

June 1, 1973

RESPONSE OF MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION

TO UNITED STATES POSITION PAPER

ON

LAND AND MILITARY REQUIREMENTS

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On May 29, 1973, the United States Delegation presented its paper on the subject of land, including Federal requirements for future land use in the Marianas. Following delivery of this paper, the U. S. Delegation made a detailed oral presentation regarding its military requirements on Tinian. During the past three days the Commission has directed numerous questions to the U. S. Delegation regarding these proposals and has discussed the matter in private meetings of the Commission. We appreciate the willingness of the U. S. Delegation to answer all our questions to the fullest extent possible in light of current plans. This memorandum will attempt to summarize the initial reactions of the Commission to the United States proposals.

The Marianas Political Status Commission is sympathetic to the desires of the United States to fulfill certain of its military requirements within the confines of the Mariana Islands. We are not prepared at this time, however, to accept all of the specific proposals advanced by the United States. The Commission believes that three days (or even three weeks) is too short a time within which to make any decisions, tentative or otherwise, on a subject which is so complicated and so profoundly significant to the future of the Marianas. We are prepared, however, to continue discussions with the United States on these important issues before the next session of negotiations and to negotiate in good faith in an attempt to find ways to meet the United States military requirements

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consistent with the best interests of Marianas citizens.

As a guide to these future discussions and negotiations, the Commission has formulated several general positions which reflect its best current thinking. As more detailed plans are made available to the Commission, obviously, the Commission members will be prepared to contribute additional thoughts or suggestions. The positions set forth below reflect the collective views of this Commission.

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1. Form of Acquisition: The Marianas Political Status Commission will not agree to the sale of land ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ for military purposes. The Commission is prepared, however, to make land available on a lease basis for a term of years to be mutually agreed upon. We recognize the United States preference for outright purchase of the required land but are unable to honor it. Prevailing practice in the United States has little relevance to the Mariana Islands, where land is scarce and has a special cultural significance to the people. Regardless of the guarantees which the United States might make, the members of the Commission could not possibly justify or explain to their constituents or families the seemingly permanent transfer of so much of the Marianas limited land to the United States for military purposes.

2. Extent of Acquisition: The Commission has the following comments with respect to the various land requests made by the United States for military purposes.

a. Farallon de Medinilla. The Commission definitely prefers that the United States select one of the more distant Northern

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Islands for target purposes. In this regard, the Commission desires to be informed of the approximate cost savings which would accrue to the United States if Farallon de Medinilla is eventually selected rather than a more distant island. If the use of Farallon de Medinilla for target practice is finally agreed to by the Commission, we will have to be reassured regarding the safety precautions which will be implemented by the United States. The Commission would like to have this information in written form before the next session of negotiations.

b. Saipan. As a general proposition, the Commission believes that the United States requests for land on Saipan for military purposes are unreasonable. In the first place, these requests are for contingency purposes only and their presentation at this time reflects an apparent lack of confidence in the future Commonwealth of the Marianas to honor its responsibilities as a member of the American political family if a future contingency should ever arise. Secondly, it is difficult to reconcile the sweeping requests of the United States for land on Tinian for presently contemplated uses with its specific requests on Saipan for more generalized future uses. Before the Commission accedes to any requests for land on Saipan, it will have to be persuaded that these contingency needs could not possibly be met through use of land and facilities to be developed on Tinian. In addition to these general observations, we have some specific objections to each of the two United States requests for land on Saipan.

(1) Tanapag Harbor: The Commission strongly objects to the United States request for 320 acres in Tanapag Harbor for contingency purposes. We believe this request overlooks

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the vital significance of the harbor area to the future economic development of Saipan. This location is the only industrial area on the island and is heavily stressed in all recent planning efforts for its potential contribution to a strong civilian economy in Saipan. As discussed during our meetings with the United States Delegation, the area sought by the United States is the only area to construct a new dock for large ships. Construction of such a dock north of Charlie Dock is virtually impossible. Yet the need for such a dock in the near future is a definite possibility. Accordingly, the Commission cannot agree to the request. The Commission might be prepared--repeat might--to lease some of this land to the United States provided it undertakes to develop facilities which could be immediately used within the civilian community and at the same time have possible military utility in the event of a future requirement.

(2) Isley Field: After this property is returned to the Marianas, the Commission is confident that the United States will be able to continue joint use rights to this airfield. With regard to the request for 500 acres south of and adjacent to Isley Field, the Commission takes a very strong negative view. This land is much too important for Saipan's future economic development to be burdened by restrictions arising from hypothetical needs of the United States in the future. The people of Saipan are entitled to have this essential property developed now as part of an integral master plan for the island

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rather than reserved for possible use by the United States which may or may not be compatible with the overall plan. In addition, the Commission is not persuaded, based on the showing to date, that 500 acres are in fact needed ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ As was the case with Tanapag Harbor, the Commission might be willing to lease some of this land to the United States provided it undertakes to develop it in the near future with facilities that could be used for present civilian, as well as future military, purposes.

(3) Tinian: The requests made by the United States for land on Tinian are so overwhelming that they are difficult to comprehend in only three days. With respect to the extent of these requests, the following points seem most important at this time:

(a) The Commission is not inclined to agree to lease the entire island to the military with a sublease back of one-third for use by the civilian community. We are prepared to negotiate a lease for that portion of the island actually required for military purposes but not for any more than the minimum required.

(b) The Commission needs to be persuaded that the runway location chosen by the United States is the only feasible location on the island of Tinian which would serve the military's purposes. We would appreciate this information in written form.

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(c) The Commission understands that other harbor locations were studied but were rejected on cost grounds. We would like to know the approximate savings to the United States of using (and developing) the present harbor facilities rather than using the best alternative location on Tinian which was examined by the military.

(d) The Commission is concerned that the United States request may not have made sufficient allowance for the needs of Tinian's civilian population in the years ahead. We want to study population trends and future economic development on Tinian to see if the land left for civilian use under the proposed military plan is adequate for the next 40 - 50 years.

(e) The Commission is especially concerned by the dislocation and loss of land resulting from the military's inclusion of the present harbor in the United States request and the accompanying safety requirements. As indicated by the Commission's questions, we desire to be more fully informed about the extent to which civilian use of the harbor and the adjacent area will be curtailed due to safety precautions.

3. Civilian Control: The Commission intends to insist firmly on the principle of civilian control over that portion of Tinian not included in the military base. As indicated above, we believe that the portion of the island not leased to the United States should remain in civilian hands--either private or public. We recognize that the United States has legitimate concerns regarding developments outside the base

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area--economic, social and otherwise. The Commission welcomes the United States desire to build an ideal civilian/military relationship on Tinian which will fully serve the interests of both the military and civilian communities. We agree with the proposal for a joint military/civilian relations committee, so long as it is made clear that its functions are advisory in nature only. The Commission is confident that the ~~government~~ <sup>MARIANAS</sup> government, with appropriate advice from the military, will be fully competent to deal with questions of immigration to Tinian and economic development within the framework of the Constitution and laws of the new Commonwealth.

4. Utilities: The Commission appreciates the United States assurances that the citizens of Tinian who are relocated in a new community will have the necessary infrastructure and services to make it viable. Exactly how best to do this is a matter which must be studied further by planners representing both the Commission and the United States. We want the opportunity, for example, to study seriously whether the military's power needs could be adequately met by a civilian power authority. To be frank, the Commission is concerned about arrangements which will make the citizens of Tinian dependent upon the military for their essential services. The people of the Marianas, based upon their past experience, are properly fearful of such a situation and its impact upon their ability to administer their own affairs. Subject to further planning and study, of course, the Commission therefore has a general preference for separate facilities from the military, whenever feasible, rather than the sharing of military facilities. We are well aware that both military and civilian authorities must be involved in such planning, not only at the outset but also on a continuing basis.

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5. Price of Land: The Commission agrees with the United States that any land [REDACTED] leased) to the United States should be at a fair and just price. The Commission believes that the two delegations should give high priority to an attempt to agree upon the procedures by which the value of land on Tinian is to be determined. We do not believe that the standard procedures followed in the United States by the military are necessarily applicable in the Marianas at this point in time. Before any serious discussion about land value and rental payments can occur, it will be necessary to explore fully the value of comparable land and recent transactions involving the acquisition of land by the military. The experience in Guam will be of special relevance to this inquiry. No price for land on Tinian can be considered fair and just unless it is arrived at after a thorough exploration of all relevant factors, including the future growth [REDACTED] of the Marianas<sup>AS A WHOLE</sup> the relationship between the amount of developed land and undeveloped land<sup>IN THE MARIANAS AS A WHOLE</sup> and similar considerations. This Commission will be unable to defend any agreement involving the lease of massive amounts of land to the United States unless it is fully persuaded that the United States has paid the maximum dollar value for the LEASE [REDACTED]

6. Resettlement of Tinian Residents: The United States proposals for resettlement of Tinian residents appear at first glance to be both flexible and generous. In this area, particularly, the Commission will want to reserve judgment until it has had full opportunity to consult with the people most directly affected. The following are some of our preliminary observations on this subject.

First, this is an area where we believe that the citizens of

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Tinian should have the widest possible range of options. If citizens prefer to move to other islands, we believe that they should receive benefits equivalent to those given to those who elect to remain on Tinian. Given the varying sizes of Tinian families, we believe a choice of houses should be available in order to accommodate large, as well as small, families. With respect to the design of the houses, the Commission's questions and comments have already suggested the need for varying designs, preferably done by local people familiar with local taste and tradition.

Second, we welcome the representations of the United States that planning this new community will be a joint military/civilian project. It is essential that this planning be integrated into Phase I of the Commission's economic program, with which the United States has agreed in principle. If the military intends to undertake preliminary planning along these lines in the near future, it is essential that the Marianas be given the financial support required under Phase I in order to participate meaningfully in the planning on Tinian.

Third, the Commission requests the military to explore the possibility of a substantially integrated housing area for military and civilian personnel in the relocated San Jose Village. We would appreciate a written report on this alternative, which fully analyzes its advantages and disadvantages. The Commission recognizes that some military personnel must live on the base, but we would like to know why integrated communities as commonly found in the United States around military bases are not possible here in the Marianas. In particular, we are interested in knowing whether such an approach would enable the United States to reduce its request for land on Tinian since less would

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be required for housing and dependent facilities on the military base itself.

7. Employment and Training Opportunities: As indicated by the Commission's questions, the members are very interested in the employment and training opportunities which will arise by virtue of United States military activities on Tinian. We appreciate the fact that the United States has only the most preliminary plans in this area and is interested in soliciting the detailed inputs of this Commission and the people of Tinian before finalizing its plans. The Commission has the following preliminary observations on this general subject.

First, the Commission would like specific data regarding the military's employment needs on the base so that our Phase I planning can be both complete and accurate. We want the opportunity to make proposals regarding training programs in order to ensure that they have maximum utility and relevance to the needs of the people of the Marianas. As the United States must appreciate, the Commission is of the definite view that these training programs should afford full opportunity to the participants to gain access to the better jobs on the base, assuming that their skills and experience so warrant.

Second, the Commission strongly believes that these opportunities should be available on an equal basis to all citizens of the Marianas.

Third, the Commission is very concerned about the level of wages to be paid on the base by the military. We want to explore jointly with the United States the practical and economic implications of military wage levels to the civilian economy planned in the Marianas.

8. Use of Local Contractors: The Commission welcomes the

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assurances by the United States Delegation that every effort will be made to use local contractors and suppliers during the construction of the base and its operations. As evidenced by questions from several members, the Commission is sceptical that in fact local contractors or suppliers will stand to profit in any material respect from this military installation. In light of the size of the base, the Commission is apprehensive that the principal contracts will go to large international concerns which will obviously purchase materials from wherever they can be obtained at the lowest cost. We would appreciate a detailed report from the United States regarding the applicable procurement regulations as they are likely to be applied in the Marianas. Such a report might also include detailed information as to the materials required, the kind of specifications which will be imposed, and what specific commitments the United States is prepared to make in this area, especially with respect to smaller contracts or those which are not subject to competitive bidding.

9. Timing: The Commission agrees that detailed planning of the Tinian installation (Phase I) should await successful conclusion of these negotiations. The Commission recognizes the need for preliminary planning, however, during the next several months, and is agreeable to such planning efforts by the United States. We welcome the assurances of the U. S. Delegation that this Commission be kept fully informed regarding this planning and will be consulted in advance regarding any significant activity undertaken by the United States on Tinian which is related to the proposals being considered in these negotiations. We also want to explore with the United States the inter-relationship between

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the political status, economic, and military issues which have been discussed between the two delegations so that we can agree on a program which will reflect their inter-dependence and permit their gradual implementation together.

The Commission hopes that these preliminary observations are of some assistance to the U. S. Delegation. We are hopeful that the United States will re-evaluate its military requirements in light of the Commission's concerns before the next session of negotiations. Representatives of the Commission will be available to consult on this subject during the recess, if the United States believes that this would be useful. If the United States re-evaluates its plans and supplies the requested information, the Commission pledges itself, in good faith, to thoroughly consider the United States proposals and attempt to reach agreement with the United States on this important subject.

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