historical absence of large-scale threats to the area and the stabilizing role played by the U.K. The U.S. has the following assets in the area (see attached map):[3]

—a 3 ship (Middle East) force at the U.K. base at Bahrain in the Persian Gulf,

—communications facilities at Ethiopia, Australia and one planned for Diego Garcia,

—atomic energy detection stations in nine littoral states,

—space-tracking and support facilities (some militarily related) in five states,

—a navigation station at Reunion.

Threats—The only major threat to the Indian Ocean is that which might result from the expanding Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean area.

The first Soviet ship presence in the Indian Ocean was an oceanographic research ship deployed in 1957. During 1965–67 the Soviets sent a destroyer on annual visits and in 1967 17 surface ships sailed to the Indian Ocean in support of space operations. Prolonged operations by warships began in 1968.

Presently the Soviets maintain a small naval force averaging 2 to 4 combatants in the Indian Ocean (compared with the U.S. Mideast force presence of three ships). The Soviet combatant ship operating days were 980 in 1969 and are expected to at least double that number in 1970.

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[3] Attached but not printed.

If the Suez Canal remains closed, we can expect the Soviet force to increase to 5 to 7 ships in the 1971–75 period. Opening Suez would raise this number to 7 to 13 ships. To support either of these expanded force levels the Soviets can be expected to develop logistics facilities east of Suez within the next five years.

Comparative U.S., Soviet and U.S. and Allied Presence Under Current Conditions

The following table compares current U.S. and current U.S. plus allied presence with Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean area.

Table 1

Presence of US, UK, and Soviet Combatants and Auxiliaries[4]

	Number of Ships	Ship Days	Port Visits
U.S.	3–4	1100–1400	100
U.K.[5]	3–4	1100–1400	30
U.S. and U.K.	6–8	2200–2800	130
Soviet	5–9	1800–3300	60

The table shows a rough parity of U.S. and U.K. presence.

U.S. plus U.K. presence is roughly equivalent to Soviet presence, although if U.K. presence at Singapore and Bahrain (home ports for U.K. ships) were included U.S. plus U.K. ship-days would exceed Soviet ship-days.

Because the Soviets visit ports less frequently than U.S. or U.K. ships, U.S. and U.S. plus U.K. port visits are almost double Soviet port visits.

Third Country Views

Indian Ocean countries such as India, Pakistan, and Indonesia are major spokesmen for the non-aligned viewpoint. Reflecting their views the Lusaka Non-Aligned Conference in September 1970 called upon all states "to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace from which the great power rivalries and competition as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries and competition, either army, navy or air force bases, are excluded." To this was added: "The area should also be free of nuclear weapons."[6]

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[4] Annual estimate based on 1969–70 data. [Footnote is in the original.]

[5] Port visits do not include Bahrain and Singapore. [Footnote is in the original. In the margin next to this footnote, Kissinger wrote: "Why so many junk[ets]?"]

[6] The meeting was held September 8.

The press and Parliament in India have already protested the planned establishment of a U.S. communication facility at Diego Garcia. Any substantial expansion of the U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean area would provoke strong protests from India and probably other non-aligned countries. These protests would be encouraged by the anti-western countries of the area such as Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, South Yemen, and the UAR.

On the other hand, littoral states such as Indonesia, Australia, Singapore, and Iran would probably welcome a larger U.S. role. The U.S. would also benefit from close U.K. relations in the Persian Gulf area, Singapore, and throughout South Asia if its presence were projected in conjunction with U.K. forces. The exception would be South Africa where a greater U.S. involvement, however projected, would cause most non-white states to regard conspicuous U.S. military cooperation with South Africa as condoning the latter's racial policies.

Alternative Force-Base Packages

The following four force-base packages were devised to provide a range of possible U.S. involvement in the Indian Ocean area. Each package has force presence and basing elements and provisions for operations with allies. The basing arrangements vary for Bahrain, Singapore, Diego Garcia, and for Freemantle/Cockburn in Australia.

The elements of the various packages are illustrative and could be combined in different ways.

1. Alternative A. Maintain Current Presence

Description—The U.S. would:

—Retain the U.S. Mideast force of three combatants (one homeported and two in the Atlantic Fleet) at Bahrain.

—Continue occasional transits and port visits by U.S. navy ships in addition to Mideast force and continue occasional air surveillance operations in the Indian Ocean.

—Maintain existing logistics support facilities on islands and littoral and existing command and communications facilities at Northwest Cape, Australia; Kagnew Station, Ethiopia, and the planned facility at Diego Garcia, BIOT.

The U.S. would urge:

—The U.K. to retain naval units and maritime patrol aircraft at Singapore to strengthen the Joint-Five-Power arrangement and preempt Soviet use of Singapore.

—Australia to continue its development of a naval base at Freemantle/Cockburn.

—The U.K. to participate in the utilization of Diego Garcia as a communications facility.

Assessment—

Pro:

—Would not provoke an adverse reaction from the non-aligned Indian Ocean states.

—Requires no increase in U.S. involvement or costs over current plans.

—Could not be used by Soviets to justify a further expansion of their Indian Ocean force.

Con:

—While current U.S. plus U.K. involvement exceeds Soviet presence, the absence of any concrete U.S. measures may deny the U.K. a justification for continuing its naval presence east of Suez until 1975. This could cause allied presence to fall short of the current Soviet presence.

—If the Soviets increased their combatant force from 2 to 4 ships to 5 to 7 in the 1972–75 period as expected, this option, assuming the U.K. maintains its current presence, would cause U.S. plus U.K. presence to fall short of Soviet presence.

2. Alternative B. Emphasize Allied Cooperation at Slightly Increased U.S. Force Levels

Description—In addition to the actions called for in Alternative A, this option would step up combined naval activities with allies and friendlies in the form of combined naval operations, cooperative maritime surveillance efforts, and increased joint use of support facilities.

Specifically the U.S. would:

—Qualitatively upgrade its Mideast force by replacing World War II vintage U.S. destroyers with modern ships.

—Conduct a combined cruise with U.K., Australian and other friendly navies at least on a regular annual basis. These cruises would last about a month and include joint naval training exercises with units of friendly littoral states (e.g. Indonesia) as feasible. Scheduled port visits would be an integral feature of these combined cruises.

—Conduct joint maritime surveillance efforts with U.K., Australian and other friendly forces.

—Develop a long-range plan for port visits throughout the Indian Ocean designed to create the most effective political/psychological impact. This action would likely entail increased use of logistic support facilities at Singapore.

—Consider upgrading the POL storage capacity of the planned communication facility on Diego Garcia to provide a limited POL and logistics support capability for transiting friendly units.

Force Presence Comparisons—The following table compares U.S., U.S. and allied and Soviet force presence for this alternative:

Table 2

Alternative B Force Presence Comparisons

	Number of Ships	Ship-Days	Port Visits
A. 1. U.S. (Alt. B)	3–5	1100–1800	115
2. Allied	3–6	1200–1600	35–40
3. U.S. and Allied	6–9	2300–3300	150–165
B. 1. Soviet (Current)	5–9	1800–3300	60
2. Soviet (Projected)	9–14	3300–5000	100–110

Assessment—

Pro:

—Would permit the U.S. to increase its operations with U.K. and other friendly forces and marginally increase its presence at Bahrain, Diego Garcia, and Singapore.

—Would not permit the Soviets to justify a further escalation of their involvement as a response to U.S. escalation.

—One-time cost is $1.5 million and incremental annual operating costs are $0.1 million. Force diversions required from Atlantic and Pacific fleets are minor and would not uncover other commitments.

—Even if Indians and other non-aligned states protested the increased U.S. presence under this option, the U.S. could legitimately claim its involvement was less than Soviet presence under current Soviet presence, and roughly half under projected Soviet presence.

—Even against projected expanded Soviet threat would permit the U.S. and allied port visits to exceed Soviet visits although in number of ships and ship operating days the U.S. plus allied force would fall short of the Soviet force.

—Keeps the U.S. presence at near parity with its allies and emphasizes joint operations in a manner that could be viewed as consistent with the Nixon Doctrine and which would make it difficult for India or the Soviet Union to contend that the U.S. was turning the Indian Ocean into another arena for big-power competition.

Con:

—While under current conditions the U.S. presence is on par with the Soviets in ships and ship days, if and when the Soviet threat expands as projected, the U.S. presence would fall well short of the Soviets.

—The U.K. may be seeking more substantial evidence that the U.S. is concerned about the expanding Soviet naval involvement that would result from selection of this option.

3. Alternative C: Moderate Increase in U.S. Presence and Operations with Allies

Description—In addition to the actions called for in Alternatives B and C [*A and B*?], this option calls for the U.S. to:

—Establish a permanent U.S. naval presence in the Eastern Indian Ocean by operating two destroyers drawn from the Seventh Fleet either on a rotational basis or home-ported at Singapore.

—Increase level of combined U.S., U.K. and Australian group operations from one of one month duration each year (Alternative B) to two operations of up to eight weeks duration. Such operations could include a major combatant (carrier or cruiser) from the U.S. Seventh Fleet and similar U.K. and Australian ships.

—Conduct occasional cruises (less than 30 days) of a small U.S. naval task unit in the Indian Ocean. Nuclear powered warships or amphibious task units could be employed.

—Increase U.S. fleet visits and combined operations at Cockburn Sound as new Australian facilities develop there.

Force Presence Comparisons—The following table compares U.S., U.S. and allied, and Soviet force presence for Alternative C:

Table 3

Alternative C Force Presence Comparisons

	Number of Ships	Ship-Days	Port Visits
A. 1. U.S. (Alt. C)	5–8	2200–2400	230
2. Allied	3–8	1600–1900	70–80
3. U.S. and Allied	8–10	3800–4300	300–310
B. 1. Soviet (Current)	5–9	1800–3300	60
2. Soviet (Projected)	9–14	3300–5000	100–110

Assessment—

Pro:

—Would permit U.S. and Allied presence to remain on par with Soviet presence if the latter expands as expected in the time period. Friendly port visits would exceed Soviet visits by a factor of six if the current Soviet posture is maintained and a factor of three if the Soviets increase their force.

—Would provide substantial evidence to the U.K. and other allies that the U.S. was prepared to act to meet the increasing Soviet threat

in the Indian Ocean area. Such evidence might prolong U.K. involvement east of Suez, although it may ease Australian and other pressures on the U.K. to stay.

—Australia would find it easier to implement more rapidly its west coast naval development and to strengthen its commitment to the Five-Power Defense Arrangement for Malaysia and Singapore.

Con:

—The U.S. would be stepping out in front of its allies, expanding its presence beyond what could be justified on an equal partnership basis.

—Could permit the Soviets to justify an expanded involvement as a reaction to U.S. escalation. The Soviets would probably intensify their efforts to gain access to air and naval facilities, possibly anticipating deployment of Soviet-targeted SSBN's to the Indian Ocean.

—Would bring strong protests from non-aligned states of the area.

—One-time costs would be $1.5 million (same as Alternative B) assuming it were not decided to home-port two destroyers at Singapore. Incremental annual operating costs are $.61 million compared with $0.1 million for Alternative B.

—Maintaining a two-destroyer force diverted from the Seventh Fleet to Singapore would require a commensurate draw down of destroyer forces available to meet other requirements in the Western Pacific. If a Seventh Fleet attack carrier were deployed, this would substantially reduce the contingency strike warfare capability and ability to cover the entire Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia areas of the theater. Similarly the deployment of guided missile escorts impacts on the overall air defense posture of the fleet units in the Western Pacific.

4. Alternative D: Begin Major U.S. Task Force Deployments, Upgrade Substantially Area Basing, and Increase Cooperation with Allies

Description—In addition to the actions called for in Alternatives A, B, and C, this option calls for the U.S. to:

—Home-port four destroyers at Singapore (instead of 2 in Option C).

—Conduct combined U.S. and Allied cruises of up to 60 days along the lines called for in option C but also including a helicopter or aircraft carrier task group from the Seventh Fleet.

—Increase air surveillance operations utilizing Navy and Air Force reconnaissance aircraft. Upgrade U-Tapao air patrol detachment to a full squadron and stage a rotational detachment of this squadron to Diego Garcia.

—Consider construction of an airfield in BIOT, possibly on Farquhar Island.

—Upgrade logistics and airfield facilities at Diego Garcia.

Force Presence Comparisons—The following table compares U.S., U.S. and allied, and Soviet force presence for Alternative D.

Table 4

Alternative D Force Presence Comparisons

	Number of Ships	Ship-Days	Port Visits
A. 1. U.S. (Alt. D)	5–10	2200–2600	280
2. Allied	3–8	1700–2100	80–100
3. U.S. and Allied	8–10	3900–4700	360–380
B. 1. Soviet (Current)	5–9	1800–3300	60
2. Soviet (Projected)	9–14	3300–5000	100–110

Assessment—

The pros and cons of this option are essentially the same as for Alternative D [*C*?] except that for this option:

—The development [*deployment*?] of amphibious units into the Indian Ocean could cause some serious reactions from non-aligned littoral states.

—One-time costs would be $21.5 million and incremental annual cost would be $5.13 million.

47. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)[1]

Washington, December 8, 1970.

SRG ON INDIAN OCEAN

SUBJECT

The Soviets and the Indian Ocean: Comment on NSSM 104, Particularly Section II of the Basic Study (pp. 6–13)[2]

Having participated in a number of Indian Ocean Studies during the last five years, I find the NSSM 104 study far and away the best. Although extremely brief in regard to Soviet activities and policies, it comes closer to what I would consider a reasonable view than the earlier efforts.

Since much of the work in the Government on Soviet "intentions" still suffers from what I believe to have been the flaws of the earlier Indian Ocean studies, I want briefly to identify these flaws.

In the first place, earlier studies saw Soviet activities as part of a coherent strategy or master plan of expansion. The NSSM 104 study (p. 6) explicitly concludes that Soviet policy is one of "opportunism rather than of grand design." (Let me hasten to note that there is no necessary comfort in this conclusion: opportunism can be as dangerous as, and probably more unpredictable than design, grand or otherwise.)

Second, previous studies viewed Soviet decision-making as monolithic. They did not allow for conflicting views in Moscow and resulting compromises rather than maximal decisions. The present study does not deal with this aspect. It is of course a highly speculative one since

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret. Sent for information.

[2] Pages 6–13 of the December 3 NSSM 104 study, "Soviet and Friendly Naval Involvement in the Indian Ocean," state that the Soviet Union, "want[s] to erode western influence, to exclude Chinese influence, and to have the countries in the Indian Ocean area look to them as the leading power. Strategically the Soviets would like to inhibit the U.S. from using the Indian Ocean as an operating area for ballistic missile submarines." It then characterizes the Soviet approach as one of "cautious probing," and states that "Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean area do not pose a direct military threat to any major U.S. interests." It concludes that it was unlikely that the Soviet Union would directly challenge the U.S. desires to use its naval presence to "strengthen certain regimes, neutralize others, and weaken others," as it would be "tempered by their own military limitations, by the negative reaction of the littoral states, and by a concern over being mired down in such an operation, and by moves by the U.S. to counter such opportunism." (Ibid.) See also Document 46.

evidence is extremely hard to come by. The issue however derives from one's assumptions about the Soviet decision-making process and these, in turn, are an important ingredient for our own policy decisions.

Third, past studies did not deal with the problem of opportunity costs: given the known constraints on the Soviet budget, even the military one, what activities are the Soviets unable to undertake by maintaining various levels of naval presence and infrastructure in the Indian Ocean and what does this tell us about their priorities? The present NSSM says that the Soviets "evidently aspire to a greater role in world affairs and to project a greater presence in distant areas." (p. 6) It does not, and probably is not the proper place to attempt a judgment in differentiating among various presences in various places at various times, or among sizes and intensities of presences in various places. Here again, some rigorous analysis could have significant bearing on our own decisions.

Fourth, past studies tended to equate the intentions they imputed to the Soviets with Soviet ability to convert them into reality. Such factors as susceptibility of riparian states, the effect of counter-measures by the US, UK, France, and others, the effect on Soviet decision-making of either setbacks or successes in the implementation of the imputed intentions etc. etc. were generally ignored. NSSM 104 is a distinct improvement, though only a beginning, on this score. Past studies also seemed to confer a near-magic significance on Soviet naval ships, even when present in tiny numbers and for short periods of time. NSSM 104 still does so to some extent. In fact, Soviet influence in the area resulted in the first place from the use of other devices, such as aid, political support, local Communist parties. There no doubt is some special weight that attaches to Soviet ships because of the novelty of their presence. But we should not add to it unnecessarily.

Fifth, related to the previous point, all past studies foresaw a growth in Soviet naval presence on more or less a straight line, based on the rate of growth thus far observable. NSSM 104 on the whole tends to accept this prognosis (pp. 8–10) but represents a substantial improvement over past efforts in noting factors which "militate against sustained deployment of larger forces in this area." (p. 10)

Sixth, past studies on the whole agreed, as does NSSM 104, that the Soviets desire to avoid a confrontation with the US. Past studies, like NSSM 104, also attributed to them the goal of maintaining friendly relations with non-aligned nations in the area (p. 11). The earlier studies were, however, far more certain than NSSM 104 that beyond this goal (which, incidentally, also serves to *restrain* Soviet actions because of the sensitivity of many riparians to great power involvement in the area), the Soviets sought to establish over time paramount influence up to and including establishment of client states and the use of vital land facilities. NSSM 104 does allow, correctly in my view, for the strong

likelihood that the Soviets will seek support facilities for their naval forces (probably in South Yemen) in order to extend their time on-station. But it avoids the more extravagant projections relating to the establishment of a network of air bases, rail heads, oil pipe-lines, supply dumps etc. etc. all around the periphery.

Seventh, related to the previous point, all studies assumed a Soviet desire at least to increase their prestige and influence, though the operational meaning of these terms is never adequately defined and no rigorous judgment is attempted of how this goal relates to and may be constrained by (1) the desire to avoid confrontation with us, (2) maintain friendly relations with non-aligned riparians and (3) the cost, in rubles, of doing so.

Eighth, NSSM 104, though again only very briefly, greatly improves on past studies in identifying certain operational uses of Soviet naval forces and, indeed, of the over-all Soviet presence in the area: to help a toppling government, to protect Soviet personnel (though only as a pretext), to strengthen certain regimes, neutralize others and weaken still others, to influence the outcome of a politically sensitive situation. (pp. 12–13). Another possible use that might have been considered is that of a stand-by force for use in pursuance of a UN resolution in the absence of other immediately available national forces in some fast-moving situation. The NSSM does well to consider deliberate "vigorous adventurism doubtful" (p. 12), although it fails to define this concept and to explain how, in some circumstances, "vigorous adventurism" would be distinguished from helping a toppling government, protecting Soviet personnel etc. etc. as mentioned above.

In some way, all these points relate to certain imponderables regarding Soviet behavior that have a bearing well beyond the Indian Ocean. Thus, we do not yet really know how, or understand why, the Soviet Union went in for a large overseas naval force when Khrushchev explicitly in 1956 mocked such a force and throughout his rule fought stout political battles against it as well as against conventional forces generally. Yet all the ships that now trouble us were bought while he was in power.

One answer might be that Khrushchev tried to deceive us, even to the point of emitting false Kremlinological signals about internal arguments over military posture. (For various reasons this seems unlikely.)

Another answer might be that Khrushchev never had the power to make his military policy, enunciated repeatedly between 1955 and at least 1961, stick. If Soviet military pressure groups were able to negate the decisions of as powerful a figure as Khrushchev was precisely during a portion of this period (1957–62), one must assume that they can do even better when the leadership is collective and hamstrung by a multitude of impediments to its capacity for decision-making.

Another answer, not inconsistent with either of the above, might be that the USSR is subject to a dynamic impulse toward great power status with all the trappings appertaining thereto, including, specifically, a capacity to maintain a military presence all around the globe. Such impulses have of course propelled many other nations over the centuries; the Soviets may merely be late starters, in part, perhaps, in subconscious admission of the fact that their *special* kind of imperialism, i.e. the potency of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the role of the USSR as a model for others near and far, has lost momentum. Actually, in the Indian Ocean we may be seeing, on the part of the USSR as NSSM 104 suggests (p. 6), a combination of the emergence of a more traditional kind of imperialist behavior with the urge to contest the growth of Chinese influence. That influence stems in part from Peking's appeal to radical forces. The Soviets while mustering what radicalism they can to meet the challenge seem on the whole inclined to utilize tools invented by Western capitalist states.

If the hypothesis is valid that what is happening in the Seven Seas is at least as much the result of impulse as design in Moscow, the danger of rash action by Soviet forces in distant places may in fact be greater than NSSM 104 suggests. For if the impulse is toward great power status and a place in the sun, there may easily develop a strong compulsion to demonstrate on some occasion that the USSR is not a giant with clay feet. There will be investments to protect (not the traditional capitalist kind, but investment in prestige, and foreign aid and in hardware that is supposed to be felt as well as heard and seen): and there may be strong temptations, especially when risks seem low, to intervene in one or another situation to prove the efficacy of Soviet power.

Moreover, and disturbingly, the Indian Ocean is not unique as an arena of Soviet great power display. The Caribbean is far closer to home and already contains one clear client subject, at least verbally, to Soviet protection.

It is considerations like these that lead me to a rather less relaxed conclusion than NSSM 104 not just about the Indian Ocean itself but about Soviet long-range military activities everywhere, including in our own front yard. I thus have no particular quarrel with the military options in the NSSM. But I don't think we have begun to cope with the more general phenomenon of the Soviet Union's emergence as an overseas power; a phenomenon all the more disturbing because it coincides with weakness in political leadership in Moscow and perhaps even with a more convulsive structural crisis in the Soviet system in which the tiny ruling "elite" may find resort to foreign adventurism a tempting defense against an alienated and frustrated society.

48. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)[1]

Washington, December 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

SRG on Indian Ocean—A Complement to Your Briefing Book

The papers that Wayne Smith has prepared for your SRG meeting on the Indian Ocean concentrate on possible U.S. naval responses to the Soviet naval buildup there.[2] This is appropriate because NSSM 104[3] specifically defined that as the scope of the study.

What I would like to add is a complementary political dimension which might affect our timing and expectations in implementing some of the naval options proposed in the NSSM 104 papers. In the last talking point which Wayne proposes for your use at the meeting, it is suggested that State prepare a political strategy paper to pre-empt the reactions of Indians and others. I would like to elaborate on this suggestion.

My point is this:

—If we deal with the Soviet naval buildup in the Indian Ocean purely in terms of a U.S. and allied naval response, we are relying entirely on a naval response to deter or match the Soviet buildup. This could produce steady escalation.

—It may be possible along with a modest naval response to develop a political strategy which would help limit further Soviet buildup without moving to a costly increase in the U.S. naval presence which would in turn provoke a sharp Soviet increase.

—From all indications the Soviets are exploiting a target of opportunity and may not be willing to jeopardize their political relations with key littoral states for the sake of simply advancing their rather low priority naval interests. This means that we might be able to inhibit the Soviets by raising the political costs of their naval involvement in the Indian Ocean.

Such a political strategy would build mainly on the expressed desire of the littoral states to limit or exclude foreign forces from the Indian Ocean. Its purpose would be to decrease any political benefits the USSR might hope to gain from increasing its naval presence. It would be consistent with a general U.S. interest in not sharply increasing its naval presence there.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files) Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret.

[2] Document 45.

[3] Document 42.

A number of the littoral states have long expressed concern over the prospect of foreign naval forces in the region and especially, as they see it, shifting great power rivalry into the Indian Ocean. This feeling is strong especially in South Asia and has been reiterated recently. The resolution adopted by the Conference of Non-aligned States at Lusaka in September[4] and the recent report of a possible initiative by Ceylon at the 1971 Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference highlight the possibility of efforts by local states to limit, or even to exclude, foreign forces from the area. The strong possibility of growing local agitation against foreign forces suggests that we consider a course of action which might:

a) heighten local resistance to Soviet naval activity, hampering the maintenance of Soviet forces in the area and tending to neutralize at least partially the political effect of those that do operate there; and
b) reduce or divert pressures against any U.S. forces or installations there.

In general terms, such a course of action would involve identifying ourselves with the concerns of the Indian Ocean states regarding foreign forces. There is a considerable range of specific steps which could be taken from the most general expression of understanding for the concerns to the presentation of quite precise formulations for limitation of forces.

A more general statement, at least as an initial step, would have most of the advantages of a more specific and elaborated measure and few of the disadvantages. The U.S. could state, perhaps in response to an Indian initiative, that it appreciated the concerns of the Indian Ocean states and stood ready to cooperate in limiting foreign military presence.

If the Soviets did not respond affirmatively, as is likely, we would not be bound to exercise more restraint than they have shown. Our good intentions would have been demonstrated, however, and we could, if we wished, leave it that we continued to be prepared to limit forces if all outside powers were similarly willing.

If the USSR should agree to consider some form of mutual restraint, we could propose a formulation that curbed a sharp increase in Soviet activity without seriously inhibiting modest U.S. activity at about present levels or slightly more.

The main disadvantages in this approach would be:

—if any such move bound us to a "nuclear-free" provision *and*
—if we now saw a clear need to station ballistic missile submarines in the Indian Ocean.

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[4] See footnote 6, Document 46.

Recommendation: That this political option be considered as a possible complement to a modest U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean—a presence such as described by a slightly reinforced Option B in your SRG papers.

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49. Letter From Secretary of Defense Laird to British Secretary of State for Defence Lord Carrington[1]

Washington, December 9, 1970.

Dear Lord Carrington:

I am writing to confirm formally the request, made during your recent visit here, for the United Kingdom to participate in operating the naval communications facility which the United States is planning to construct on the island of Diego Garcia, in the Chagos Archipelago.

As you know, the British Indian Ocean Territory was set aside in the mid-sixties for defense projects of either country. I understand that in 1967 our predecessors had reached agreement for a joint air base on Aldabra Island, a plan later abandoned.[2] British participation in the new Diego Garcia facility would therefore be wholly in keeping with previous planning between our two nations for the Indian Ocean area, as well as most welcome from the standpoint of this Administration.

The facility on Diego Garcia is designed to strengthen U.S. naval communications in the large area between Kagnew station, Ethiopia and Northwest Cape, Australia. Its airfield and POL storage will also provide minimal logistic support, but will be strictly supplementary to the communications function. We are prepared to substitute Royal Navy officers and enlisted men for U.S personnel on a one-for-one basis in a range of billets in the communications, maintenance, meteorology, and station support categories. Enclosed is a list of 53 such billets which would be appropriate for U.K. manning.[3] In order to play

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[1] Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–067, Box 73, Indian Ocean. Secret.

[2] See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, volume XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Documents 34, 37, 38, 39, and 42–47.

[3] Not attached.

an active role in the operation of this facility, beginning in 1973, we would suggest that the Royal Navy select up to 25 or 30 of these billets, representing about 10% of expected station strength, with details being arranged between our two Navies.

I am pleased to report that funds for this project have now been approved by the Congress, and their apportionment is expected shortly. We will be most interested to have your response,[4] and trust that it will lead to another fruitful example of Anglo-American partnership.

Sincerely,

Mel Laird

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[4] In his December 21 response, Carrington wrote Laird that the British agreed to help with manning the station, but that shortages of naval manpower meant their numbers and specialization required careful study. He also suggested that conditions for constructing and operating the facility could be covered by a memorandum of understanding. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–067, Box 73, Indian Ocean)

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50. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting[1]

Washington, December 9, 1970, 11:05–11:50 a.m.

SUBJECT

Soviet and Friendly Naval Involvement in the Indian Ocean Area, 1971–1975 (NSSM 104)

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–111, Senior Review Group, SRG Minutes Originals 1970. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. According to Talking Papers prepared for the meeting, OSD was to argue for postponement of any decisions until after discussions with the British were complete because 1) it was not clear that a U.S. naval response was the best way to counter an increased Soviet naval presence; 2) the United States and its allies had significant political assets in the area; 3) an enlarged Diego Garcia facility would encounter Congressional opposition; 4) the Navy was already over-committed; and 5) the United States might be "getting out ahead of our allies and the local powers in our military presence, and thereby be contradicting the Nixon Doctrine." (OSD paper, undated; Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–067, Box 73, Indian Ocean, 1970) The JSC recommended Alternative C, a moderate increase in U.S. presence. They based their decision on 4 principles: the importance of U.S. interest in the region, the connection between increased Soviet naval presence and economic and political inroads, the possible drawdown of British forces, and the need to be able to mount a response in the event of a naval threat. (JCS paper, undated; ibid.)

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—John N. Irwin
Joseph J. Sisco
Thomas Pickering
Joseph Neubert

Defense—David Packard
G. Warren Nutter
Robert J. Pranger

CIA—Richard Helms
Bruce C. Clarke

JCS—Lt. Gen. Richard Knowles
Admiral William St. George

Mr. John Thompson, UK Cabinet Office

NSC Staff—Dr. K. Wayne Smith
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt
Mr. Harold H. Saunders
Col. Richard T. Kennedy
Jeanne W. Davis
Mr. Robert Sansom

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

It was agreed that:

. . . CIA would prepare a paper on the Soviet offensive buildup in the UAR;

. . . JCS would consider how Soviet moves in the Indian Ocean relate to other Soviet naval moves;

. . . we must now examine the political implications of Soviet moves in the area, analyze our own interests and those of others and work out a coherent strategy.

Mr. Kissinger: We welcome John Thompson of the British Cabinet Office to our meeting today. As you know, the President and Prime Minister Heath had agreed to cooperate on an Indian Ocean study[2] and Mr. Thompson's presence here will give us an opportunity to hear the British perspective. (to Mr. Thompson) It will also give you an opportunity to compare what you are told privately and publicly. We have prepared a paper of our own and the British have a study.[3] I suggest we talk about some aspects of our own paper and then ask Mr. Thompson to comment on how the British see the issue. (to General Knowles) Could you give us a rundown on how the Soviet naval threat developed in this area.

General Knowles: (handing out an annotated map which is attached)[4] The current situation in which the Soviets have a small task force in the area is about par for the course. They came into the area for the first time in March of 1968 and have kept 2 to 4 ships, or more, there ever since.

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[2] See Document 41.

[3] See Document 46. The British paper was "The Indian Ocean Area—Soviet and Chinese Capabilities: Intentions and Opportunities." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files, (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104)

[4] Not attached.

Mr. Kissinger: Do they come around the Cape or from Valdivostok?

Admiral St. George: Both.

Mr. Thompson: The bulk come from Vladivostok; some from the Black Sea.

General Knowles: In addition, the Soviets have six space-related ships and three hydrographic research ships in the area. They seem very interested in airfields and may be looking for a radar site. They have made frequent port visits, apparently practicing old-style gunboat diplomacy. They may also be looking to fill the void left by the UK withdrawal, though there is still the key UK base at Singapore to which our ships are allowed entry. The Soviets are gaining operational experience in the area, learning the facilities, becoming acquainted with the people, and generally increasing their presence. With regard to port visits, Soviet ships spent 1106 ship-days in area ports in 1968 and 2127 ship-days in 1969. US ship-days were dropping during this same period. In 1970, the US had 560 ship-days in port and the USSR 2239 ship-days. This is not significant in itself but it is an indicator. Annex B of the study gives one a feel for the number of visits by area.

Mr. Thompson: (showing Dr. Kissinger a map) This will give you an impression of the intensity of their presence.

Mr. Kissinger: I have a number of impressions that I would like to mention. First, this study was focused on the Navy, and the response is entirely in naval/military terms. We should, of course, discuss the relationship of the increase in the Soviet naval presence and their political objectives. Is it true that political influence grows commensurate with naval presence? At what point? When they increase from two to four ships? From two to twenty ships?

Second, if there is some relationship, can or should it be countered by a build-up of the US Navy alone? With Free World navies? And/or with other means? We should look at the political context of the littoral states.

Third, assuming we should react by increasing our naval power, what should be the timing? Should we wait for the Soviets to increase and then react, or should we preempt Soviet action by an increase of our own?

Fourth, our recent experience in Cuba indicates a world-wide overseas deployment of Soviet power.[5] Is this more pronounced in the Indian Ocean? What is the US position? I think we should look at the whole outward projection of Soviet forces, including all the exercises they have run recently.

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[5] Reference to the Soviet submarine base at Cienfuegos, the southern coast of Cuba.

I'm aware, of course, that we didn't ask for that in this study, but I think we should address these questions in the next phase. I would like to ask Mr. Thompson to outline for us any preliminary conclusions the British have reached from their study.

Mr. Thompson: I am extremely grateful to have this opportunity—it is a privilege. I had a long talk with the Prime Minister before I left, and he views the problem of Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean as of great importance but not very singular. He wants to examine it jointly, and has it in mind that, depending on the outcome of the joint study, we should be prepared to do something. It would be imprudent at this time to try to indicate what that "something" might be.

We see the development of Soviet power in the area as part of their general political-strategic policy. They are increasingly confident—for example, in Europe and the SALT negotiations. They are assertive, as in their building of both an offensive and defensive capability in the UAR. Their general attitude in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean is one of confidence. They have built their navy to a point where they have some spare capability beyond that required for their national security. They can use their capacity for political purposes, and we think this tendency will increase. They are interested in the acquisition of power for its own sake, and there is some probing of Western intentions. We believe their activities in the Indian Ocean are in line with this general policy and are not defensive—they have no high defensive priority in that area. Their actions there fit with their general assertiveness, their desire to probe our intentions and the potential for picking up some political dividends cheaply. The Russians in general don't see the Indian Ocean as a unified area, but the Soviet Navy is an exception. While others see it as different bits, the Soviet Navy puts it together. They are exploiting their naval power to acquire more political influence so as to use this influence in the littoral countries as the opportunity arises. And, of course, they are not averse to creating that opportunity. In Mauritius, for example, which has the highest population density in the world, they can exploit the existing political instability and use their presence to keep a pro-Soviet party in power. It is the sort of situation they can create and exploit. By increasing their power in the Indian Ocean they are putting themselves in a position to threaten Western interests. They are creating new options for themselves—primarily political, but some military—and are putting constraints on Western actions. I think these general statements apply, but we will have to go into specifics in our later talks.

There have, however, been three recent developments which have sharpened our interest in this problem. First, the development of Soviet offensive capability in the UAR in the Aswan area, by which they could have military domination of the Red Sea.

Mr. Kissinger: What is the buildup in the UAR?

Mr. Helms: (to Mr. Thompson) Which thing are you referring to John?

Mr. Thompson: The three airfields the Soviets now have in the UAR which appear entirely unconnected with Israel. Their communications systems are different, and their facilities indicate that they are entirely offensive in nature.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Helms) May we have a separate paper on that?

Mr. Helms: Yes. We have been reporting regularly on these and working with DIA on them. We will tie it all together in one paper.

Mr. Packard: They have some long-range missiles that they need aircraft to guide in. Having air fields and aircraft in this area would greatly increase their capability by making it possible to use these missiles, some of which have a 200 mile range.

Mr. Kissinger: Where are the missiles they would guide in?

Mr. Packard: On submarines, for example.

Mr. Thompson: We do not think it accidental that Aswan was chosen as the site for this facility. They can operate both ways from there. While is is probably designed to move against the 6th Fleet, it is also well-placed for coverage of the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Kissinger: Why should they go so far south if it is directed against the 6th Fleet? To get out of the range of Israel?

Mr. Thompson: Partly, but also because if gives them more capability in the other direction.

The second development which interested us was the extreme pressure the Russians put on Lee Kuan Yew during his visit to Moscow. The Russians are obviously interested in acquiring facilities in Singapore. This would not be terribly serious for us but it would be awkward. It would enable them to keep their fleet at a higher state of operational readiness.

The third development is the Soviet activity with regard to Grand Port in Mauritius. The Russians are clearly aiming to establish a facility there, which was a World War II port, now used hardly at all. If they succeed, they would have an exclusive port in the area.

Mr. Kissinger: Do the Russians have representation in Mauritius?

Mr. Thompson: They have the biggest Embassy in the country. They have signed a fishing agreement and a cultural agreement with Mauritius, and we recently persuaded the Mauritius Government to turn down their request for a communications facility. They are also bringing in a Soviet mother ship for their fishing fleet. They have gone a long way in Grand Port although in a fairly low key. They are establishing facilities around the area—we think Aden is a high-priority target. When and if the Suez Canal is opened, this will mean a sig-

nificant up-grading of their naval capability because they can use Alexandria.

But, while we do not think what is happening in the Indian Ocean is exceptional, we shouldn't close our eyes to it. We believe the Russians think they are getting good dividends for some expenditure, and that they will continue along this line and that the dividends will increase.

Mr. Helms: If you look at the world from Moscow, the Middle East, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean all tie together. It would be logical to tie it off at the bottom of the Indian Ocean—it makes a tidy package. We see the Arab-Israeli conflict in a narrower context because we are deeply engaged in it, but the Soviets are looking at it in a larger context. What can the conflict do to promote their interests in the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean and other places?

Mr. Thompson: Also, there are a lot of sensitive things in the area that the Soviets would like to put their finger on. For example, 88 percent of Japanese oil goes through there.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Irwin) What do you think, Jack?

Mr. Irwin: I think Mr. Thompson has given us an excellent summary of the situation and that Dick Helms' comments about the view from Moscow are very perceptive. This is also tied into Soviet China policy. We have always known that one of the reasons for their desire for access to Suez was that it quickened the route to the Far East. The paper is, of course, limited in scope, and we should put the issue into a larger context and try to tie the whole thing together. The Indian Ocean is a back-door to our interests in the Middle East and in South East Asia. We don't have a real interest in the Indian Ocean as such, although we want to fly over it and sail through it and maintain commercial relations with the countries bordering it. We have treaty ties with some of them through SEATO, CENTO and ANZUS.

Mr. Kissinger: Except in the sense Mr. Thompson describes, I agree that any one interest in the area is not vital. There is, however, the domino effect of an increased Soviet capacity to exert a political effect in the countries.

Mr. Irwin: To the degree one can take advantage of a great-power competition, I believe we should keep our presence low.

Mr. Kissinger: Are you saying that the best way to counter the Soviet presence is to keep ours low so as to avoid competition?

Mr. Irwin: I'm saying that I'm not sure the best position is to increase our naval presence there.

Mr. Packard: We should study this issue on a much broader basis. Our interests are quite important if we add them up. We need a more imaginative view of this problem. The SST might well be more important to our interests in the Indian Ocean than nuclear submarines. It would give us a tremendous capacity to improve our relations. Our

ability to move in with the SST for commercial travel and with the attendant economic support could be an important factor. Remember that one SST would be equivalent to four *Queen Mary's* so far as the passengers it could carry. We need to think about ways to exert our influence, not based on the way it has been done in the past but on ways in which it might be done in the future. I see no case for a big naval buildup. The Soviet buildup was not decided on recently; we are only now beginning to understand it. Soviet forces have been designed to thwart our capabilities in the Mediterranean and we must now recognize this. We have the advantage of nuclear propulsion on carriers and support vessels. But I don't think any short-term naval moves are necessary. Economic, social and other supporting moves are just as important.

Mr. Irwin: Three things have helped the Soviets in their entry into the Indian Ocean, as elsewhere: 1) The Arab-Israeli conflict, which ensures them the support of all Arabs. If the Middle East conflict is settled, this would start the possible removal of one of the mainbases for Soviet strength in the area.

Mr. Kissinger: How does the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean relate to the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Mr. Irwin: Soviet strength in the Mediterranean has been increased by their bases in Egypt and by their potential in the lower end of the Arabian peninsula. If we solve the Arab-Israeli dispute, we lessen in some degree the base that enabled the Russians to come in.

Mr. Packard: I disagree completely. If the Arab-Israeli dispute is settled, the Suez Canal will be reopened which will enable the Russians to move still further forward.

Mr. Kissinger: The effect is not felt equally in all areas. In the Persian Gulf, for example, the Arab-Israeli dispute is peripheral.

Mr. Irwin: The other two elements are the situation in South Africa and its effect on US relations with Africa as a whole, and the revolutionary influence throughout Africa which creates a situation which the USSR and China can both take advantage of.

Mr. Kissinger: How is South Africa related?

Mr. Irwin: It is an added difficulty in US relations with East Africa.

Mr. Kissinger: Short of the collapse of South Africa, what can change this?

Mr. Irwin: I don't know that anything can change it, but it is a factor we should consider.

Mr. Sisco: I agree with Mr. Thompson and Dick Helms that we are confronted in the Indian Ocean with a basic Soviet strategy and that their objective is political. The Soviets have, in their naval presence, an important tool with which to exercise political influence. Mr. Thomp-

son's examples are all good ones. We as a government have not been as keenly aware of what is going on. We have a gradation of interests and not all areas are of equal importance to the US. We have focused on the Arab-Israeli dispute and on the Mediterranean. We must assume that the Arab-Israeli problem won't be solved probably in the next five years. There is no doubt that it has improved the climate for Soviet influence—in the first instance in the Mediterranean, but it has also had tremendous impact in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Even if the problem is resolved, I don't think the Soviets will get out of these areas. We are confronted with a long-range political strategy, bulwarked by increased naval strength used for political purposes. I can draw no conclusions on this but it definitely needs more study. It would be difficult to come to a judgement in which we would not have to take the increased Soviet projection into account. Mr. Thompson's major contribution today was to underscore the systematic approach Moscow has taken to this problem.

Mr. Packard: It can't be solved in World War II terms.

Mr. Irwin: It is also related to the overall strength of the US Navy. We can't solve the problem by thinking in terms of the past in the military sense.

Mr. Kissinger: This study and this discussion have been a good introduction to tell us what we are up against in the military sense. Mr. Pranger's group has done an outstanding job with this paper. Now we need an analysis of the implications of what Mr. Thompson has said. We need to examine our interests, those of others and the long-range political implications, and work out a coherent strategy, taking in account the impact of the Middle East dispute and of South Africa. Let us also get from the JCS a feel as to how Soviet moves in the Indian Ocean relate to other Soviet naval moves. (to Mr. Irwin) We will talk to you on how to set this up. There is no sense discussing the number of ships and port calls until we have addressed these other questions. (to Mr. Thompson) We will stay in close touch with you on this.

Mr. Irwin: (to Mr. Thompson) Our problem relates to the question of the political atmosphere on the East Coast of Africa with regard to South Africa. To the degree that the US is implicated in South Africa through US–UK military ties and UK supplies to South Africa, it affects our relations with and abilities in East Africa. It also affects Soviet abilities there. How much, is the question.

51. Memorandum of Conversation[1]

Washington, December 10, 1970, 4–5:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Mr. John Thomson
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Dr. K. Wayne Smith

SUBJECT

Dr. Kissinger's Discussion with Mr. Thomson

Dr. Kissinger welcomed Mr. Thomson and remarked that he was pleased that Thomson had been able to attend the SRG meeting[2] the previous day on the Indian Ocean study. He went on to say that this particular view of our bureaucracy in action could only be shown to our British friends—that he could never invite officials from other countries to such a meeting. Mr. Thomson expressed his gratitude at being invited and said he had found the meeting very satisfactory and very useful. His general impression from the meeting and from his discussions with the NSC staff was that there were no important differences between the two countries on the basic facts or the interpretation of those facts. He continued by saying that in his discussions with Prime Minister Heath before his visit he had explored the question: Since it was at U.K. initiative that the Indian Ocean problem was being studied, what if the U.S. asks us what we are going to do? The Prime Minister's position, he explained, was essentially that:

—He believes there is a growing problem in the Indian Ocean area resulting from the Soviet naval buildup.
—He is not at all sure what should be done about it.
—He is not going to go it alone.
—But he is prepared to do something.

Dr. Kissinger replied that we are not yet prepared to say what we will do either, but based on his experience, the President would probably be inclined toward increasing our naval strength. Dr. Kissinger at this point also assured Thomson that the South African issue would be treated separately and would not interfere with developing joint responses to the Indian Ocean problem. Mr. Thomson stated that the Prime Minister would probably also want to do something on the naval

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 727, Country Files, Europe, United Kingdom, Vol. IV. Secret. Sent for information. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office. All brackets are in the original.

[2] See Document 50.

side and that this decision would have to take account of British concerns in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea as well.

Dr. Kissinger noted that we need to put this problem into a larger context for the President's consideration.[3] The problems caused by the Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean are only part of a larger problem caused by the increases in Soviet naval capabilities. He also noted that the President had not yet focused on the Indian Ocean but was convinced that the President would be very concerned once he became aware of the various Soviet activities. Dr. Kissinger pointed out that he himself had been somewhat shocked by the summary presentation given by Thomson at the SRG meeting. The presentation had, he declared, effectively synthesized the various problems and given the SRG members a good overview of the problem. Mr. Thomson then emphasized that the U.K. did not see this as the greatest problem we face, but simply as a problem. He expressed the view that recognition of the problem and increased cooperation could go a long way toward meeting it; he did not, he continued, believe the amount of extra resources required would be large.

Mr. Thomson then turned to the upcoming Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference scheduled for February in Singapore and asked if Dr. Kissinger thought it would be a good idea to raise the Indian Ocean problem in this context. One possibility he had in mind, he explained, was to get eight or nine countries to do something jointly. [At this point Dr. Kissinger had to leave to see the President. He returned twenty minutes later.] Dr. Kissinger renewed the discussion by asking if, after the phase two portion of our study is completed, Thomson could return for another round of discussions. Mr. Thomson said that he would like very much to do so. Dr. Kissinger then explained the difficulties he had in getting papers that clearly stated the views of each agency. What he normally got, he noted, was a "negotiated" paper. Mr. Thomson noted that the same problems existed in the U.K.—indeed, that it had been institutionalized in the form of a "coordination man" who was sent around to coordinate a paper but knew nothing of its substance.

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[3] Smith had drafted a memorandum for Kissinger to send to Nixon. (Ibid., NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104) In an internal December 15 NSC memorandum to Kennedy, Robert Houdek wrote that the draft was "too lengthy and detailed for the President's use," although he thought Kissinger should read it. He felt that Sonnenfeldt covered the issues adequately in the talking points and background information prepared for Heath's visit and wrote, "There is no indication on the memo that it has been coordinated with either Hal Sonnenfeldt or Hal Saunders. I have not called Smith on this point, because of his past sensitivity on this precise subject but will if you wish." In the margin Kennedy agreed that the memorandum not go foward. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 942, VIP Visits, United Kingdom Visit of PM Heath, December 1970)

Dr. Kissinger inquired as to what Lord Rothschild[4] was going to do. Mr. Thomson said he didn't know for sure, but would probably concentrate on the domestic side. Dr. Kissinger stated that his impression of Rothschild was that he did not seem to be a man capable of taking charge of the bureaucratic machinery. He then explained that our system demands that one take charge from the first day and that was one great lesson he had learned from McNamara.[5] He had explicitly done this, he noted, in his dealing with the bureaucracies during the first year and had begun to let up only recently after he had established control. Mr. Thomson volunteered that he had been asked at the Embassy how Dr. Kissinger had dealt with the SRG meeting and that he had responded by saying "with easy mastery."

Mr. Thomson then turned to the possibility of doing some advance work with the Australians before the Commonwealth meeting in Singapore. Dr. Kissinger responded that he thought that was a good idea. Mr. Thomson then returned to his earlier question about getting the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference to focus on the problem. Dr. Kissinger asked if Thomson thought India and Pakistan would recognize this as a joint problem. Mr. Thomson said he didn't know. Dr. Kissinger said he thought it would be interesting to see if the Commonwealth countries would be willing to undertake some kind of joint efforts. He noted that the Indians know how to use power and might be interested. He added that we now have some influence with Pakistan and would be willing to speak to that country regarding the Indian Ocean problem if some kind of plan was worked out. Mr. Thomson asked if Dr. Kissinger would be willing to send a member of the NSC staff to the Commonwealth meeting as an observer. Dr. Kissinger responded that he would.

Dr. Kissinger then asked Mr. Thomson about his position. Mr. Thomson replied that he was in the Cabinet office and theoretically was responsive to requests from all the Cabinet members. In fact, however, almost all of the requests came from the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the Defense Minister. Dr. Kissinger inquired if the Prime Minister could keep certain facts from the others. Mr. Thomson stated that he not only could but on occasion did.

Dr. Kissinger pointed out the advantages of having a small but capable staff. His staff sometimes complained bitterly while they were here, he explained, but often came back on their knees (like Larry Lynn)[6]

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[4] Nathaniel Mayer Victor, the 3rd Baron Rothschild, appointed in 1970 by Heath as the first Director General of the Central Policy Review Staff.

[5] Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, 1961–1968.

[6] Larry Lynn was a member of the National Security Council from 1969 to 1971; he resigned in 1970 over the invasion of Cambodia.

after having been away for a while. A student of international relations needed to stay in the government to be relevant he pointed out. He concluded by noting that this job had ruined him for any future consulting work because he had found that consultants almost never contribute anything. We use consultants largely, he added, for eyewash. What we needed from them was help in framing questions but what they wanted was to be operators. As an example, he cited Vietnam. Here he declared our consultants were always suggesting gimmicks, ignoring the fact that our policy couldn't really make drastic turns, because each change had to be negotiated and explained to the U.S. bureaucracy, the South Vietnamese, the North Vietnamese, etc.

Mr. Thomson agreed wholeheartedly and noted that the same factors which prevented drastic changes in policy in Vietnam also prevented such changes in the Middle East. Dr. Kissinger, after noting that our Middle Eastern diplomacy is probably not going to go down in history as brilliant, asked Thomson what he thought we should do there. Mr. Thomson declared that he thought most of the chances for a solution have slipped away. The key to a solution he stated lay in the Soviets and the Egyptians decoupling themselves from Syria. The Israelis would simply not negotiate away from the Golan Heights, he believed. Dr. Kissinger agreed that a moderate Syrian government right now was a nightmare. Assuming Syria could be decoupled, what, he asked, would Thomson then suggest? Mr. Thomson responded that he would then suggest going ahead with the basic scheme worked out in the four-power talks earlier. The key problem in this, he pointed out, was whether or not Israel would be willing to go back to this plan. Dr. Kissinger stated that Israel would have to be forced back. Mr. Thomson suggested that this might not be the case, that he believed they would not want to go back but could be persuaded. Dr. Kissinger asked how. Mr. Thomson said with the promise of arms, aid, and Western guarantees. In light of recent Western performance regarding guarantees, Dr. Kissinger asked, wouldn't this be insane? Mr. Thomson noted that what Israel wants is protection against guerrilla attacks and that Israel might accept some kind of arms package coupled with an agreement to withdraw. Dr. Kissinger then noted this did not seem likely since they are already getting arms without withdrawing. Mr. Thomson observed that it appeared that both sides were now simply putting on a show. Dr. Kissinger said that this might be so. He then expressed his belief that by summer time for an agreement will have run out. [At this point the meeting broke up and Mr. Thomson departed.]

52. Paper Prepared by Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff[1]

Washington, December 17, 1970.

Diego Garcia: The initial reaction around the Indian Ocean littoral to the announcement of our intention to set up a small communications facility on Diego Garcia has been fairly much as expected.[2] Most of the governments did not seem to be particularly disturbed, at least at first blush, although there did seem to be considerable suspicion that we would be developing more than an austere facility. The most negative reaction not unexpectedly came from Somalia which was "strongly opposed." The Indians, in what appeared to be a prepared statement, also registered a negative response insisting that Diego Garcia was a "base" and deploring the whole operation.

We have not yet heard the last word on Diego Garcia since there is likely to be a second, and in some cases more important, wave of reaction. When the final results are all in we should have an interesting test of sentiment around the Indian Ocean against which to judge possible naval moves we might wish to make in the future.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104. Secret. A typed notation reads "For HAK." This paper was prepared for, but not included in, the President's December 18 briefing. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 29, President's Daily Briefing Files, December 16–31, 1970)

[2] On December 15, the Department of State released information that the United States would begin construction of an austere naval communications facility on the Diego Garcia atoll in the Chagos Archipelago, British Indian Ocean Territory, in March 1971. This was in concurrence with a 1966 bilateral agreement. Both British and American flags would fly over the facility and the United Kingdom would assist in its manning. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, Unfiled Material, Country "Cy–E" 1953–1977, Diego Garcia) Circular telegram 202722, December 14, contained a copy of the public announcement and a long listing of anticipated questions and approved answers. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 727, Country Files, Europe, United Kingdom, Vol. IV) Attached but not printed is a December 16 letter from Eliot to Kissinger transmitting a summary of reactions to the announcement. Australia, Iran, and Malawi had favorable reactions; India and Somalia had unfavorable reactions; Indonesia, Kenya, South Africa, the Malagasy Republic, and New Zealand were noncommittal; and U.S. notifications to Bahrain, Ceylon, the Maldives, and the Seychelles were delayed. No reaction had yet been received from Moscow.

53. Editorial Note

On December 17, 1970, during British Prime Minister Edward Heath's visit to Washington, December 17–18, British Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home told Secretary of State Rogers that, since Britain could not itself put a fleet into the Indian Ocean, it seemed "only sensible" to maintain South Africa's capability. If the United States "could do more in Indian Ocean," however, "this would reduce U.K. dependence on South Africa." (Telegram 206630 to London, December 20; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 UK) In a January 11 telephone conversation, Under Secretary of State John Irwin told Kissinger of his concern that the British would "try to tie an interest in the Indian Ocean into effect our approving their actions in South Africa." President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger stated that the United States intended to maintain the arms embargo on South Africa. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, Kissinger Telephone Conversations, Box 8, Chronological File)

At the Commonwealth Conference in Singapore, January 14–22, 1971, Heath presented the British policy of arms sales to South Africa "as necessary to counter the growing Soviet threat in the Indian Ocean and around the Cape." National Security Council staff member Helmut Sonnenfeldt felt this reflected the further assessment that "South Africa can be counted on as a reliable partner in the future and the black Africans (except possibly Nigeria) cannot." The policy provoked significant opposition throughout the Commonwealth, particularly in Parliament, in members of Heath's government (including Douglas-Home and Lord Carrington), and in Africa. Indeed, India argued that the Indian Ocean should be free of great powers altogether. Sonnenfeldt noted that U.S. interests would suffer from the potential "anti-western" reaction and that the United States needed to make clear its support of the arms embargo against South Africa. If it did not make its support clear, Sonnenfeldt predicted, U.S. policies toward the Indian Ocean would become "enmeshed in Commonwealth politics" and "generate more controversy here at home." By contrast, he noted, the Soviets portrayed their presence in the Indian Ocean as entirely peaceful. (Memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, January 21; ibid., NSC Files, Box 728, Country Files, Europe, United Kingdom, Vol. V)

54. National Security Study Memorandum 110[1]

Washington, December 22, 1970.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Follow-on Study of Strategy Toward the Indian Ocean

As a follow-on to the study developed in response to NSSM 104,[2] the President has directed that a further study be prepared outlining alternative U.S. strategies through 1975 for dealing with the increase in Soviet activities in the Indian Ocean area. Whereas the NSSM 104 study concentrated on Soviet naval threats and friendly naval force and basing alternatives, this study is to provide the broader framework necessary for judging a naval response in the context of other possible strategies.

This study should provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the political significance in the Indian Ocean context of the Soviet naval presence? In each case, attention should be given to the effect of the passage of time.

—What states in the area are more susceptible and less susceptible to this sort of Soviet influence?

—In what specific ways in these states could the Soviet Union be expected to enhance its influence by increasing its naval activity?

—In what parts of the area could local tensions develop to the point of (1) tempting Soviet exploitation and (2) producing local invitation for Soviet involvement?

—In what specific ways in these states could an increase in Soviet naval presence be expected to work to Soviet disadvantage?

—In these states, how does Soviet naval activity compare in effectiveness with military aid, economic assistance, political support and local Communist parties as devices for increasing Soviet influence?

—Does Soviet political influence increase commensurately with increases in Soviet naval activity?

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–178, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 110. Secret. A copy was sent to Moorer. Submitted to Kissinger under a December 18 covering memorandum from Kennedy, Saunders, Smith, and Sonnenfeldt. (Ibid.)

[2] See Document 46.

2. What is the military and political significance of the Soviet naval deployments in the Indian Ocean viewed in the context of global Soviet naval strategy and overseas deployments elsewhere?

—What are the principal views of the relationship between Soviet naval and political strategy?

—Against the background of the global context, what seem to be Soviet objectives in the Indian Ocean?

—In what Indian Ocean states is the Soviet interest greatest and least?

3. What is the political significance of Chinese Communist activities, e.g. ICBM testing and political relations with littoral states?

4. What are the U.S. options in setting a strategy toward this area? The NSSM 104 study outlined options for a naval response. The purpose of this study would be to develop a political framework for the naval response.

—In which states are U.S. and allied interests greatest and least?

—What activities other than naval are potentially useful devices in countering Soviet influence? How do these differ in various littoral states or regions?

—In what ways can Soviet activities be made more costly politically for the Soviets?

—What U.S. responses are most likely to encourage or discourage response by allied governments?

—What U.S.-allied responses are more and less likely to elicit hostile and friendly responses from the indigenous nations?

—What is the appropriate political posture for the U.S. to take with the states in the area in connection with each strategy option?

5. If there were to be a U.S. and allied naval response to the Soviet buildup, which is the more appropriate timing for the U.S. and allied response? Is it better to move quickly to try to pre-empt further Soviet buildup or to keep pace with the Soviet buildup?

This study should be prepared by an NSC Ad Hoc Group to be chaired by a representative of the Secretary of State. It should be submitted by January 22, 1971.[2]

Henry A. Kissinger

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[2] The paper was submitted to Kissinger on February 8. See Document 57 and footnote 4 thereto.

55. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union[1]

Washington, March 27, 1971, 0135Z.

51640. Subject: Indian Ocean: Secretary–Dobrynin Conversation, March 26. Following is uncleared, FYI, Noforn, subject to revision upon review. During discussion with Secretary prior to his return to Moscow to attend 24th Party Congress,[2] Dobrynin raised question of Indian Ocean. He did so by referring to recent international conference on this subject held at Georgetown University in Washington.[3] Dobrynin commented that Soviets had at times been accused of sinister motives in this area. Dobrynin said he wished to ask informally whether USG might be interested in idea of a pronouncement or declaration to the effect that this area should be kept free of major-power competition. He asked whether U.S. would have any strong opposition to declaring that Indian Ocean remain "free of military bases and fleet concentration." He noted that Indians, Ceylonese and some others had expressed interest in such a possibility.[4] Dobrynin emphasized that he was advancing these queries informally but was interested in our reaction since he would be seeing Gromyko during Party Congress which convenes on March 30. Secretary said he had no comment at this time.

Rogers

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US. Confidential; Limdis. Drafted on March 26 by Adolph Dubs (EUR/SOV) and approved by Richard T. Davis (EUR). It was repeated to Canberra, Colombo, Djakarta, London, and New Delhi.

[2] Documentation on Dobrynin's conversation with Rogers is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

[3] Indian Ocean Conference, Center for Strategic and International Studies, held in Washington, March 18–19. Several of the papers presented at this conference are summarized in an April 14 memorandum from Kennedy to Kissinger. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 304, National Security Council, Feb–Aug 1971)

[4] Presumably a reference to Bandaranaike's January 21 speech before the Commonwealth Conference. (Telegram 170 from Colombo, January 22; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 CEYLON)

56. Memorandum From the Chief of Naval Operations (Zumwalt) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Moorer)[1]

OP–61/maw Ser 00481P61 Washington, April 17, 1971.

SUBJ

US naval presence in the Indian Ocean (U)

1. (C) Recently the US Ambassador to Ceylon, Robert Strausz-Hupe called on me, and the Ambassador to the Malagasy Republic, Anthony D. Marshall visited Under Secretary of the Navy Warner.[2] Each of the two ambassadors spoke at length concerning US presence and the desirability of US ship visits to Indian Ocean ports. I believe you may find the essential points of their discussions useful in your meeting on 20 April with the Senior Review Group concerning NSSM 110.[3]

2. (S) Ambassador Strausz-Hupe believes the USSR is augmenting its naval strength in the Indian Ocean to gain greater influence in the region. The Soviet Navy is a highly visible force in the Indian Ocean and has sought this visibility by the deployment of modern, major combatants. By way of contrast, the US Navy is not very visible and not impressive, i.e., three old ships assigned to the Middle East Force. The Ambassador favors an increased presence of impressive naval forces similar to the nuclear task force cruise of 1964. He believes a show of US naval strength in the Indian Ocean is necessary to counter the Soviet presence.

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean). Secret.

[2] Under Secretary of the Navy Richard E. Warner. Saunders detailed Strausz-Hupé's views on the Indian Ocean in an October 15 memorandum to Kissinger. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 592, Country Files, Middle East, Ceylon, Vol. I) On July 8, 1970, the Ambassador had written to David Schneider, Country Director for Ceylon, outlining great power maneuverings in the Indian Ocean and possible U.S. policies. (Ibid.)

[3] The meeting took place on April 22. See Document 58. A memorandum prepared for Moorer's use at the meeting stated that "certain forces are at work within the NSC Staff that could lead to serious restrictions on the use of the sea—in the theological format of arms control." The paper noted that only Defense and JCS were opposed to the initiation of an arms control study, and that a "hard and persuasive line will be necessary to prevent the preparation of this potentially damaging study." (Memorandum from R.C. Robinson to Moorer, April 20; National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean))

3. (S) Ambassador Marshall believes that increased US naval presence now in the Indian Ocean could obviate the need for greater military forces at some future time. He favors increased ship visits, particularly of modern ships and submarines, including nuclear propelled vessels. He further believes that we should assign a resident naval attaché to the Malagasy Republic, and recommends a US initiative for closer liaison with the Government of France in Indian Ocean matters and greater US utilization of the French Navy base at Diego Suarez.

4. (C) Unfortunately, these views are not universally held by Department of State officials.

E. R. Zumwalt

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57. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff[1]

Washington, undated.

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY AND ISSUES PAPER

NSSM 110—Indian Ocean Follow-On Study

Introduction

NSSM 110[2] directed an Ad Hoc Group chaired by State to prepare a follow-on study filling in the broad political context necessary for judgment on possible U.S. responses (including the naval options presented in the NSSM 104 Study)[3] to increased Soviet naval activities in

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71. Secret. All brackets are in the original. On April 21, Smith complained to Kissinger that the views of his staff were left out of this final summary, which failed to advance knowledge on Indian Ocean problems. Moreover, it set up a series of false dichotomies the result of which created a naval response without any real political or economic component and without any assessment of the competitive forces at work within the region itself. Smith concluded, "there is no analysis of the details of the threat, the local situation, and the impact of free world programs on which to base any firm conclusions on Soviet interests, our's, or the U.K.'s or anyone else's and how they impact on the littoral countries." (Ibid., Box H–054, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting, Indian Ocean (NSSM 110) 4/24/71)

[2] Document 54.

[3] See Document 46.

the Indian Ocean. The NSSM 110 Study[4] assesses Soviet objectives and the political implications of Soviet naval activity, Chinese involvement, and U.S. interests and the threats to them. *On the basis of this material, the Study offers two basic options: (1) a decision to explore the feasibility of a U.S. arms limitation initiative for the region, or (2) a decision to move ahead now with some form of naval response to Soviet activities.*

This paper sets forth the Study's principal findings; our views are indicated within brackets.

The Criteria For Choice of a U.S. Indian Ocean Posture

[The basic problem with this Study, as with its predecessor, is the difficulty of identifying useful criteria for choosing between different naval options, or between naval and other means to enhance our interests. Both Studies argue for a low to moderate level of Soviet threat and U.S. interest, stressing that since the region is not of central strategic concern to either power, the key variable is local stability. The littoral's fragmented character and the lack of unifying strategic issues complicate our decision. The key criteria are discussed below.]

1. Soviet Objectives in the Indian Ocean

[The key issue here is: Should we view increased Soviet naval activities in the region as an integral part of a global naval challenge?]

The Study notes a variety of motives for Soviet naval actions:

—The desire to enhance their space, oceanographic, intelligence, and ASW capabilities (the latter probably directed against possible U.S. deployment of SSBN's to the area).

—The U.K.'s continuing disengagement from the region with the prospect of uncertainty and possible instability providing opportunities for political gains at low risk.

—The desire to underline Soviet achievement of parity with the U.S. beyond the strategic nuclear sphere, thereby offsetting previous U.S. supremacy in worldwide conventional capability and bolstering Soviet diplomatic efforts in littoral states.

[—Another factor, not discussed in the Study, is that Soviet Indian Ocean policy may reflect internal debate (including inter-Service rivalry) within the Soviet decision-making group.]

On balance, the Study argues that the Indian Ocean will rank ahead of Africa and Latin America, but well behind the countries on their periphery and the Middle East in the Soviet order of priorities over the

[4] Attached but not printed is the February 1 study entitled, "Strategy Toward the Indian Ocean 1971–1975: Response to NSSM 110." It was submitted to members of the Senior Review Group on February 8. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–178, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 110)

next five years. Soviet policy will be one of "cautious opportunism," but the "political use of naval forces" will increase. The Study doubts that the Soviets are seriously concerned that the Indian Ocean might become the theatre of U.S.-Soviet or Sino-Soviet hostilities.

The analysis explicitly recognizes the parallel with Soviet naval policy in the Mediterranean. However, it notes that the USSR may confront local resistance in attempting to translate naval presence into the degree of influence it has achieved with the radical Arabs.

In sum, the Study reflects consensus that Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean "represents a departure from the traditional missions of the Soviet navy" and that this effort to project influence "is having an impact in countries where it was unimportant a few years ago." Despite uncertainties in evaluating Soviet activities in the Indian Ocean, there is consensus that some form of Western (including U.S.) naval presence or, alternatively, some type of arms limitation arrangement, is required.

2. Chinese Involvement

The Study takes the position that PRC interests in the Indian Ocean littoral have no common denominator, apart from a general desire to counter U.S. and Soviet influence. Chinese concern over Soviet naval deployments reflects sensitivity to Soviet influence along its southern border rather than a sense of direct military threat.

Should the Chinese decide to undertake missile testing in the Indian Ocean, they would almost certainly seek support and monitoring facilities, perhaps in such littoral states as Tanzania and Pakistan.

[In the long run, the Chinese may perceive a need for a presence of their own as a badge of great power status, particularly if the U.S. and the USSR have a permanent presence in the area.]

3. U.S. Interests and the Threat to Them

The NSSM 110 analysis follows closely the predecessor Study, arguing that our interests—oil flows and investment, intelligence and communications assets, political influence, security commitments, and access and transit—are of moderate importance and face a moderate level of threat. The likelihood of a direct Soviet physical threat to U.S. interests is heavily discounted, though indirect Soviet political leverage flowing from naval and other programs could support local pressures against U.S. interests. On balance, *the Study takes the view that the primary threat to our interests will come from the states of the area, and that the root of the problem is the low level of economic development and political stability in much of the region.*

[The judgment that our interests in the region face a relatively low level of threat rests on the premise that we share more common interests and commitments with the littoral states than do China and the

USSR. The corollary is that "our best hedge against an excess of Soviet influence in the area is the good sense and rather abrasive nationalism" of the littoral states.]

[It can, of course, be argued that the Soviet-radical Arab pattern of alignment *could* be duplicated elsewhere along the littoral as the fruit of local tensions in such areas as the Persian Gulf, the Horn of Africa, or Southern Africa. This possibility buttresses the view that we should not adopt a unilateral self-denying ordinance. On the other hand, highly visible deployments of U.S. power along the littoral would not necessarily enhance local stability, and could actually spawn future alignments between the USSR and local nationalism. *Hence, we need to steer a middle course which gives the Soviets neither a completely free ride nor the high moral ground of siding with littoral state sensitivities to gunboat diplomacy.*]

4. The British Factor

[The key issue is: *What is the nature of the linkage between U.S. and U.K. policy in the region?* The NSSM 110 Study does not address this question, apart from noting that even implied support for the U.K. decision to supply arms to South Africa "will be costly to us in terms of our relations with the Afro-Asian world." This is a comparatively minor aspect of the problem: there is no question of our publicly opposing the arms deal, nor are we likely to endorse it. The Study recognizes this since none of the options calls for any change in our stance vis-à-vis South Africa or the U.K. arms sales.]

[Far more important is the fact that our Indian Ocean reviews were generated, in substantial measure, by the talks between Heath and the President last October.[5] Both NSSM's assumed a linkage of some sort between what we do and what the British do. In general, the naval options offered by the NSSM 104 Study posited increasing levels of U.S.–U.K. cooperation and of U.K. naval effort as the U.S. increased its naval deployments and activities.]

[This may not be an especially useful way to approach the problem. The British have not suggested that their continued presence in the area is contingent upon any particular level of U.S. effort, nor that they would increase their presence if we increased ours. Their stance is based on two assumptions:

—That a continued U.K. presence, even if only symbolic or intermittent, could enhance local stability and British interests in such areas as Singapore–Malaysia and the Persian Gulf.

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[5] See Document 41.

—That Britain's (and Europe's) substantial interests should not go unrepresented in a region of growing interest to the Soviets.

[In addition, East of Suez deployments coincide with factors of sentiment and continuity almost irresistible to a Tory Government, despite the constant reorientation toward Europe.]

[On the other hand, *the British are most unlikely to increase their Indian Ocean presence, regardless of our posture.* They are currently in the process of reducing considerably the nearly 40,000 men and 16 combatant ships they support East of Suez. Rather, it is a matter of holding on at reduced levels instead of withdrawing virtually everything as envisaged by Labor.]

[*What the British appear to seek is a general U.S. endorsement for their view of the strategic problem and for the relevance of U.K. efforts there.* Such an endorsement, even if confined to low-key recognition of increased Soviet activities and to modest collaborative projects as in BIOT, would lend credibility to a U.K. posture rooted historically in the colonial era. Given the broad congruence of U.S. and U.K. interests in the region—apart from the South African arms deal—there are advantages in not adopting a disinterested posture which might tend to accelerate an eventual total U.K. withdrawal.]

5. The Political Impact of a Naval Presence

NSSM 110 asked for analysis of the *political* implications of Soviet naval activity in the area, and of the relevance of a U.S. *naval* response. The Study argues that "the Soviet naval threat in the Indian Ocean can only be dealt with on a global basis" in the context of worldwide Soviet naval policy, but it also identifies certain political ramifications of the naval effort in littoral states:

—promotion of an image as a world maritime power with expanding strategic interests and capabilities;
—establishment of naval aid and training relationships;
—symbolic sympathy and support for littoral regimes and movements;
—conditioning of littoral states to Soviet probing and presence in the region.

While the impact of this effort varies considerably in different littoral states and could "arouse latent fears of a new Soviet imperialism," it is ultimately aimed at establishing a position to deter or neutralize Western activities and influence.

The Study judges, however, that other Soviet actions—arms supply, training, economic aid, political moves—have a greater impact on littoral states than Soviet naval activity which is essentially supplemental. Moreover, it argues that U.S. naval presence is a relatively minor tool in enhancing U.S. influence in the region.

But the Study nonetheless concludes that given the Soviet naval initiative, there is a political, though not a military, requirement for some Western presence.

The argument that naval presence translates into political influence is elusive. It seems to boil down to a judgment that gunboat diplomacy is *not* outmoded in Afro-Asia, even where actual on-scene capabilities and the willingness to use them are minimal. Perhaps the case was best summarized in Ambassador Strausz-Hupé's recent observation that Western interests will not be best served "if littoral states believe they can count on our absence."

The Options

The Study explicitly states that, given the moderate level of U.S. interest and Soviet threat, there is little requirement for a significant increase in U.S. presence and programs in the area. Consequently, "there is little absolute difference" between the options it offers. Rather, the issue boils down to a tactical judgment on how best to achieve our objectives of:

—avoiding U.S.–Soviet military rivalry in the area;
—inhibiting the growth of Communist influence;
—keeping open the option to exert military influence if needed; and,
—maintaining access and good relations in this core region of developing Afro-Asia.

[As indicated above, an additional objective of U.S. policy should be to respond to our British friends in such a way as to enhance the credibility of their role, thereby maximizing its size and duration, while profiting from British assets and experience through periodic consultations and intelligence exchanges. Hence, the options should also be costed in terms of their impact, if any, on British policy.]

The Study presents a choice between a strategy emphasizing limitation of super-power competition and a strategy including an element of naval response to Soviet activities. *Hence, the primary issue is whether or not to explore further the arms control option—inside the government, with our allies, and with important regional powers.*

1. The Arms Control Option

This option is not spelled out in detail, and would require considerably more interagency study before any decisions were made. The issue here, therefore, is whether this extra effort is worthwhile. It could range from a general unilateral statement of understanding for the concerns of littoral states that the Indian Ocean not become an arena of U.S.-Soviet rivalry to quite detailed scenarios for negotiating limitations on great power military presence in the area.

The Study tentatively judges the former approach more attractive, at least as a first step—we would simply be aligning our posture with that of important regional states and expressing our preparedness to limit our forces *if the USSR did likewise.* This would place the ball in the Soviet court, demonstrate our good intentions, and leave open our ultimate stance until the Soviets responded. [However, this approach could be dangerous: we would refrain from vague but virtuous initiatives until we know our position on specific potential Soviet counter proposals.]

The Study recognizes the many issues that formulation of a detailed arms control proposal would pose for us: (1) the problem of denuclearization and the possibility that we might want to deploy SSBN's in the area—this apparently poses no immediate strategic problem, but we might want to keep the option open; (2) the importance of Diego Garcia and what, if anything, we would accept as a quid pro quo for giving it up; (3) the feasibility of securing Chinese adherence, the impact of probable Chinese non-participation, and the need for an escape mechanism if they refuse to participate; and (4) our continuing interest in freedom of naval access and transit worldwide.

However, the argument is that the potential attractiveness of an arms control approach warrants a full in-house study of possible proposals. *Such a study now provides us the best opportunity we are likely to have to confirm or refute the apparent attractiveness of the arms control option.* If we subsequently decided to go ahead with a proposal, it could lessen U.S. strategic involvement and U.S.-Soviet rivalry in the region, it would align our policy with important regional states (i.e., India), and it could heighten regional resistance to Soviet activity. If the Soviets responded negatively, it would place the onus for subsequent naval rivalry on them. *In addition, such an approach would be a unique and striking application of the Nixon Doctrine to the Afro-Asian world.* [Finally, an agreement limiting U.S. and Soviet deployments would permit us to pursue our interests through political means, backing up the residual role of Britain and the potentially growing roles of Australia, Japan, and friendly littoral states.]

The major counter-argument is that such a proposal could hand the Soviets and their friends a propaganda field-day if our proposal was so hedged with qualifiers as to appear self-serving. They, for example, could focus on denuclearization or our Diego Garcia facility. Furthermore, an Indian Ocean agreement could generate pressures for similar agreements elsewhere. We have an interest, as the world's largest naval power, in maintaining the traditional freedom of the seas. An agreement could restrict our role in an unstable zone, thereby encouraging insurgents and discouraging allied and friendly states. [This option could also create an undesirable impression of "bargaining from weakness" in a region of modest but growing Soviet activity.]

[The unknown factor is whether it is possible to design an arms limitation proposal which cannot be turned against us. A related question is whether we should view a proposal as a *tactical gambit* to place the Soviets in a poor light, or as a *serious* effort to exclude U.S.-Soviet naval rivalry from the region.]

[The question of timing and tactics was recently highlighted by an approach from Ambassador Dobrynin to Secretary Rogers (a cable[6] on this approach is in your book). Referring to discussion at the recent Georgetown Indian Ocean Conference,[7] Dobrynin asked "informally" whether we would be interested in a declaration that this area be kept free of major power competition, including "military bases and fleet concentration." He sought our views—Secretary Rogers was noncommittal—on the grounds that he would be seeing Gromyko during the Soviet party congress starting March 30. *Should the Soviets go public with the arms limitation idea, surfaced by several participants at the Georgetown Conference, we would not only lose the initiative but would face the need to respond.* This may constitute a compelling reason to order an in-house study now.]

[There is also a bureaucratic problem. The Ad Hoc Group's efforts surfaced sharp disagreement between representatives of State (pro) and OSD/JCS (con) over whether such an option should even be presented to the SRG, much less explored in depth. If we do want to examine further the possibilities of the arms limitation route, we will need to give study guidelines designed to elicit the full range of agency views. Such a study should evaluate alternative proposals in terms of their impact on (1) U.S. global and regional interests, and (2) allied and friendly policy, particularly those of the U.K. and Japan (the NSSM 110 Study assumes that U.K. forces would not be restricted); and it should assess the salability of various proposals and tactical approaches.]

2. Naval Options

If it is decided not to explore the arms limitation route, we need to consider possible naval responses. The Study concludes that *any* of Options A through C in the NSSM 104 Study would be appropriate, ranging from continuation of present policy to modest increases in U.S. visibility through qualitative upgrading of MIDEASTFOR, permanent deployment of 2 destroyers in the eastern Indian Ocean, and increased joint U.S.–U.K.–Australian operations. Option D—a higher option calling for homeporting 4 destroyers at Singapore, extensive joint cruises and air surveillance, and improved support facilities—is judged inappropriate in view of the findings of the NSSM for the period up to 1975.

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[6] Document 55.

[7] See footnote 3, Document 55.

The advantages of one of the relatively low-visibility naval options over the arms limitation approach would be:

—It would underline our willingness to help our friends resist Soviet encroachments or Soviet-sponsored internal pressures, and demonstrate to all concerned that they cannot count on our absence.
—It would give us some capability to meet local contingencies (evacuation of nationals, show of force, etc.).
—It would indicate to the Soviets that they face another arena of politico-military competition if they continue to up the ante.

On the other hand, such a course could complicate our relations with some littoral countries which would accuse us of bringing the cold war to the Indian Ocean, and it could require higher levels of economic and military assistance to regional states. Moreover, any increase in U.S. naval activity could lead to spiralling naval competition in an area of limited U.S. interest. [Finally, we would need to weigh likely Congressional and public reaction to any new military undertakings overseas, regardless of the rationale.]

Apart from the judgment that Option D (of the NSSM 104 Study) is too "high" to be consistent with our interests and the threat to them, the Study does not evaluate the naval options offered by the earlier Study. The NSSM 104 Study assessed Options A through D in terms of:

—the consistency of each with friendly plans for the area, especially those of the U.K.;
—the relative presence of U.S. and friendly forces compared with Soviet forces, and possible Soviet reactions;
—possible reactions from neutral countries;
—costs and naval force availability.

[In addition, the options should probably be assessed in terms of the local political impact of particular naval deployments, e.g., in the Persian Gulf.]

[A capsule evaluation of each Option is outlined below. For a fuller discussion, turn to the Analytical Summary of the NSSM 104 Study which is in your book.]

Option A. Maintain Current Presence

We would maintain our present activities and assets in the Indian Ocean area, while urging the U.K. to retain a presence at Singapore to strengthen the Five-Power arrangement, and to participate in the use of Diego Garcia.

This Option would not provoke adverse reaction from littoral states or from the USSR, and it requires no increase in U.S. involvement or costs. On the negative side, the absence of any concrete U.S. steps in response to Soviet activities may deny the U.K. the justification it seeks for its residual role in the area, which could cause allied presence to fall below the current Soviet presence. Moreover, even if

the U.K. retained its presence, allied presence would fall below the anticipated Soviet presence over the period 1972–75.

Option B. Emphasize Allied Cooperation at Slightly Increased U.S. Force Levels

We would qualitatively upgrade MIDEASTFOR by replacing World War II vintage destroyers with modern ships, and we would conduct combined allied cruises, port visits, training exercises, and maritime surveillance efforts with U.K., Australian, and other friendly forces. We would make increased use of Singapore for logistic support and consider upgrading Diego Garcia's POL storage capacity.

This Option would not open us to the charge of initiating big power competition and would keep our presence at parity with our allies, while enabling allied presence to roughly match the Soviets in port visits. Costs and force diversions would be minor, and it would not justify Soviet escalation. Disadvantages are that we would still fall below the Soviets in terms of ships and ship days, and that the U.K. may be seeking more substantial evidence of our concern.

Option C. Moderate Increase in U.S. Presence and Operations with Allies

In addition to the above, we would establish a permanent presence in the eastern Indian Ocean by operating two destroyers at Singapore, and we would increase the level of U.S.–U.K.–Australian group operations, conduct cruises of U.S. naval task units, and increase fleet visits.

This Option would enable U.S. and allied presence to remain on a par with the Soviets if they expand as anticipated, and it would provide tangible evidence of our concern, thereby encouraging the U.K. and Australia to maximize their efforts. On the negative side we would be stepping out in front of our allies and we could expect Soviet counter-escalation and strong neutralist reaction. In addition, this Option would divert destroyer and other forces from our fleet capability in the Western Pacific.

Option D. Begin Major U.S. Task Force Deployments, Upgrade Substantially Area Basing, and Increase Cooperation with Allies

In addition to the above, we would homeport four destroyers at Singapore, increase the duration and size of joint cruises, increase air surveillance operations utilizing both U-Tapao and Diego Garcia, upgrade Diego Garcia facilities, and consider construction of an aifield elsewhere in BIOT.

The pros and cons are essentially the same as for Option C except that it could cause more serious reactions from non-aligned littoral states and would entail somewhat higher costs.

Another naval option surfaced by the Study, but not by its predecessor NSSM 104, is the possibility of an *intermittent naval presence*

through a systematic program of visits by more impressive units than those in the 3-ship MIDEASTFOR. This option has some inherent merits not available in options calling for a given level of permanent U.S. presence:

(1) It frees us from the stigma attached to foreign military bases in the nationalist environment of most littoral states. However, Diego Garcia could offer some of this advantage since the political vulnerability of our base would be minimal.
(2) It would probably be cheaper than permanent basing arrangements.
(3) It would upgrade the size and quality of our ships in the area.
(4) Timely visits/exercises could make a greater impact than a permanent presence.

On the negative side, the irregularity of our presence would downgrade our assured capability (currently minimal outside the Persian Gulf); it could be seen as a sign of disinterest and might be equated with withdrawal; it would give us support problems and put our presence on the same footing as the Soviets'.

[Advocates of an intermittent presence would note that we get limited mileage from MIDEASTFOR's World War II vintage units, essentially a Persian Gulf force. No presence may be preferable to one so easily outclassed by modern Soviet ships, particularly if our interests do not seem to demand a permanent presence. In addition, a permanent force such as MIDEASTFOR could become a questionable asset in an area of potential instability.]

[Others would counter that even MIDEASTFOR pays dividends along the African and Arabian littoral as a familiar symbol of our interest and a form of contact with local peoples. On-scene (or over-the-horizon) naval capabilities are seen to provide inherent leverage, if only for preemptive purposes, in local affairs. Proponents of this view would argue that our naval presence should be designed in terms of concrete circumstances in key parts of the littoral—e.g., Bahrein or Singapore—not by an illusory need to match the Soviets ship-day for ship-day in the Ocean as a whole.]

[Since the Study does not make a case for the urgency of deciding on a naval option, there may be merit in deferring a long-range decision until we've explored the arms limitation idea, especially in light of the Soviet approach. *As a practical matter, if we are going to have a study of the arms control possibilities, we do not want to move in the interim to measures which clearly suggest a permanent, higher level of U.S. concern and activity.* Construction of new facilities (apart from Diego Garcia as planned) and negotiations for new base rights fall into this category.]

[By the same token, however, an interim decision for a relatively low level naval option—e.g., Option A or B or a program of cruises and visits—may be a useful holding device while an arms control study is underway.]

3. Non-Naval Elements of a U.S. Response

The NSSM requested a political framework for a naval response and asked what non-naval activities are potentially useful in countering Soviet influence. The Study notes that each Option would be accompanied by continued economic aid, but it rules out an approach based either solely on aid or solely on a strengthened military presence.

[In theory, it would be desirable to design alternative policy packages including naval, political, and economic aid elements, since naval policy itself is only a small part of both the Soviet and U.S. postures in the area. *In practice, a package approach for the whole region is possible only at the highest level of abstraction.* For example, if we go the arms control route (after studying it), we would support the views expressed by the non-aligned states at Lusaka and emphasize our desire to avoid superpower competition in the area. An appropriate political rationale for a modest naval option would stress our concern at Soviet activities and our inability to unilaterally refrain from naval activity.]

[The basic problem with designing policy packages for the Indian Ocean is that we tend, like other powers, to focus on its subregions rather than the area as a whole. Aid levels and bilateral political relations are set in conjunction with our priorities in East Africa, South Asia, or the Persian Gulf rather than in terms of Ocean-wide criteria. Naval policy is probably the only area where it makes conceptual sense to think in Indian Ocean terms, and it may not be helpful to attempt to squeeze all our programs and postures into what is essentially a naval strategic frame of reference.]

58. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting[1]

Washington, April 22, 1971, 3:42–4:05 p.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean (NSSM 110)

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—U. Alexis Johnson
Ronald I. Spiers
Christopher Van Hollen
Thomas P. Thornton

Defense—David Packard
G. Warren Nutter
Robert J. Pranger
Capt. Robert N. Congdon

CIA—Richard Helms
William Parmenter

JCS—Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
R/Adm. William St. George

OMB—James Schlesinger

ACDA—Philip J. Farley

NSC Staff—Helmut Sonnenfeldt
Col. Richard T. Kennedy
Harold H. Saunders
Dr. K. Wayne Smith
Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

A Working Group will be established to examine in detail:

1) the various types of U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean and what each would do; and

2) the various arms control options and what they would do, with all their shortcomings, and with the understanding that the JCS does not believe any such agreement would be acceptable.

Mr. Kissinger: This is a follow-on to the earlier meeting we had on this subject in which the British participated.[2] It involves primarily the question of a U.S. naval presence in the area or some form of arms limitation agreement. Before we get to that, how fruitful is it to talk about the Indian Ocean as one unit? There are so many different countries

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–112, Senior Review Group, SRG Minutes (Originals) 1971. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Saunders and Kennedy prepared an April 17 briefing memorandum for Kissinger that included talking papers. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 304, National Security Council, Feb–Aug 1971) An April 22 memorandum from Saunders and Hoskinson to Kissinger discussed Soviet and Chinese policies toward Ceylon within the wider context of access to the Indian Ocean. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–054, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meetings Indian Ocean (NSSM 110) 4/22/71) Nutter prepared a memorandum for the record of this meeting on April 26. (Ibid., RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean))

[2] See Document 50.

and interests involved that it might be misleading to talk about our "relatively slight" interest in the Indian Ocean. If we add up our interests in the littoral countries it might be a helluva lot more.

Mr. Johnson: I have understood that we were talking about the Ocean as such, not the littoral powers.

Mr. Kissinger: The British make the point, as have some of our Ambassadors, that the presence of the Navy has an impact on the political consciousness of the littoral, independent of its military purpose. Is that a valid statement? Is it true that we cannot quantify its value simply in terms of its naval activity?

Adm. Moorer: There is no question about it.

Mr. Kissinger: If we carry this syllogism to its extreme—if the political orientation of these countries is of major policy interest to us, and if it can be influenced by the Navy, Tom [Moorer][3] will be asking for three more carriers.

Mr. Spiers: It depends on what kind of naval presence you are talking about.

Mr. Packard: If we had the SST, we could be flying it into these countries with the same effect.

Mr. Kissinger: In terms of what criteria should we look at the question of the military presence in the Indian Ocean? How do we merge the two considerations?

Adm. Moorer: We want to maintain our freedom to go into the area if it should become necessary for military purposes. Also, it is very useful from a political point of view to demonstrate our presence from time to time. I have just come from the MIDEASTFOR meeting.[4] Although our MIDEASTFOR military force is small, there is no question of its political impact, with regard to Iran, for example. Also, it gives us some communications capability and the ability to move quickly for humanitarian or other reasons. In general, it demonstrates U.S. interest in the area. We are already being attacked on this question of freedom of the seas in the Law of the Sea discussions. I think the country's national security would be damaged if we deny ourselves access to the oceans in any way. The day could come when we might want to put Polaris submarines into the Indian Ocean. The U.S. is a maritime nation; anything that restricts its movements on the ocean is inimical to our interests.

Mr. Johnson: No one is suggesting that we do anything like that.

Mr. Kissinger: What is our attitude toward the British presence? Do we welcome it or are we indifferent to it?

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[3] Brackets are in the original.

[4] Apparently the CENTO Economic, Technological, and Scientific Cooperation Meeting held in Tehran March 9–10.

Adm. Moorer: We want them to stay as long as they can with as much as they can. They are limited by their resources.

Mr. Kissinger: Does anyone hold a contrary view?

Mr. Van Hollen: No.

Mr. Spiers: We have traditionally favored the British presence there.

Mr. Johnson: And we still favor it. Even with their pull-back East of Suez, they decided to maintain some presence in the Indian Ocean and we welcome it. It has symbolic importance if nothing else.

Mr. Kissinger: Are their activities related to ours or are they independent?

Adm. Moorer: They are definitely related. It is much easier for us to have the British there. It means, for example, that there is logistical support available. Also, we are going ahead with Diego Garcia which is part of BIOT. The basic characteristic of naval operations is their mobility—they do not stay at a fixed point. The British presence gives us greater access to ports, greater flexibility and consequently a quicker response.

Mr. Kissinger: The paper presents the choice between the arms control option and a naval presence.[5] However, almost all the various types of naval presence (except the highest option) seemed quite consistent with the arms control option. It is obvious that the Soviets don't believe that an increase in their strategic forces is inconsistent with SALT. Why would a U.S. naval presence in the area, pending an arms control agreement, be inconsistent?

Mr. Johnson: The paper does not say that.

Mr. Kissinger: It says there is a choice between them. Why couldn't we pursue both courses simultaneously? What do we mean by arms control? No ships?

Mr. Farley: There is range of possibilities: no ships in the area, the definition of the level of ships or weapons, nuclear free zone, limitation on bases, as Dobrynin indicated in his feeler to Secretary Rogers.[6] I think we should consider whether there is a possibility that the Soviets might agree to some restraints and that we might want to avoid prejudicing this possibility in any naval buildup we might undertake. Other than that consideration, I agree we could proceed in parallel.

Adm. Moorer: There is a big difference between arms control limitations on naval forces and on strategic missiles. You're talking about controlling the area in which our ships operate. You would be putting a voluntary limit on the flexibility of U.S. forces. I consider this the height of imprudence for a maritime nation.

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[5] Reference is to the NSSM 110 response; see Document 57.

[6] See Document 55.

Mr. Kissinger: Why would this put the Soviets at an advantage and us at a disadvantage?

Adm. Moorer: We abide by agreements and they don't.

Mr. Johnson: If it were estimated that, without some limitation agreement, the Soviets would seek to increase their presence in the Indian Ocean, would there be an advantage in exercising some restraint on the Soviet presence?

Adm. Moorer: The Soviets want to control both ends of the Suez Canal. They want to control the Persian Gulf and the Oman area. They will go ahead regardless of what we do.

Mr. Kissinger: Wouldn't some limitation agreement reduce their ability to put their forces in?

Adm. Moorer: No. They could come down the Suez in two or three days.

Mr. Johnson: (to Adm. Moorer) I understand that you don't think any restrictions would be effective. But for the sake of argument, if we *could* get some restrictions that were at least partially effective, would it be useful?

Adm. Moorer: You also have the question of the Chinese navy. They will be putting several submarines out of Hainan, and they may be testing missiles in the Indian Ocean in the future. The Japanese are also building up their navy to maintain their LOC with the Middle East.

Mr. Johnson: We are not concerned about the Chinese navy now. We consider the Japanese naval interest as complementary to our interest.

Adm. Moorer: But the Soviets might argue that they have been forced into the Indian Ocean by the Japanese presence.

Mr. Kissinger: The abstract options given in the paper are almost impossible to discuss. We haven't staffed out the details of a naval presence or of an arms limitation. I think it would be extremely helpful if we could get a working group to work out various models of an arms limitation agreement, with the full understanding that the JCS does not think any agreement would be acceptable. I think we should carefully work out what such an agreement would do, its shortcomings, its influence on military capabilities, questions of asymmetry, etc. Second, we should work out what we mean by the abstract options of a naval presence. I know we have done that to some extent in the response to NSSM 104[7] but it needs refining. Then we can put these two things side by side and get a definition of what we are trying to achieve with a naval presence. We can also consider what Soviet presence we should be reacting to and the best way to react.

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[7] See Document 46.

Adm. Moorer: We had a good program in this area when the Vietnam war started. I was in command of the 7th Fleet, and every quarter we moved some ships into the Indian Ocean. We visited India, West African ports—we were never out more than two or three weeks at a time so we didn't wear out our welcome. I think we should be doing the same thing now. We should upgrade MIDEASTFOR with newer, more modern ships. At the CENTO meeting, the CNO of the Iranian Navy told me that a Soviet naval force had visited Iran. Also, my Iranian counterpart was very concerned about Iraq and the Persian Gulf. I think periodic visits would be very useful, politically as well as militarily.

Mr. Kissinger: There is no doubt that in the absence of an arms control agreement we have to look very carefully at the Soviet naval presence and see how best to protect our interests. We have no quarrel with that. However, we do have the feeler from Dobrynin about some sort of limitation agreement, and they can force us to respond at any time by surfacing a formal proposal. Even if we reject the idea, we must have marshalled our arguments. If the Soviets are only two days from the Persian Gulf and our nearest base is X days away, we must certainly take this into consideration. We must decide what we are trying to limit. We can't keep Soviet naval forces from operating in the Indian Ocean if they want to. One thing that makes it easier, of course, is that, if they do come in in numbers larger than authorized in any agreement, the problem of evasion is more difficult with naval ships than with anything else. They are so much easier to find and identify. I have never thought of putting limits on naval deployments. When we look at it, we may find that no scheme would be worth the anguish. However, even if we should decide on some agreement to permit X number of naval visits, this would be unrelated to the question of modernizing MIDEASTFOR. We would probably want to do that in any event. I think we need to do two things: we need to look in detail at the various types of a U.S. naval presence and what each will do; we also need to examine the various arms control options and what they would do, with all their shortcomings. We could be forced into the latter consideration by the Soviets at any time.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have already done a lot of work on the naval options but we can refine it.

Mr. Spiers: We should also consider upgrading Diego Garcia and modernizing MIDEASTFOR.

Adm. Moorer: We can upgrade Diego Garcia easily. We recommended the present plan only to get started.

Mr. Kissinger: We will get the working group established and working on these two studies. We will discuss them in detail with the JCS, of course.

59. Memorandum From Richard Kennedy and Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)[1]

Washington, August 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

August 11 SRG Meeting on the Indian Ocean[2]

The Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the two Indian Ocean follow-on studies generated by the April 22 SRG.[3] You will recall that your memorandum of May 4 (at tab)[4] called for the preparation of:

—a paper describing a full range of possible arms control arrangements for the Indian Ocean and providing an overall assessment of this approach; and

—a proposal for U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean for FY 72.

These papers were submitted in June. They are tabbed in your book[5] together with our summary of them.

Your objectives in this meeting are:

1. to gain SRG approval of the interim naval presence paper;
2. to probe the need for some sort of posture (both public and diplomatic) on the Indian Ocean arms control question;
3. to examine critically whether we have any positive interest in pursuing further the arms control idea.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71. Secret. Sent for information. A handwritten note by Kissinger reads: "I agree Smith should participate." Above Kissinger's comment, Haig wrote "will be there" and his initials.

[2] The Senior Review Group did not meet on this topic until October 6. See Document 61.

[3] See Document 58. The first of these two studies was "Indian Ocean Arms Control" prepared by ACDA, undated. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71) The second was "Report on NSSM 110 Follow-On: Proposals for a U.S. Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean for FY 1972," prepared by an interagency working group chaired by the Department of Defense. Packard submitted it to Kissinger under a June 16 covering memorandum. (Ibid., Box H–178, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 110)

[4] Attached but not printed.

[5] Kissinger's briefing book for the meeting, with its tabs, is attached but not printed.

The Situation

The Soviets do not appear to be considering Indian Ocean arms control a matter of urgency or high priority. You recall that on March 26 Ambassador Dobrynin approached Secretary Rogers (see "Dobrynin Approach" in your book) concerning the U.S. attitude toward limitation of naval forces and bases in the region.[6]

Since then, Brezhnev has publicly criticized U.S. complaints about the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean, and said the USSR was willing to solve "on an equal basis" the problem of "the navies of great powers . . . cruising about for long periods far from their own shores." (See Brezhnev June 12 speech at tab in your book.)

However, as you know, Gromyko was not prepared to discuss Indian Ocean arms limitations when Ambassador Beam raised the subject in their meeting on July 28. (The reporting cable[7] is tabbed in your book.) Although the ball is now in their court, we should probably have a position in case they surface the issue again.

Recently, the arms control issue was given fresh impetus by the decision of Ceylon's Prime Minister Bandaranaike to campaign actively for the establishment of an "Indian Ocean Peace Zone" which would virtually bar all external military presence. (The proposal is tabbed and summarized in your book.) An important feature of the proposal is its apparent anti-Soviet flavor and its timing shortly after the Soviet-Indian treaty. State has circulated a paper (tabbed in your book) which discusses the Soviet-Indian treaty in the context of arms control options.[8] Briefly, it notes that an arms control arrangement could help reduce U.S.–USSR polarization in the region symbolized by the treaty, and could limit specific military advantages the Soviets may have gained from the treaty; at the same time, however, an agreement limiting external military presence could free India's hand to operate as a Soviet proxy or to undertake destabilizing activity in the area.

In any event, *since Prime Minister Bandaranaike will be meeting the President after having presented her proposal to the UNGA, we have an additional*

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[6] See Document 55.

[7] The tab is telegram 5355 from Moscow, July 28, in which Beam noted that while Gromyko was not prepared to discuss the issue, he did offer the "general observation" that the Soviets believed in the principle that "all open seas, including Indian and other oceans, should be free of military competition."

[8] The paper, entitled "Possible Soviet Gains in Indian Ocean Arms Control Talks," concluded that "The USSR is particularly afraid and would do its utmost to prevent deployment of ballistic missile submarines on regular patrol in the Indian Ocean. The US decision, announced last December, to begin building a communications facility on Diego Garcia has probably strengthened Soviet fears that SSBN deployment is ultimately in the cards. The Soviets would probably also like to keep the Indian Ocean free of the periodic or regular US carrier or amphibious task forces which have been advocated by US proponents of a 'blue water' strategy in support of the evolving Nixon Doctrine."

reason to develop a position on Indian Ocean arms control. Embassy Colombo takes the view that Ceylon's proposal does not offer a practical basis for resolving our Indian Ocean problems and is not at this time compatible with U.S. interests vis-à-vis the Soviets. Ambassador Strausz-Hupé states that it has been advanced partially to enhance the Prime Minister's non-aligned image at India's expense. He concludes that the proposal should be "decently but convincingly shelved," while "nursing" the Prime Minister's political objectives in taking the initiative.

Naval Presence Paper

The naval presence paper recommends a package of FY 72 proposals which closely resemble Option B of the initial NSSM 104 Study. (See pp. 7–8 of the NSSM 104 Summary[9] in your book.) Basically, it calls for:

—a *qualitative upgrading of* MIDEASTFOR by assigning a modern flagship and rotating modern destroyer types.
—scheduling 2 *task unit operations* during FY 72.
—modestly *increasing the frequency of port visits* stressing areas not normally visited by MIDEASTFOR.
—increased utilization of *Singapore for logistic support.*
—deployment of the existing *maritime air surveillance* detachment (3 planes) based at U-Tapao into the Indian Ocean as Vietnam requirements permit.

In our view, this is a modest package; the Navy's over-stretched assets have probably been a factor in keeping it that way. The paper judges—and we concur—that the proposals keep open our future options and should not trigger significant reaction, provided they are tactfully implemented with an eye on the evolving diplomatic situation. At the same time, they achieve our purpose of not letting the Soviet naval increases go completely without U.S. response.

We nevertheless think you may want to use the SRG meeting to re-emphasize the political dimension of our Indian Ocean review and to underscore the importance of not handing the Soviets or the littoral neutralists a propaganda field day.

On balance, our studies have concluded that we do not need a naval presence capable of matching the Soviets ship-for-ship, but one that signals, in the littoral state context, that our absence cannot be taken for granted. The political logic of this approach also requires that we not ignore littoral sensitivities in implementing our naval improvements. The *style* and *timing* of such measures as upgrading MIDEASTFOR should be considered in the light of possible developments in the littoral state context and in the arms control field.

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[9] Document 46.

You may want to underscore this point with JCS, by gently probing concerning the new flagship for MIDEASTFOR*—the most permanent and, perhaps, visible naval improvement recommended.* The point here is simply that there may be advantage in not delaying the replacement much longer, in view of the possibility of further diplomatic moves on arms limitation and in light of the U.K.'s impending withdrawal from the Gulf. The Navy, on the other hand, appears to be planning on replacing the present flagship towards the beginning of FY 1973. In our view it should be done as soon as possible.

Arms Control

You will recall that our initial purpose in looking at possible arms control arrangements was to discover if it might be possible to deal with the Soviet naval challenge by an agreement on mutual limitations. (You may want to refer to pp. 6–9 of the NSSM 110 Summary[10] in your book.) In addition, there was concern that the Soviets might launch an arms control "offensive," forcing us to respond or at least to think of possible responses. Although the Soviets appear to have put the issue on the back burner, we should probably not shelve the question without first:

—deciding whether there is any positive advantage in pursuing the matter further. *The issue here is whether the nature of the challenge and the level of our interests make a regional agreement more desirable than continued, low-level naval competition.*

—reaching some general consensus on what our posture should be in the event that the Soviets surface the subject again.

The ACDA/DOD Paper

There appears to be a consensus that Soviet interest in Indian Ocean arms control is focused primarily on limiting possible U.S. SSBN deployments to the area and, to a lesser extent, on limiting U.S. bases. Our interest, on the other hand, lies primarily in limiting Soviet surface deployments.

Turning first to the question of whether there is any advantage in pursuing arms limitation, the paper fails to come to grips with the issue of what, if anything, we should be prepared to sacrifice to get an agreement limiting Soviet naval presence, primarily because of sharp interagency disagreement over the merits of the exercise. Furthermore, assessment of the paper's seven options is hampered by confusion between the criteria of *negotiability* and *desirability.*

Briefly, the seven options (spelled out in pp. 18–22 of our summary) are:

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[10] Document 57.

Option I: An informal, generalized understanding to limit naval presence. (This is largely a procedural option which does not define our position on key substantive issues.)

Option II: An agreement limiting surface combatants and existing bases, but *not* strategic systems such as SSBNs.

Option III: An agreement limiting surface combatants, bases, *and* SSBNs.

Option IV: An agreement limiting surface combatants less severely than the above, limiting existing bases, but *not* SSBNs.

Option V: An agreement limiting surface combatants but *not* bases or SSBNs.

Option VI: An agreement to freeze existing deployment and establish no new bases for one year while negotiations continue. (Like Option I, this is a procedural variant which does not spell out our substantive position.)

Option VII: A multilateral undertaking by all outside powers to exclude all their forces from the Indian Ocean except for transits. (This is similar to the Ceylonese proposal.)

You will probably want to concentrate on Options II–V, and raise the following issues at the meeting:

Issue 1: SSBNs

The central strategic issue in the paper is our attitude toward the option of Indian Ocean SSBN deployments. The paper concludes that an agreement limiting such deployments would be "undesirable from a strategic standpoint." (See the discussion on pp. 13–14 of our summary.) The argument here stresses asymmetry:

—We would in effect be bargaining away a strategic option—targeting the USSR, or the USSR and China simultaneously without overflight of the other—in exchange for the strictly local political benefit of limiting naval competition. Since the USSR cannot offer us a strategic quid in the Indian Ocean context, we should not accept unilateral limits on our force deployments.

We have no quarrel with this judgment. There are *some, however, who would argue that SSBN deployments in the Indian Ocean are a purely hypothetical option which we should be prepared to sacrifice rather than take the blame for the failure of possible future talks with the Soviets.* You may want to probe DOD and/or JCS on the likelihood of our wanting to deploy SSBNs in the area, but we *doubt that anyone will argue in favor of placing our Indian Ocean interests ahead of our global strategic ones.*

If one concludes that SSBN limitations are undesirable, this rules out Options III and VII in the paper. However, *the argument for sacrificing SSBN deployments would become more cogent if we could get some*

sort of global or geographical limitation on Soviet strategic naval forces in return. You may want to raise this point at the meeting.

Issue 2: Bases

If one rules out an agreement limiting SSBNs, there is still the possibility of an agreement limiting only surface combatants and bases. (Options II and IV) The paper does not take a position on base limitations, though here again there is the problem of asymmetry since we and our allies have bases whereas the Soviets do not.

In our view, there are obvious disadvantages in an agreement requiring the dismantling of Western bases in exchange for a prohibition on future Soviet bases. However, supporters of this approach could, of course, argue that an arrangement limiting Soviet surface deployments to levels approaching our own would be a sufficiently attractive trade-off for base limitations. (Option II would do this, while Option IV which permits a higher level of Soviet deployments appears to be a non-starter.)[11]

Issue 3: Surface Combatants

Option V confines itself to surface combatants. Though obviously the most desirable in terms of U.S. interests—or least undesirable, the JCS view—there are serious doubts about its negotiability.

A U.S. proposal along these lines could lead us straight to an impasse with the Soviets who would focus on, and perhaps, publicize, the issues of central concern to them—prohibiting SSBN deployment and limiting bases.

There is thus a risk of political embarrassment in any U.S. initiative which may outweigh the potential advantages of an agreed limit on Soviet naval forces. Nevertheless, it might be worthwhile to ask ACDA to outline a negotiating scenario designed to protect our interests on bases and SSBNs while achieving some limit on naval presence. The scenario could be submitted for review before final judgment on whether we wish to take the matter any further.

Issue 4: A U.S. Position: What you Want from this Meeting

If one concludes from the above that the U.S. does not at present find advantage in actively pursuing arms limitation in the Indian Ocean, *there is still one avenue of further work that should be pursued:*

To protect our public and diplomatic posture, it would be useful to *direct the preparation of a U.S. position paper for possible use in handling the Ceylonese initiative or future Soviet proposals.* This would have the

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[11] A handwritten note by Kissinger reads: "Also what procedure. How do we do it?"

additional advantage of having on paper an agreed government view on the subject. Such a paper would outline:

—a U.S. counter to proposals either from the USSR or from the littoral states. This should be cast in terms of both diplomatic and public positions.
—arguments to defend our position and deflect attention from issues which could cast it in an unfavorable light.

This paper should be produced over the next few weeks[12] so that it will be available before Mrs. Bandaranaike's visit (October 19).

In developing such counters, you may want to consider whether there would be advantage in dealing with the Indian Ocean arms control idea by *broadening the discussion* to include:

—global naval force limitations;
—regional trade-offs in limiting strategic naval deployments near the U.S. and the USSR.

We recognize that this would take us far beyond the confines of our Indian Ocean review, and that we would not want to get into such a discussion without full consideration of the global strategic and force posture issues which are clearly involved. Hal Sonnenfeldt and Wayne Smith concur in the judgment that *we should not pursue either global naval force limits or regional trade-offs in the Indian Ocean context at this time.*

Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that we may be hard pressed to find credible and defensible counters should the pressures mount for inherently asymmetrical force cuts in the Indian Ocean or, for that matter, the Mediterranean. In time, events could develop in such a way that our interests would be best served by broadening the discussion—e.g., if the Soviet navy continues its rapid growth, or if we become especially anxious to limit Soviet strategic naval deployments near the U.S. Your talking points raise this issue, should you decide to pursue it at the meeting.

[Omitted here are a scenario for conducting the meeting and a list of the tabs of the briefing book.]

[12] See Document 60.

60. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff[1]

Washington, undated.

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY
of the
CEYLONESE PROPOSAL

On September 22, the Ceylonese handed us a 7-point aide-mémoire describing Madame Bandaranaike's proposal for an "Indian Ocean Peace Zone."[2] The proposal is generally similar to Option 7 of the arms control paper,[3] barring nearly all forms of external military presence, though the Ceylonese have hinted at considerable flexibility in their position.

1. *No armaments of any kind, defensive or offensive, may be installed on or in the sea, on the subjacent seabed, on land areas within the zone that are under the jurisdiction or control of any state.* The Ceylonese apparently intend this to apply only to *external* states. They have informed us that Diego Garcia would not be affected as long as it remains a communications facility, but it would presumably rule out Bahrain and certain allied facilities.

2. *Ships of all nations may traverse the area, but warships and ships carrying war-like equipment must remain in transit and cannot stop other than for emergency reasons of a technical, mechanical, or humanitarian nature.* This would prohibit all non-transit deployments in the area such as MIDEASTFOR, 5-Power operations, unless specifically excluded. While we would retain freedom to utilize the Indian Ocean as an LOC, this prohibition could set undesirable precedents for other ocean areas, and it would constitute a ban on projection of naval power as an instrument of foreign policy by external powers. It is unclear whether it would prohibit port calls.

3. *Submarines cannot rest on the seabed except for emergency reasons.* This is unclear in that SSBNs do not normally operate on the seabed. It is also unverifiable. If it ruled out SSBN patrols, or obliged us to conduct them clandestinely, it would obviously affect the central strategic question raised by our arms control study.

4. *No warships of any state may carry out maneuvers in the area.* This would rule out U.S. and allied exercises in the area and preclude surge operations of any kind. (No escape clause appears in the proposal

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71. Secret.

[2] Attached but not printed is telegram 2728 from Colombo, September 22.

[3] See Document 59.

which "ideally" would take precedence over all defense pacts now operative in the area.)

5. *No ships may carry out intelligence operations in the area.* This is probably not verifiable.

6. *No tests of weapons of any kind may be carried out in the area.* This would probably not affect the U.S. and appears to be directed primarily at China and, possibly, India.

7. *The regulative prescriptions will be supervised by an international authority.* While this is not spelled out, it could subject outside powers, including the U.S., to a continuing propaganda exercise, and would not necessarily reduce East-West polarization in the Indian Ocean context.

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61. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting[1]

Washington, October 6, 1971, 3:10–4:02 p.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—U. Alexis Johnson
Christopher Van Hollen
Ronald Spiers
Thomas Thornton

Defense—Armistead Selden
R/Adm. H.H. Anderson

JCS—Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
R/Adm. James H. Doyle

CIA—Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman
Bruce Clarke

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Material, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–112, Senior Review Group, SRG Minutes (Originals) 1971. Secret. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. The Assistant Secretary of Defense's office prepared a memorandum for the record on the SRG meeting; the memorandum and the Talking Paper prepared for Packard and Moorer are ibid., RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 125, Misc. File, SRG, VP Minutes.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed:

—to issue a NSSM calling for a study of the general question of naval arms control;[2]

—that we are not prepared to accept any deployment limitations on SSBNs in the Indian Ocean;

—to prepare a more specific paper on the question of naval deployment limitations for presentation to the President, and that nothing would be discussed with any government prior to a Presidential decision;

—State will prepare talking points for the President's meeting with Prime Minister Bandaranaike and obtain agency views on them;[3]

—our instructions to our UN Delegation on the Ceylonese proposal will be based on the President's conversation with Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Dr. Kissinger: We have two issues today: 1) the composition of the naval presence in the Indian Ocean and plans for upgrading, if any; 2) the various schemes for arms control in the Ocean, triggered by the Ceylonese initiative and Dobrynin's presentation to Secretary Rogers in March.[4] Is that a fair statement of the issues?

All agreed

Dr. Kissinger: Let's start with the naval side.

Adm. Moorer: We have been maintaining three ships in MIDEASTFOR: the *Valcour,* a communications and flag ship, and two WWII destroyers rotating around the Cape into the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. We have depended on the British at Bahrein for our ground support for these ships. The British are pulling out now, but we have negotiated for access to some of their installations there to support MIDEASTFOR. We have no problem in this regard.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the British turning over their facilities to Bahrein? Are we dealing with Bahrein for these facilities?

Adm. Moorer: We're getting part of them from Bahrein. In any event, our logistic support will continue. We also have in mind upgrading the force. We plan to have an LPH, an amphibious ship with helicopter capability and good aircraft communications capability.

Dr. Kissinger: Would you have troops abroad?

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[2] The NSSM was drafted only. See Document 63.

[3] Briefing material, including the Talking Points, are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 592, Country Files, Middle East, Ceylon, Vol. I.

[4] See Documents 60 and 55.

Adm. Moorer: No, but there is room for troops which would give us greater evacuation capacity if we should need it. We plan to put that in next summer.

Dr. Kissinger: Would this replace the *Valcour*?

Adm. Moorer: Yes. It's bigger, better looking and more modern. We would scrap the *Valcour.* We also plan to begin intermittent deployment of two new missile-carrying destroyers similar to the Berkeley class. We would hope for continuous deployment soon.

Dr. Kissinger: Are you still planning two Task Unit operations?

Adm. Moorer: Before Vietnam we used to send Task Forces from the Seventh Fleet into the Indian Ocean from the Persian Gulf. We had the Shah of Iran and other VIPs from the littoral states aboard at one time or another. When Vietnam drops off, we will resume the practice. That would involve a carrier, a tanker and four or five destroyers. We also run a maritime patrol from Udapai in Thailand. There is a good Australian base on the west coast with VLF communications facilities. We will visit there and at Singapore from time to time. In other words, we would have intermittent cruises into the Indian Ocean in addition to a permanent presence.

In connection with Diego Garcia, I wrote the first report in 1962 recommending that we go ahead with it, and it's taken ten years to get it. The Seabees are there now and we plan some austere communication facilities, an airfield, some fuel storage and an anchorage. We are doing it in three increments: the first was in FY 1971, the second is included in this year's military construction bill, and the third will come next year. We have had difficult fueling, since we have port problems in both India and Ceylon. Also, we will be conducting a CENTO exercise, MIDLAKE 14, with the British, Iranians, Turks and Pakistanis. This will involve one submarine and two destroyers in the Persian Gulf.

Dr. Kissinger: Does anyone have any comment on the program Tom (Moorer) has outlined?

Mr. Johnson: I think it's first class.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Moorer) How about the defense program for FY 73? Do you think it adequately responds to the differences you had noted earlier between us and the Soviets with regard to port calls, etc.

Adm. Moorer: Yes, but we're not trying to match ship-day for ship-day.

Mr. Selden: You will make selective port calls, though?

Adm. Moorer: Yes, for all forces.

Dr. Kissinger: Okay. Can we talk about arms control now. This was, of course, triggered by Dobrynin's discussion with the Secretary (Rogers), by the comments by various littoral states about a "sea of peace," and by the September 22 aide-mémoire from Ceylon with its

seven points. Mrs. Bandaranaike will be here on October 19. We have two issues: the question of arms control at sea in the Indian Ocean and that of naval arms control all together. There are obvious significant differences between naval and land arms control—restraints on deployment have different significance, the ability to reinforce is different. We have never formally addressed the question of arms control at sea, except as a part of some other issue such as SALT.

Mr. Farley: Only in combination with other forms of control.

Dr. Kissinger: If Phil (Farley) agrees, I think we should put out a NSSM to look at the question of naval arms control in a general way.

Adm. Moorer: Before we get into this I'd like to make two points. First, we're a maritime nation and any action that is taken to inhibit the freedom of the seas can only be detrimental to our interests. The Soviets have a geo-political problem which makes it more difficult for them to operate naval forces. We mustn't do anything to degrade our advantage here. Second is the problem of enforcing any arms control at sea or of isolating an area. No matter what you take out, they can always move back in in a few days. A sanitized area doesn't mean anything.

Dr. Kissinger: Those are exactly the sorts of questions we should address in a general consideration of arms control at sea. We must take into account Tom's (Moorer) point of the geo-political differences. Naval arms control would have a different impact on a maritime nation than on a land nation. Let's defer that issue to the general study. We understand that Tom (Moorer) is opposed to any limitation on naval arms in the Indian Ocean and probably anywhere. In the general study we can address the issue of naval constraints and the types of arms to be considered.

Have the Soviets re-raised the issue of limitations in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Johnson: No, the ball is in their court.

Dr. Kissinger: It didn't come up in the Beam–Gromyko conversation.[5]

Mr. Spiers: Gromyko said he'd look into it but we haven't heard back from him.

Dr. Kissinger: So this isn't an immediate issue unless we want to force it. I assume we are talking about limitations on outside forces, not on the littoral countries. Then we would have to consider the question of limitations on us in other places where we were not a littoral.

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[5] See footnote 7, Document 59.

We have an ACDA–DOD paper with seven options[6] and, to my surprise, the middle option seems to be the more realistic. The options are (reading from the paper): I—an informal, generalized understanding to avoid conflict and limit naval presence; II—a bilateral agreement limiting surface combatants and existing bases, but not SSBNs; III—a bilateral agreement limiting surface combatants bases, and SSBNs; IV—a bilateral agreement limiting surface combatants less strictly, and limiting bases, but not SSBNs; V—a bilateral agreement limiting surface combatants but not bases or SSBNs; VI—a bilateral agreement to freeze existing deployment levels and establish no new bases for one year while negotiations continue on detailed arms limitations; VII—a multilateral arrangement whereby all outside powers would exclude all their forces from the Indian Ocean except for direct and immediate transit.

Before we get into the options, what are we trying to accomplish by arms limitation in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Farley: A primary consideration was that we needed our ships elsewhere more. We have a situation of increasing Soviet activity, and we would find it painful to step up our activity to match. Therefore, we might find a means to hold the Soviets at their present level. Also, there is the question of our general posture toward the "sea of peace." There are lots of holes in this, but we might try to do something with the Soviets to avoid a build-up of competition in our naval postures. It would be better public relations.

Dr. Kissinger: Toward whom?

Mr. Farley: Toward the countries in the area, and also in the situation that might develop here if we appear uninterested.

Dr. Kissinger: Am I correct that the Soviets don't have a base on the Red Sea?

Adm. Moorer: They're all over the area. They're at Socotra, they refuel at Mauritius . . .

Dr. Kissinger: If there were a significant Soviet base in, say, Alexandria, any restrictions on their activities would be marginal. How long would it take to get from Alexandria assuming the Canal were open?

Adm. Moorer: One or two days.

Dr. Kissinger: What is our closest base?

Adm. Moorer: Camranh Bay, the Philippines, Western Australia. When the Canal is open the situation can be shifted overnight. That's why I don't think we should let the Ceylonese tail wag the dog.

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[6] See Document 59.

Mr. Johnson: There's another side, though. If we're not going to do any more in the area and the Soviets are planning to do more, is there any value in seeing if the Soviets will agree to limit their activities to our level.

Dr. Kissinger: Is there any Soviet base in the Indian Ocean?

Adm. Moorer: No, but they are always there.

Dr. Kissinger: If they have nothing based in the Ocean, what are we trying to get them to do? To agree not to have more than three ships there at a time?

Gen. Cushman: They keep two to four ships there all the time. Once they had eight.

Dr. Kissinger: Would we say they couldn't have more than four ships under the status quo option? What if they say 'okay, you can have the same'? What would that mean?

Adm. Moorer: It would knock out any Task Force operations.

Mr. Farley: It would depend on the formulation.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's say transits were permitted. Could they be staged so that there were always more ships there de facto?

Adm. Moorer: Yes. And, of course, they could change course at any time.

Dr. Kissinger: It would be interesting to know what each side could actually do. They have in fact been conducting maneuvers since they have no base there.

Mr. Farley: They have had a continuous presence at the two-to-four level.

Adm. Moorer: Plus support.

Dr. Kissinger: Does anyone see any sense in banning SSBNs from the Indian Ocean?

Adm. Moorer: No.

Gen. Cushman: It would be impossible to verify.

Adm. Moorer: It would greatly simplify their warning system and ASW system. We want them to have to look 360 degrees.

Gen. Cushman: Their Y-class submarines might be a threat some day, but they aren't now. And we couldn't verify an agreement to ban them anyhow.

Adm. Moorer: We can use the Indian Ocean against them better than they can use it against us.

Dr. Kissinger: So we are all agreed that we're not prepared to discuss deployment limitations on SSBNs. That knocks out all the SSBN options.

Let's go back to deployment limitations. The question of whether we would ever agree to deployment limitations on our naval activities

would have to go to the President. We need a more specific paper on this—how to distinguish transit from permanent presence; maneuvers from transit and permanent presence. There is a surface attractiveness to the proposition that we won't build up our naval forces and we might get the Soviets not to. That's okay if that's all that would happen. But we have to consider the possible precedent.

Mr. Johnson: The question of precedent is most important.

Dr. Kissinger: We would have to go to the President.

Adm. Moorer: This would fly in the face of the Nixon Doctrine. If there were a crisis in the Indian Ocean, in which the Soviets were not involved, and the President wanted to send a force in, he couldn't do it.

Mr. Johnson: That depends on the type of agreement you have. You understand I'm not advocating an agreement. I'm very skeptical that we could devise anything that we would find acceptable.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we all understand that nothing is to be floated to any government prior to a Presidential decision?

All agreed

Dr. Kissinger: On bases, we're only talking about one at Diego Garcia, aren't we?

Mr. Spiers: We don't call it a base.

Adm. Moorer: Communications facility, then. The Soviet agreement with the Indians includes utilization of their ports—I call those bases.

Mr. Farley: Will we have people stationed at Bahrein?

Adm. Moorer: We'll have some mailmen and dependents—no combat forces.

Dr. Kissinger: American naval personnel?

Adm. Moorer: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't that a good definition of a base? We have two bases, then—Bahrein and Diego Garcia.

Adm. Moorer: They're facilities.

Dr. Kissinger: Could each side be permitted unlimited facilities but no bases?

Mr. Selden: Diego Garcia is a joint facility. The British have personnel there.

Mr. Spiers: The British and French also have facilities at Djibouti and Diego Suarez.

Dr. Kissinger: Are we sufficiently concerned that the Soviets might establish a base in the Indian Ocean to make it significant to discuss?

Adm. Moorer: We've seen no sign of construction, but they can anchor and stay for days at Socotra.

Dr. Kissinger: When we talk about arms control, there are a number of ways to do it: limitations on the types of ships, the number of ships, the types of activities, bases . . .

Mr. Johnson: If you are asking me if I think there is a danger of the Soviets establishing a Soviet base in the Indian Ocean, the answer is no. That's not the way they operate. Alexandria is not a Soviet base. It's not likely under the present circumstances, but I don't exclude it.

Adm. Moorer: But they have one in India.

Mr. Johnson: It doesn't fly the Soviet flag. We have the problem of defining a base. We fly our flag on Diego Garcia.

Dr. Kissinger: I assume we're not prepared to discuss the Ceylonese proposal affirmatively with Mrs. Bandaranaike. Should we say anything else other than we are studying it?

Mr. Johnson: We could use various stalls—ask her what her neighbors think. No one is proposing a positive response.

Mr. Spiers: She will have considerable support in New York.

Mr. Selden: The best way to stop it is to say we're not interested—that we're opposed.

Mr. Farley: The Ceylonese have already introduced it in the UN, and Mrs. Bandaranaike will make her speech on October 12.

Mr. Spiers: We need to get some guidance to our UN Delegation on it.

Adm. Moorer: Why not just turn her off?

Dr. Kissinger: We know there are a number of items we won't accept no matter how much we study it—restrictions on submarines, restrictions on maneuvers . . .

Mr. Spiers: We have a list of suggested talking points for the President's meeting with Mrs. Bandaranaike. (handed them to Dr. Kissinger)

Mr. Johnson: Why don't we look at these and see if there is any consensus.

Dr. Kissinger: The talking points, in effect, say that we don't want Big Power competition in the Indian Ocean. That Mrs. Bandaranaike should consult the other littoral states and, if they agree, we would have to take a position which would most likely be in opposition. Could we tell her now that most of the items are not likely to be acceptable? We could say we are studying the proposal and would come back to her if our reaction were more favorable.

Mr. Spiers: We hope she would get bogged down in differences with others and that the proposal will go away. If we try to get into specifics, she will offer to make changes to accommodate us.

Dr. Kissinger: I think the issue is clear. We can either bog her down with general good will, or turn her off.

Mr. Johnson: Under the heading of general good will, we could say we don't want Big Power competition.

Dr. Kissinger: When the Soviets are moving into India, it's silly to talk about Big Power competition as sea power.

Mr. Johnson: But we're talking about sea power. We can say her proposal gives us difficulties and we don't see how it would work out.

Dr. Kissinger: We need two things: what the President should say to Mrs. Bandaranaike and what position we take at the UN. When does it come up in the UN? After the President sees her? Can we be guided by what the President says?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: It will be hard to raise this with the President this week. We'll try to get to him next week.

Mr. Johnson: We can see what the President says and take our instructions for our UN Delegation from that.

Dr. Kissinger: Would October 20 be soon enough?

Mr. Spiers: Fine.

Dr. Kissinger: I'll get this discussion to the President. We won't ask for a formulation from the bureaucracy until the President sees Mrs. Bandaranaike.[7] Based on that conversation, we can draw up something for the UN.

Mr. Johnson: We'll refine these talking points for the President and get a reaction from you all.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, we need to see the talking points. The President can express his desire to avoid Big Power competition, then he can either follow the line we have been discussing here, or say that the fault lies more with the Soviets than with us. Let's redefine these present talking points.

Mr. Spiers: There is also the question of how deeply we want to go in defining our objections.

Mr. Selden: Will delay on our part run the risk of building up support in New York?

Mr. Spiers: She's already getting a lot of support. There will be some resolutions but nothing will happen unless the Big Powers are interested. There is no evidence of any Russian interest. If we follow Option 1, it may provide a good framework for dealing with proposals like the one from Ceylon. But if Ceylon is encouraged to talk to others, there will be lots of problems.

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[7] See Document 62.

Dr. Kissinger: If we know we don't want anything, we might be better to put her out of her misery. It's better to turn down one country than seven.

Mr. Spiers: We do have some diplomatic means to influence some of these people.

Dr. Kissinger: We have a choice of formalizing an arrangement, or of saying we are restraining our activities and will be watching the Soviets to see if they do.

Adm. Moorer: Instead of saying we will study her proposal, why not say we have studied it?

Dr. Kissinger: (to Johnson) You will get us a refinement of your proposed talking points. I won't try to get the President's reaction until the end of next week.

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62. Editorial Note

During her October 1971 trip to the United States, Ceylonese Prime Minister Sirimayo Bandaranaike spoke to both the United Nations General Assembly and to top U.S. officials concerning the proposal to turn the Indian Ocean into a "zone of peace" along the lines of the Ceylonese aide-mémoire (see Document 60). Although Bandaranaike had submitted a draft of her upcoming speech to the U.S. Embassy, according to telegram 3007 from Colombo, October 14, the version she delivered to the General Assembly was less compatible with U.S. policy than had been her original draft, as she had made changes after her arrival in New York. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 33–6 IND)

On October 19, Madame Bandaranaike met with President Richard Nixon in Washington. Neither the memorandum nor the tape of the conversation indicates that Bandaranaike or Nixon raised the issue of the Nuclear Free Zone proposal. (Memorandum of conversation, October 19; ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 592, Country Files, Middle East, Ceylon, Vol. I, and ibid., White House Tapes, Conversation No. 596–4) At a working lunch with Secretary of State William Rogers that same day, Rogers asked about the proposal and noted that the United States was studying it. (Telegram 195054 to Colombo, London, and USUN, October 23; ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 33–6 IND) However, according to a later report on her trip, Nixon expressed interest in the proposal and Bandaranaike talked at length on its origins stemming back to 1964. Bandaranaike was also reported to have discussed it with Rogers and to have said that both Rogers and Nixon had

indicated they would study it further. (Memorandum from Helms to Kissinger, November 16; ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 592, Country Files, Middle East, Ceylon, Vol. 1)

Subsequently, the Departments of State and Defense rejected the Indian Ocean declaration as a basis for negotiation because it meant a special Law of the Sea regime for the Indian Ocean, put the General Assembly behind a declaration that was inconsistent with the Law of the Sea, reduced strategic mobility, and affected the security interests of any state that relied on a military balance of power for its stability. The U.S. Delegation at the UN was to seek the cooperation of the Soviet Delegation on the grounds that the United States agreed to the principle of avoiding military competition, as Gromyko had brought up July 28, but outside of the General Assembly. (Joint State/Defense telegram 200345 to Indian Ocean Embassies, November 3; ibid.)

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63. Memorandum From Richard Kennedy of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)[1]

Washington, October 15, 1971.

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Henry asked for this NSSM at the Indian Ocean SRG meeting.[2] I want to express my serious reservation that this might be a source of embarrassment. The fact of the study could be leaked by:

—Those opposed to any naval limitations to embarrass the President and bring down the wrath of public opinion,

—Those who favor a defense budget cut in the interest of showing that the President really is looking for ways to counter Navy and Defense pressures for increased Navy expenditures.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–178, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 110. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only. Sent for action.

[2] See Document 61. The draft NSSM is attached but not printed. Entitled "Concepts of Naval Arms Control," it stated: "while directed specifically at bilateral arms control arrangements between the U.S. and U.S.S.R., the study should also consider multi-lateral arrangements (similar to MBFR) on both a global and a regional basis. The importance of NATO and Warsaw Pact fleets should be considered in both instances." The study was to assess "the relative balance of U.S. and U.S.S.R. (and NATO–Warsaw Pact) fleets existing and projected in the foreseeable future. . . . The assessment should include both military implications and the role of naval forces in alliances and general foreign policy."

Either case could be embarrassing in the charged atmosphere of the coming year. The counter argument of course would be that such proposals are being surfaced from a variety of foreign sources and in a variety of forms. The US, therefore, must be in a position to effectively deal with such proposals on their merits rather than be caught with counter arguments which won't wash, unprepared entrance into some sort of discussions forced by others, or opposition which the other side could call intransigence.

I wanted to flag this for you in the event you thought Henry should focus again on this.[3]

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[3] On another copy of this memorandum, Haig wrote: "HAK—I agree this is wrong time." Kissinger initialed and a handwritten notation reads: "HAK agrees." (Ibid., Box H–176, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 104)

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64. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)[1]

Washington, October 28, 1971.

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Under Secretary of State
The Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Deputy Director, ACDA
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SUBJECT

Further Study of Indian Ocean Arms Control

As agreed at the Senior Review Group meeting of October 6,[2] the study of Indian Ocean arms control should be further developed by the preparation of a paper which specifically analyzes the issues raised in designing non-strategic naval limitations in the Indian Ocean. Using as a point of departure Options II, IV, and V of the arms control study prepared as a follow-on to NSSM 110,[3] the paper should concentrate on such issues as:

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71. Secret.

[2] See Document 61.

[3] See Document 57.

—the comparative impact on the U.S. and USSR of limitations on Indian Ocean bases and support facilities;

—the question of distinguishing naval transits from exercises and "show of force" maneuvers and of distinguishing all of these from a permanent presence;

—the comparative impact on the U.S. and the USSR (in terms of surge capability and reaction time) of deployment limitations on non-strategic naval forces, both with and without Indian Ocean bases and support facilities.

The issue of possible precedents which could be set by such Indian Ocean limitations should be weighed in assessing the attractiveness of non-strategic limitations as a means of dealing with the increased Soviet naval presence in the area. Interagency differences should be clearly identified.

The paper should be prepared by an Ad Hoc Group chaired by representatives of ACDA and DOD and comprising representatives of the addressees and the NSC Staff. It should be submitted to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs no later than November 19.[4]

Henry A. Kissinger

[4] See Document 69.

65. Telegram From the Embassy in Ceylon to the Department of State[1]

Colombo, December 9, 1971, 0645Z.

3434. Subj: Ambassador's Conversation on Indo-Pak Developments with Felix D. Bandaranaike. Ref: Colombo 3433.[2]

1. In conversation Dec 8 with Ambassador, Home Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike said Prime Minister was increasingly disturbed about developments in subcontinent which she holds fundamentally upset balance of power in Indian Ocean. Felix, in response Ambassador's

[1] Source: National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean). Confidential; Immediate. It was repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, and USUN.

[2] Telegram 3433 from Colombo, December 9, reported on a Ceylonese peace proposal aimed at achieving a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, as noted in the *Ceylon Times*. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

query on GOC plans for Indian Ocean resolution in UNGA, said that last two weeks[3] have "changed everything", and that he, Felix would urge PM to shelve resolution. Felix went on to say "our interests now converge" and that Ceylon's stand on Indo-Pakistan conflict was same as yours."

Felix then disgressed on emerging stategic situation. He envisages a "coastline of 3,000 miles" available to deploy Soviet power via her "Indian proxy." He foresaw trouble, too, in Ceylon's north, i.e., the Tamil area, and said he would not be surprised if India were, within next few years, to foment communal trouble in Ceylon.

3. *Comment:* While GOC is still gingerly seeking to readjust their position to the emergent realities in subcontinent and while government has thought fit to suppress press reports of its own UN plan (reftel), it seems that, at least for time being, Ceylon is searching for counterweight to India, since GOC increasingly skeptical of Chinese ability to check India, not to speak of Soviet Union. From general drift of Felix's observations GOC now appears to have second thought re U.S. naval presence in Indian Ocean and is likely to welcome, at least tacitly, tokens of U.S. naval power. Our star appears to be rising.[4]

Strausz-Hupé

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[3] A reference to the India–Pakistan war, which began December 3 and ended December 17. For documentation, see *Foreign Relations,* 1969–1976, volume XI, South Asia Crisis, 1971.

[4] By late February 1972, the Ceylonese Prime Minister asked for visits by both the U.S. Navy and CINCPAC. This change in attitude reflected the impact of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, the India–Pakistan war, and the "realization of high degree of dependence on West for assistance." (Telegram 535 from Colombo, February 18; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL CEYLON–US)

66. Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State[1]

London, December 10, 1971, 1641Z.

11267. Subj: Diego Garcia Agreement. Ref: London 11245.[2]

1. New U.S. position embodied in State 219330[3] appears to have transformed Diego Garcia negotiation fron near-total impasse to drafting exercise. While British reactions described in reftel are necessarily provisional, it is clear that officials in both MOD and FCO now believe we are on road to early agreement and are immensely relieved.

2. In past few months British have had growing conviction that U.S. was attempting to write an agreement which would expand HMG's approval of a limited communications facility to a license to do whatever we please in Diego Garcia. While construction on island proceeded apace, we maintained official positions, seen here as contradictory, that (A) we had no present plans for construction beyond what we had already told HMG, but (B) we could not accept any British inhibitions on future construction or land use. As recently as December 8, we jokingly reassured MOD official that USN did not really intend to sneak in a Polaris base under cover of darkness, and met stony reply "you have given us very little reason to feel sure of that."

3. Compromise solution of scope paragraph[4] was major substantive element in restoring British confidence and permitting both sides to resume genuine negotiation. British apprehensions had reached a point which required the additional concession we have made, by including many administrative details in the government-level exchange, to make the package work. In Embassy's opinion, these concessions will not in themselves work seriously to our disadvantage, or inhibit achievement of legitimate US objectives in BIOT.

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean). Confidential; Exdis.

[2] Telegram 11245 from London, December 9, reported on the preliminary reaction of the British to the current draft of the Diego Garcia agreement. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–UK)

[3] In telegram 219330 to London, December 4, the Department suggested that a counterproposal be focused on the principles of the 1966 BIOT agreement, leaving the details to subsequent agreement by "appropriate administrative authorities." (Ibid., RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 113, Work File (Indian Ocean))

[4] This paragraph detailed provisions under which the United States had the right to construct, maintain, and operate a limited naval communications facility on Diego Garcia. (Ibid.)

4. We believe we will now get a good agreement, and put to rest lingering British doubts. We are grateful to Washington for excellent support in providing instructions which will make it possible.

Annenberg

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67. Editorial Note

The Ceylonese Resolution, adopted on December 16, 1971, by the 26th session of the UN General Assembly as Resolution 2832, declared the Indian Ocean a "zone of peace." It called on the great powers to consult with the littoral states in order to halt the expansion of their military presence, and to eliminate all bases, facilities, and nuclear weapons. Littoral and hinterland states were likewise to consult with other nations to ensure that no other power used the Indian Ocean to threaten or use force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity, or independence of the littoral and hinterland states. The right of free use of the Indian Ocean was not affected by the resolution. The vote was 61 in favor, with 55 abstentions. Among those voting for were Japan, China, India, and Pakistan. Those who abstained included France, Australia, the USSR, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (*Yearbook of the United Nations,* 1971, pages 11, 33–35)

68. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to the Chief of the Plans and Regional Affairs Division, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Linebaugh)[1]

Washington, February 14, 1972.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Naval Limitations

REF

Your Draft Memorandum of 2/7/72[2]

I believe it would be a mistake for us to go back to the Soviets now on the Indian Ocean. The Soviets are well aware of our initial expression of interest after Ambassador Beam's follow-up with Gromyko in July. The fact that Gromyko did not raise it with the Secretary during their conversations at UNGA last fall (although the Ceylonese Peace Zone proposal had been put forward), and that Dobrynin did not raise it during a meeting with the Secretary on February 4 despite widespread publicity of Ambassador Johnson's remarks the same week,[3] suggests to me that the Soviets are not greatly interested in pursuing the subject at this time.[4] In any event, they owe us a reply. For the US to press now could be interpreted by the Soviets as a sign of weakness in the aftermath of the Indo-Pak war which they might then seek to exploit.[5]

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US. Secret. Drafted by Robert W. Chase, Regional Political Adviser, and Stanley D. Schiff, Director of NEA/RA, on February 11.

[2] Attached but not printed. Linebaugh drafted a memorandum to Nixon urging a U.S.-Soviet compromise to exercise restraint in permanent naval deployments as the best means to limit Soviet naval power in the Indian Ocean. In his cover letter to Davies, Linebaugh also suggested that Rogers raise the issue with Dobrynin, following the line used by Beam with Gromyko on July 28. For the Beam–Gromyko discussion, see footnote 7, Document 59.

[3] The memorandum of conversation between Rogers and Gromyko, February 2, is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR. On February 1, Johnson testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on U.S. base rights in Bahrain, noting the "good will" implicit in this U.S. policy. (Department of State *Bulletin,* February 28, 1972, pp. 279–284)

[4] According to an October 11 memorandum from Richard Nethercut (EA/RA) to John Kelley (PM/ISO), a "foreign diplomat was told by a Soviet Foreign Ministry official earlier this year that the Soviets had broached the Brezhnev proposal with Hanoi and were given a negative reaction. Hanoi reportedly stated that it was premature to effect a regional security arrangement in Asia before the Indochina question had been settled." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US)

[5] A handwritten note in an unknown hand in the margin next to this sentence reads: "no longer true."

I understand there is a reasonably good prospect for a successful conclusion to the SALT talks before the President's trip to Moscow.[6] Should that happen the stage would be set for consideration of the next practical step in arms limitation for discussion with the Soviets. Conceivably, one such step might be an agreement to explore mutual "restraint" in the Indian Ocean.

I suggest that we use the time remaining before the trip to consider what the President might say on the subject in Moscow should he judge that, following a SALT agreement, he might want to suggest to the Soviets the possibility of some exploratory talks on the Indian Ocean.

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[6] Nixon was in Moscow from May 22 to 30 for the Moscow Summit. SALT I was signed on May 26.

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69. Study Prepared by the Interdepartmental Group for the Indian Ocean[1]

Washington, undated.

Non-Strategic Naval Limitations in the Indian Ocean

I. Summary and Conclusions

Separate statements concerning the summary and conclusions of this paper were prepared by the State, ACDA and CIA representatives and the OSD and JCS representatives.[2]

A. The following views are those of the State, ACDA and CIA representatives.

1. A US–Soviet agreement to avoid competition by limiting their permanent naval deployments in the Indian Ocean may prove to be in the US interest. While the US plans to upgrade MIDEASTFOR qualitatively, it does not now plan to increase the size of that force or to make other permanent deployments. The Soviet Union may continue to increase its deployments, as it has in the last few years. Hence, it may be in the US interest to bind the Soviets to a level comparable to our own.

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–060, Senior Review Group Meetings, SRG Meeting Indian Ocean 10/6/71. Secret. Under a February 15 covering memorandum, Farley and Selden submitted the paper to Kissinger in response to his request of October 28; see Document 64.

[2] Not attached.

2. The Indo–Pak war and the surge of the *Enterprise* task force, which were not considered in this study, could affect the timing of any US initiative with the Soviets for naval limitations in the Indian Ocean. It would be best to await further clarification of the situation on the subcontinent and in the area before undertaking such an initiative, although a naval limitation understanding with the Soviets might well form part of our efforts to normalize the situation in the area.

3. A US–Soviet agreement to limit their permanent naval presences need not affect either our right or our ability to "surge" temporarily into the Indian Ocean if we needed to and as we have done with the *Enterprise.* We could do it again—if this seemed advisable and effective—even if we had concluded an agreement with the Soviets similar to those considered in this study, since only permanent deployments would be limited. On the other hand, frequent surges, even though called "temporary", would vitiate an agreement.

4. The Soviets do not have direct land access to South Asia and would have to cross international borders to send ground forces to intervene there. Such a move would entail serious international political risk with implications far beyond local effect in the Indian Ocean area. There is no evidence that the Soviets are prepared to take those risks.

5. Relative geographic propinquity may give the Soviets some advantage over us in influencing states of the Indian Ocean area—although great power "influence" is based on a whole array of factors in addition to geography. Nonetheless, if geography somewhat favors the Soviets, they should not also be allowed the additional advantage of a greater naval presence as well.

6. In accordance with the terms of reference in Dr. Kissinger's memorandum of October 28, the study analyzed certain specific issues of non-strategic naval limitations and their comparative impact on the US and USSR. These issues and the conclusions of the analyses are as follows:

a. Bases and Support Facilities

A prohibition on bases would probably favor the Soviets. They have developed a modus operandi which allows them to support their forces without a base structure comparable to ours. Although we have not developed such a modus operandi in the case of MIDEASTFOR, it would be possible to maintain that force without a base, if we were willing to spend the extra resources involved in deploying another auxiliary ship to the area. However, for a number of reasons primarily political in nature, it is important that the base at Bahrain be retained. It is also important that Diego Garcia be retained, at least as a communication facility.

b. Surge Capabilities

"Surge" capabilities involve the insertion of forces from outside the area. They would not be affected by an agreement limiting permanent naval deployments within the area.

Surge capabilities depend on the location and nature of the forces surged. US forces would probably come from the Seventh Fleet, as recently demonstrated by the surge of the *Enterprise.* The Soviets would most likely send their forces from their Pacific Fleet based at Vladivostok as they also did recently or, if the Suez were reopened, from their Mediterranean squadron. In the latter case surging forces of the two sides would arrive at about the same time. In the former, US forces from the Seventh Fleet would arrive sooner. A Soviet surge force cannot match the amphibious and air capabilities of a US surge force; thus the Soviets would not have the same capability to project power ashore.

c. Possible Precedents

A US decision, in agreement with the Soviets, to exercise restraint in naval deployments to the Indian Ocean would not be a limitation on our rights with respect to the international waters of the world. Those rights are based on principles of international law and on the 1958 Geneva Convention on the High Seas and cannot be affected by a bilateral US–USSR agreement to limit their own naval deployments. The US and the Soviet Union would not be "legislating" for others. Limitations of the nature considered in this paper could be structured so as not to establish precedents adverse to our interest in freedom of the seas or the Law of the Sea. In fact, voluntarily accepted restraints would tend to strengthen rather than weaken the rule of law.

d. Distinguishing Naval Activities

Distinguishing between naval activities might be done in terms of time in the area, or in terms of specific types of activities (e.g., transits, visits, training exercises, maneuvers, port visits). An agreement which attempted to sanction some but prohibit other types of activities might be difficult to formulate and might establish an undesirable precedent.

A generalized understanding (Option 1) would probably not require definition of naval activities, in terms of time or otherwise. On the other hand, for reasons of both policy and precedent, an agreement which placed specific limitations on sailing days or number of ships (Options 2, 4 and 5)[3] in terms of time in the area should only limit their "permanent presence." This could be defined as naval deployments in

[3] For these numbered options, see Document 59.

the Indian Ocean for X months or longer. Transits or visits of shorter duration would not be limited. The US would remain free to introduce forces for a temporary period.

e. Caveat Clauses

Various caveat or escape clauses which recognize the right of withdrawal under certain circumstances should be part of any specifically worded naval limitation agreement. A generalized understanding limiting US-Soviet naval competition in the Indian Ocean would require less caveating and might not require a specific "escape clause".

7. *Options*

Two types of options have been considered in this study, as they relate to the above issues:

a. A Specifically Worded Agreement

Such an agreement would place numerical limitations on the total number of certain types of ships and limitations on total ship days. Only permanent deployments would be limited; short term visits and transits would be allowed. The agreement would include an escape clause. Bases and SSBNs would not be limited. This type option would present obvious problems of negotiability since the Soviets would probably press for limitations on bases and submarines. Also, a formal and detailed agreement, in contrast to a general understanding, would seem to be disproprotionate to the magnitude of the problem it would seek to solve.

b. A General Understanding

Potentially undesirable features of a specifically-worded nonstrategic naval limitation could be avoided or minimized by casting an agreement in general terms. A general understanding would place inhibitions on sharp increases in the level of Soviet naval forces, while allowing us the flexibility to match low level increases.

Such an agreement might consist of declarations of restraint by the US and USSR, with the definition of "restraint" being part of the negotiating record.

B. The following views are those of the OSD and JCS representatives.

1. OSD and JCS representatives believe that recent events in the Indian Ocean area make it inadvisable to enter into a dialogue with the Soviet Union on naval arms limitations at this time. It is certain that the Indo-Pak war will have significant effects on political relationships and major power influence in the area. It is not at all clear, however, what these effects will be. Until the results of the recent war can be better assessed, it would not be prudent to undertake discussions with the Soviets leading toward closing of some of the US political and military

options in the area. To a lesser (but still important) degree, this argument also applies to the UNGA resolution declaring the Indian Ocean a "zone of peace."

2. Further, aside from recent events, OSD and JCS representatives believe that neither a specifically worded agreement nor a general understanding (Option 1) with the USSR which places restrictions on naval activity in the Indian Ocean would be in the best interests of the United States for the following reasons:

a) The USSR occupies a central geographic location while the US does not. They are less dependent on overseas sources of supply and are less involved with overseas allies. Primarily for these reasons, the Soviets have developed a naval strategy designed to disrupt our sea lines of communication and to obstruct the projection of our sea power ashore. In the political arena, they have traditionally pressed for the concept of closed seas, which would transform the enclosed and semi-enclosed seas contiguous to the Soviet Union into "Soviet lakes" and facilitate achievement by the Soviet Union of military and political preponderance in these areas.

The naval strategy of the US on the other hand, is designed to maintain control of the vital sea lines of communication on which we and our allies depend and to project military force inland from the sea when necessary. Thus any agreement or understanding which would place "equal" restrictions on the US and Soviet naval forces would tend to support the Soviet strategy while, at the same time, it would counter the US strategy. Likewise, any agreement or understanding which would advance the principle of closed seas to the detriment of free seas would tend to work to our disadvantage and establish a damaging precedent.

b) Any agreement or understanding (Option 2) reducing or limiting US naval forces in the Indian Ocean would be viewed by the littoral nations as reflecting a lessening of US interest in the area at a critical time. The importance of MIDEASTFOR has increased now that the British have withdrawn their forces from the Persian Gulf area. The Trucial States in particular view MIDEASTFOR as a stabilizing influence between the Arab world and the expanding Iranian interest in the Persian Gulf area.

c) Any agreement or general understanding (Option 1) that would place restrictions on the use of naval forces in the Indian Ocean area could serve to complicate efforts to settle the situation in the Middle East. At the present time the options available to negotiators include the possible use of US naval forces. However, the flexibility afforded by this range of options could be reduced by placing restrictions on the number, size or time on station of naval units in the Indian Ocean area.

d) A naval arms limitation agreement or even a general understanding (Option 1) with the USSR in the immediate aftermath of the Ceylonese peace zone resolution would be viewed by many as major power accession to pressure by littoral states and as a tacit acceptance of the principle that coastal states have a right to regulate activities of other nations in high seas areas adjacent to their territorial waters. Such negotiations would thus weaken the US position on Law of the Sea, would lead to additional pressures at the 1973 Law of the Sea Conference to limit naval uses of the high seas even further and could cause us to fail in achieving our overriding ocean policy objective—to preserve the freedom of the sea in the largest possible area of the world's oceans.

e) The incorporation of a caveat or "escape" clause could not adequately serve our national interests in regards to limitations of naval forces in the Indian Ocean area. The invocation of an escape clause would have a political price which might be significant in any specific instance. Since the US in all likelihood would be more reluctant than the Soviets to implement the escape provisions of an agreement, the delay involved in considering the decision would operate to give the USSR a time advantage.

f) Naval units can be deployed around the world without crossing national boundaries. To enter into an agreement or understanding that in any way restricts the use of naval forces would be to give up an option of great flexibility and value to US national security interests.

g) A naval arms limitation in the Indian Ocean would not necessarily serve to hinder or dampen the efforts of either the US or USSR in seeking greater influence with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean area. The problem involves the various means of access to the sub-continent area. A naval limitation in the Indian Ocean would not reduce competition equally since the Soviets would still have a distinct advantage by being part of the Euro-Asian continent. In addition, we cannot overlook the military and political power of the Chinese and their influence in the sub-continent.

h) Finally, OSD and JCS representatives do not believe it would be feasible to have meaningful discussions with the Soviets since SSBNs will not be included in any such negotiations. It is not realistic to believe that the Soviets would seriously discuss limitations on their anti-submarine forces without demanding similar restrictions on our SSBNs. If talks are started, we expect that the Soviets would press hard to include SSBNs and would propagandize in an effort to bring maximum pressure on the US to accommodate the Soviet demands.

3. The OSD and JCS representatives' conclusions as regards limitations on Indian Ocean bases and support facilities, distinguishing

between various naval activities and US and USSR surge capabilities are as follows:

a) Any agreement or understanding that restricted bases and support facilities in the Indian Ocean area would favor the Soviets. The Soviets to date have not relied on establishment of a specific base in the area. Their present modus operandi allows them to operate by relying on their support ships in the area rather than local area facilities. Conversely, it would be very expensive for the US to maintain any presence in the Indian Ocean if denied access to base facilities. The expense would involve the reassignment of a considerable number of ships from other forces both for rotational purposes and logistics.

b) The question of distinguishing naval transits from exercises, "show of force" maneuvers and rotation of naval forces, and of distinguishing all of these from a permanent presence in the area would be both difficult and argumentative. Any definition distinguishing between mobile force and premanent presence would, of necessity, be restrictive. Acknowledging this type of restriction is not in our national interest. Basically, it is inconsistent with our view of freedom of the seas. Further, it could later lead to undesirable applications in other ocean areas of higher US interest.

c) A comparison of the impact of deployment limitations in terms of surge capability and reaction time on US and USSR non-strategic naval forces tends to favor the US at the present time. However, the likely opening of the Suez Canal coupled with the present Soviet/Egyptian relationship would give the Soviets a decided advantage in the more economically important western part of the Indian Ocean area. The US would be restricted in the use of an open canal primarily because of the size of our aircraft carriers. The possibility also exists that, with Egypt in control of passage through the canal, our ships could be delayed by passage procedures. The Soviets would not be similarly restricted.

[Omitted here is the remainder of the paper.]

70. Memorandum From Chester Crocker of the National Security Council Staff to Richard Kennedy and Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff[1]

Washington, March 28, 1972.

SUBJECT

The Indian Ocean and the Moscow Summit

Background

Hal Sonnenfeldt is currently staffing a March 21 memorandum (Tab A) from Gerard Smith to HAK proposing two Presidential initiatives in Moscow, one of which would be "a declaration, perhaps in the context of working to reduce tensions in South Asia, that the two Governments intend to exercise restraint in deploying naval forces to the Indian Ocean, so as to avoid military competition there." The Smith memo refers also to an ACDA paper on various arms control possibilities for the Moscow agenda. The Indian Ocean portion is at Tab B.[2] It reflects ACDA's conclusions from the most recent interagency study entitled "Non-Strategic Naval Limitations in the Indian Ocean," which was submitted February 15. This study (Tab C),[3] responding to HAK's October 28 memo (Tab D),[4] has not yet been staffed.

The Problem

The problem is what to do with the various parts of this puzzle. The reflex response of our Soviet area colleagues is that this whole subject is a "No-No" and that a Presidential initiative would be "out of the question." I do not endorse the Presidential initiative suggested by Smith. But there are at least three valid objections to simply shelving the Smith memo and ignoring the subject in our preparations for Moscow:

1. *The need to have a position should the Soviets bring up this or related subjects.* There is no certainty that they will do so. In fact, *we* initiated the last exchange on the subject last July[5] and have made it clear pub-

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[1] Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–178, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 110. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for information. All tabs, with the exception of Tab D, are attached but not printed.

[2] Attached at Tab B is the suggested language for a U.S.-Soviet communiqué declaring that both nations seek to avoid naval competition and exercise restraint in deploying naval forces to the Indian Ocean. It also explained the administration's reassessment of Indian Ocean policy.

[3] Printed as Document 69.

[4] Document 64.

[5] See footnote 7, Document 59.

licly on several occasions since (a) that the ball is in their court and (b) that we support the principle of avoiding military competition in the area. Moreover, the Soviets may prefer exploiting their position following the Indo-Pak war to pressing us for naval limits in the area. However, it is quite possible that the subject could surface in the context of discussions on bilateral rivalry in the Middle East, Persian Gulf, and South Asian regions. It would be surprising if our respective political-military objectives in these areas were *not* discussed, and the President should be prepared to deal with such discussion. *This is not to say he should advocate Indian Ocean naval limits, but it does suggest that he may want to:*

(a) set the record straight on who initiated naval escalation in the area,
(b) place our military presence in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in a broader context of U.S. support for military balance and super-power restraint, or
(c) reaffirm our public and diplomatic support for the general principle that both countries have an interest in avoiding military competition in the area.

All this is merely another way of saying that our preparations for Moscow should accurately reflect the record to date:

—The Soviets have twice brought up the subject of restraint and/or naval limitations.[6]
—Ambassador Beam has told Gromyko we favor the principle of avoiding military competition in the area.[7]
—State Department publications have affirmed this principle, while U. Alexis Johnson has told the SFRC[8] we favor restraint and are not about to get involved in naval competition there.

2. *There may be South Asian arguments for the U.S. side to raise this general subject, if it is considered a political rather than an "arms control" initiative.* Our studies have concluded that the primary issues, interests, and threats in the Indian Ocean are political, not military-strategic. Military presence in this area seems, more than is usually the case, to have principally a *political* impact and relevance. Consequently, there is little logic in dealing with a political problem, such as growing Soviet presence and influence, through arms control measures *whose one clear impact is to restrict military flexibility.* We clearly do not want restrictions on U.S. *naval* flexibility—the one aspect of overall U.S. military power which is demonstrably superior to the USSR's and, therefore, the one military element in which we possess a *potential* Indian Ocean advantage.

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[6] See Documents 55 and 59.
[7] See footnote 7, Document 59.
[8] See footnote 3, Document 68.

Not surprisingly, there are few advocates of Indian Ocean arms control, even of the "non-strategic" variety. The most recent study should convince any doubters on this score. Even ACDA argues only for a "general understanding" of a few lines which would serve as a joint U.S.–USSR statement of common interest in the principle of naval restraint.

In my view a U.S. initiative in this area begins to make more sense when the arms control aspects are eliminated.

If the subject of U.S.–USSR bilateral relations in areas of rivalry is likely to arise in any event—as suggested in subhead 1 above—it may be wise for our side to raise the general point that *as superpowers we have a responsibility to exercise political restraint to avoid exploiting local conflicts, and to refrain from steps which could heighten local tensions.* If discussion developed, we could say that the size and nature of superpower military activity in such areas as the Indian Ocean was an element of such restraint. Such an initiative:

—would be wholly consistent with our public posture to date on both the Indian Ocean (including MIDEASTFOR, Bahrein, and Diego Garcia) and the Subcontinent.

—would enable us to continue to take the public position that we oppose cold war competition for unilateral advantage in the area, and have urged Soviet acceptance of our view.

—could, if accepted by the Soviets, help reduce present tension and polarization on the Subcontinent and focus regional attention on any future Soviet behavior incompatible with its spirit.

—would leave us as free as we are today to take any military steps we wanted in future contingencies, since no specific arms control undertakings would be involved.

3. *We need to put our Indian Ocean review to bed and it is logical to do so now.* Our review of Soviet activity in the Indian Ocean has developed a life of its own. Folding it into the Summit preparations has certain obvious advantages:

—It would enable us to "consider" both Smith's recommendation for a naval arms control initiative and the most recent ACDA/DOD study on Indian Ocean arms control. A brief summary of the ACDA/DOD study, covered by our recommendations, could be prepared for HAK and the President as part of the staffing of Smith's memo.

—It would be an appropriate way of apprising HAK and the President of the Indian Ocean review and of ensuring that the regional (i.e., Persian Gulf and South Asia) political context of U.S.-Soviet relations is adequately reflected in our preparations for Moscow.

—It could serve as a mechanism for wrapping up the review, while indicating general White House interest in the level of Soviet and U.S. naval activity in the area. Specifically, we could respond to Smith or to the agencies via a memo reflecting Presidential consideration of Smith's memo and the ACDA/DOD study. Such a memo would stress our desire to retain flexibility, while avoiding actions which could open the U.S. to charges of military escalation in the area.

Comment

I urge that we factor the ACDA/DOD study and Smith's memo into the South Asia/Middle East input to the Summit preparations—with the recommendation that the President raise in Moscow the desirability of superpower political restraint in the Indian Ocean area.[9]

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[9] Neither discussions at the Moscow Summit nor the declaration issued May 29 included material on the Indian Ocean. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XIV, Soviet Union, October 1971–May 1972, for documentation on the Summit and the concluding declaration.

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71. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of International Security Operations, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Stoddart) to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Stoessel)[1]

Washington, September 14, 1972.

SUBJECT

US–UK Agreement on Diego Garcia

Working-level negotiations on the proposed agreement with the UK for the use by the Navy of Diego Garcia as a limited naval communications facility have been completed, and the agreement is now ready for formal approval by both governments. An airgram is attached which authorizes our Embassy in London to sign the agreement.[2]

As you know, this agreement has been the subject of lengthy negotiations with the British beginning in December 1970, conducted pursuant to the 1966 Agreement with the UK on defense uses of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). Several major points that were at issue with the British have been satisfactorily resolved. These include:

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[1] Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15 IND–US. Confidential. Drafted by John E. Kelley (PM/ISO) and cleared in L/PM, L/T, H, NEA/RA, AF/RA, and EA/RA. Sent through Burns (EUR/NE). The memorandum was a revised version of one prepared in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense on August 17. (Washington National Records Center, OASD/ISA Files: FRC 330–75–125, Box 3, Indian Ocean Islands 000.1 1972)

[2] Not attached. Notes were exchanged on October 24. (Airgram A–1567 from London, October 25; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 15–IND US)

1. *Area of the facility.* The US had originally desired exclusive use of the entire island, while the British had sought to delimit narrowly the extent of the facility. The problem was resolved by delimiting the area in which permanent construction could take place without further UK approval. The British retain the right to build their own defense facility within that area, provided there is no interference with US operations. We have freedom of access to the entire island, and may also undertake construction in support of the facility in areas other than those reserved for permanent construction with the prior agreement of UK authorities.

2. *Civil aviation.* Another question arose over possible use of the island by civil aircraft, especially those chartered by BOAC and the Military Airlift Command. We were concerned that such use might cause third countries, including the USSR or its satellites, to assert rights to use the airfield under the Chicago Convention. As finally worked out, the agreement simply states that "state aircraft owned or operated by or on behalf of either Government" may use the airfield; this phraseology should serve to preclude such third-country claims.

3. *Protection and security.* The original British draft had called for inter-governmental consultation concerning threats to the security of the entire Chagos Archipelago. Our more limited language, now accepted by the British, calls only for consultation if there is any threat to the facility. We believe that this language will help us to avoid Congressional criticism when the agreement is published in the TIAS series.

In addition to the foregoing, the relocation of the former copra workers on Diego Garcia has worked out fairly well, with little adverse publicity, although resettlement is not yet completed and the possibility exists that unfavorable publicity may still result from this process. The UK is responsible for the resettlement, but the US cannot escape identification with the problem.

The Department of Defense has cleared the Agreement. Your approval is required in order to authorize the Embassy to conclude the Agreement.[3]

[3] Stoessel initialed his approval on September 15.