E.O. 11952
TAGS: 12065: GDS 1/25/88 (NEGROPONTE, John D.) OR-M MARR, XL, XX
MARR, XL, XX
SUBJECT: DOD BUDGET TO REQUEST FUNDS FOR WESTERN CARIBBEAN AIRFIELDS

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO: AMBASSARY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE
AMBASSARY KINGSTON IMMEDIATE
AMBASSARY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

BECKET TEGUCIGALPA 621

EXDIS DECAPItionED

REF: STATE 18912

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT

2. Embassy Tegucigalpa replies to questions raised para six reftel are as follows.

3. Host government would be very receptive to use of DOD funds for airfield improvement at both La Mesa and Goloson.

4. We believe an agreement granting U.S. military aircraft and associated forces access to improved airfields could readily be negotiated. We would in fact not rule out possibility that host government would agree to constant use of airfields by U.S. forces and believe that if

Instructed to raise this matter with host government this
should be part of our initial negotiating position.

5. Implementation of proposal would have favorable political impact on Honduran military and body politic. There would undoubtedly be some adverse reaction from a vocal minority; but we believe such reaction would be within host government ability to contain and in the implementation of proposal long run/would strengthen government's hand vis-a-vis these types of critics.

6. Strategic impact would be viewed here as significant, offsetting to some extent Nicaraguan buildup and alleviating concern about Nicaraguan acquisition of MIG-21's. Such U.S. access would not repeat not in our view be substitute for upgrading and modifying Honduran Air Force fighter capability.

7. Regarding timeframe, we believe agreement in principle could be obtained almost immediately after new government takes office; and if Washington can keep its requirements for a detailed agreement reasonably simple and straightforward, we could probably negotiate an agreement in very short order after that.

8. We do not foresee any serious difficulties in the negotiating process.

9. Department please repeat CINCLANT NORFOLK VA, USCINCISO QUARRY HEIGHTS PANAMA AND JCS.

NEGROPONTE