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OP-30 FILES: 11000/p

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SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

CNO BRIEFING SUMMARY

OO-BRIEFED

IN REPLY REFER TO
Op-61FS/dgb
Ser 001895P61
7 SEP 1967

SECRET

MEMORANDUM OF INFORMATION FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Subj: Diego Garcia (U)

OP-001
✓ OP-002
✓ OP-003
OP-004
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OP-008

→ 1. Background. The Navy Strategic Island concept was developed in 1959 and approved by the JCS in 1960. In essence it calls for a "stockpiling" of islands for use of the United States. In 1963 the U.S. approached the UK on the possible reservation of Indian Ocean Islands for defense purposes. After negotiations the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) was formed in November 1965 and comprised the Chagos Archipelago, Aldabra, Isle de Roches and Farquhar. The selection of these islands was predicated on unquestioned UK sovereignty, low political profile and a negligible population.

A bilateral agreement signed in 1966 gives the U.S. 50 year base rights, unrestricted use, and provides for both unilateral and joint facilities in the BIOT.

2. Diego Garcia. In January 1966 SECDEF requested SECNAV for Navy plans for Diego Garcia. In February the plan for an austere naval facility was approved in principle by SECDEF. Navy PCR turned down without prejudice by SECDEF in order to sound out British interest. The British stated in April 1967 that although interested, they had no funds to commit to this project. In May the UK stated it would be receptive to a diplomatic approach proposing the U.S. build the facility with nominal UK participation.

In July the JCS endorsed the Navy project and recommended that an approach be made to the British to determine their willingness to share manning and operation of the facility. The JCS further recommended that the project should be undertaken by the U.S. unilaterally if necessary.

3. Present Status. SECDEF has for decision a Navy request that he approve the first increment of construction on a U.S. facility (13M) in FY 69. OASD/ISA is currently preparing its recommendation to SECDEF on the Diego Garcia proposal.

A joint US-UK site survey was completed on 5 August. The report of this survey has not yet been received, but results are understood to have been generally favorable. ←

DOWNGRADING AT 12-YEAR INTERVALS

NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED

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4. Op-61 Comment. A proposed draft recommendation by OASD/ISA has been in circulation since 28 July. To date ISA has had no success in obtaining the concurrence or comment of System Analysis. (SA has not, in the past, been favorable to the project). It is expected that the project will be discussed this week between ISA and SA at the Assistant Secretary/Deputy Assistant Secretary level. It is not, however, possible to predict when Diego Garcia will come out of limbo and an OSD/ISA recommendation will go forward to SECDEF.

5. All of the above paragraphs are classified SECRET.

Copy to:
UNDERSECNAV

Op-06
Op-09
Op-06
Op-04
Op-03
Op-60
Op-090
OPA

Very Respectfully
James W. O'Grady

JAMES W. O'GRADY
Director, Politico-Military Policy Division

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