



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

SECRET

November 30, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY ARMISTEAD I. SELDEN, JR.

SUBJECT: Early Development of "US Military Base Complex in the Marianas"

REF: Your memorandum dated 28 November 1971

From the perspective of the Micronesian Status Negotiations, the next few months will be crucial. It is essential that anti-U.S. elements in the Trust Territory be denied, wherever possible, any opportunities to discredit the U.S. position. At Hana the U.S. Delegation assured the Micronesians that, if any non-emergency land transfers became necessary before final agreement on the status issue was reached, the United States Government would negotiate with the "proper authorities." In the case of the Marianas this would probably be the District Legislature. Certainly the premature leak of any secret and detailed plans for building military bases in Micronesia could be used by unfriendly individuals or groups to charge bad faith on the part of the United States. Consequently, it appears wise not to risk a leak until separate negotiations with the Marianas are underway.

If, however, the Department of Defense believes that a delay in this project could jeopardize national security, every precaution should be taken to keep the information from leaking and to frame the proposal so that it is clearly a contingency action which will ultimately depend on full consultation with the proper Micronesian authorities.

I should like to take this opportunity to underscore my strong belief that, at this stage, any defense activity in or related to Micronesia, no matter how innocent or well motivated, would be seized upon and distorted by elements in Micronesia and the United States, in order to prevent a final agreement. This is unfortunate, but nevertheless a fact of life. Consequently, every effort should be made to keep military activity of a public nature and defense pronouncements about the Trust Territory at a minimum until the negotiations have reached a more secure stage.

Franklin Haydn Williams

Franklin Haydn Williams
The President's Personal Representative
for Micronesian Status Negotiations

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In reply refer to:
I-29346/71

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (ISA)

SUBJECT: Early Development of "U.S. Military Base Complex in The Marianas"

The proposal for commencement of classified planning in the case of Tinian, which was forwarded to you recently, is being temporarily held up in order to establish the possible political consequences, vis-a-vis the status negotiation efforts of Ambassador Williams, if some of the details become compromised to the public. In order to establish such a position it appears mandatory that the views of Ambassador Williams be solicited.

Ambassador Hummel, the Director of the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations has been contacted informally and agrees with this approach. He has also indicated that both he and Ambassador Williams are very receptive to pushing ahead with the speedy development of a classified plan in view of the net advantages of such a course of action. However, he desires an opportunity to reply formally after detailed coordination.

The concurrence of Ambassador Williams on both his need for an approved plan and his acceptance of attendant risks will permit the response to the Chairman on Tinian development to be forwarded with a clear understanding of the possible risks by all concerned.

Recommend signature.

h/ Poolin

PREP: CDR SHAID/OASD/ISA/EAPR/rdm/24 Nov 71/X-73248
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24 Nov-71
In reply refer to:
I-29346/71

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MEMORANDUM FOR AMBASSADOR HAYDN WILLIAMS

SUBJECT: Early Development of "US Military Base Complex in the Marianas"

BACKGROUND

You were provided long-term requirements for military basing options in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) in the Secretary of Defense letter of 9 September 1971. This letter also stated that the requirement for construction/rehabilitation of facilities in the Marianas "could occur at an early date."

CURRENT STATUS: Planning within the Services for a Tinian Island basing complex has now proceeded to a decision point. Each component is determining what facilities and forces might appropriately be located on Tinian (and Saipan), in the event a plan is approved and construction can begin at an early date. However, further efforts must now be made within the normal planning, programming and budget processes of DOD.

Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have asked the Secretary of Defense to approve; the incorporation of the Tinian development plan in appropriate DOD and Service planning documents; the initiation of base master planning; and the subsequent inclusion of these detailed plans into the budget and programming documents of the Military Departments. Without such approval, realistic planning by the Services cannot progress further and congressional authorization for this project could not be obtained before FY 1974 or 1975.

If such programming is approved, planning may proceed with sufficient speed to permit a submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) by end CY 71. In that event, it is conceivable that an approved construction program could start as early as FY 1973.

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However, there is a view here that once a program (even a classified program such as this) is submitted there is a risk that the program as a whole and some of its details could be compromised to the public. This view also holds that the potential damage to your negotiation efforts from such a compromise would outweigh the immediate advantages resulting from expediting our development efforts.

There is a second view that the speedy development of a classified detailed basing and construction plan, that has been approved to the point of congressional authorization, would play a vital role in achieving our military objectives on Tinian. Such a project, when placed in your hands for use in negotiations, could be the critical inducement that facilitates the acquisition or control of the whole of Tinian Island. It might also help in obtaining a speedy Marianas agreement to a political status that is more advantageous to the U.S.

Your comments and recommendations on the practicability of proceeding with the above planning would be appreciated.

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acting asst. Sec.

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