

March 19, 1974
**Record of conversation Between T.N. Kaul and
Henry Kissinger, 'Indian Ocean'**

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Summary:

They discuss creating a "zone of peace" in the Indian Ocean.

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Indian Ocean

I told Kissinger that feeling in our parliament and among public was very strong against any trend towards Great Power military rivalry and competition in the Indian Ocean area. The setting up of an Anglo-American military base in Diego Garcia might produce a chain reaction. I expressed hope that US government would respond favorably to the suggestion of a conference between the littoral States and other interested powers in devising an arrangement which would prevent such military rivalry and competition and safeguard the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace in accordance with UN resolution. I hoped that Kissinger would take this matter up with Soviet Government during his visit to Moscow or else they might take it up with him and I asked for Kissinger's reaction to this idea. He replied "You can rest assured that our presence in the Indian Ocean is not aimed against India or a threat to your country. On the contrary, it might prove of some use to you at some future date. However, we are willing to consider the idea of an international conference to resolve this matter and if the Russians take it up with me I shall be glad to discuss it with them. Moynihan has been spring pressing India's point of view with us." I would suggest that you may pass this on to the Russians and suggest that they take up the matter with Kissinger when he visits Moscow next week.