

27 NOV 71

U.S. to Return CIA's Carib Island Base

WASHINGTON — (CST) — After a decade as a center of U.S. cloak and dagger activities, a tiny island of bird droppings in the Caribbean will be formally returned to Honduras today by Robert Finch, the presidential assistant, during a one-day visit.

The island, Swan Island, about 100 miles north of Honduras, is composed almost entirely of guano, the accumulated droppings of sea fowl.

It served as the site of a covert Central Intelligence

Agency radio station broadcasting to Cuba during and after the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion and later to other points in Latin America.

Diplomatic sources indicated that final disposition of the station, and whether it will be used again by the CIA, will be subject to negotiation.

The United States has claimed the island since 1863 under the Guano Act of 1836, which gave the President the right to designate an unclaimed island as U.S. territory once an American citizen had discovered guano on it.

See this file 5 Dec 69