

LAND STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS

June 3, 1973

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I would like to begin my remarks this afternoon by thanking the Marianas Commission for making the arrangements for our joint visit to Tinian. We also appreciated the hospitality that was extended to us by the leaders and the people of Tinian. The marathon long public meeting was certainly in the best traditions of a free and open society and a good example of freedom of speech and democracy in action.

Following our return to Saipan, members of the U. S. Delegation turned for the first time to a consideration of the Marianas Commission's statement on land which was presented at the working session immediately prior to our departure for Tinian. This statement in response to the U. S. proposal on land did not comment on the American position on the public lands, land alienation or eminent domain. It rather concentrated on future U. S. military land requirements. My comments this afternoon will thus be limited to this same subject; summarizing the U. S. position and answering some of the specific questions posed by your paper.

The U. S. welcomed, as it has in the past, a further acknowledgement by the Marianas Commission of the oft-stated U. S. need for land in the Marianas for defense purposes. In particular, the American Delegation appreciated the Commission's pledge to negotiate in good faith ways to meet the U. S. land requirements. We approach land negotiations in this same spirit, and such an attitude is wholly consistent with our understanding of your desire and choice regarding your future political status

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The U. S. Delegation, while it believes that a great many social, political and economic benefits will accrue to the people of the Marianas under the proposed commonwealth arrangement, has emphasized from the outset that membership in the American family involves obligations as well. Contributing to the common defense is one of the most fundamental of these obligations. The U. S. land requirements in the Marianas for military purposes, as already set forth, have been carefully considered by the U. S. Government, in the context of the immediate and possible future need for Pacific to enable the U. S. to military facilities in the/ carry out its defense responsibilities and obligations. It is on the careful basis of this/assessment of military need that the U. S. land requirement in the Marianas is based.

While your Commission is prepared to make land available to the United States, the question of the extent and how land is to be acquired remains to be resolved. First the question of the form of acquisition. I believe the record is clear that the United States Government appreciates the importance which the people of the Marianas attach to their land. This has been brought forcefully home by the United States' insistence that all public land will be returned to the people of the Marianas and by our offer to do whatever is necessary to protect your land from coming under the control of private interests outside of the Marianas.

Nevertheless, it might be helpful to say again that what the U. S. is proposing is the use of land for public purposes. The U. S. Government

historically purchases, not leases, land when it acquires land for the public good and for uses involving substantial investment over a long period of years. This is as true in the acquisition of land for the building of dams, hospitals, schools, post offices, etc., as it is with military bases. The U. S. Congress is reluctant to commit large sums to projects with only the protection of a lease. The proposals for land acquisition which have been discussed here certainly fall in this category.

This does not mean, however, that the Commission's concerns on permanency could not be satisfied in some fashion. The U. S. would perhaps be willing to commit itself, if at some time in the future a decision was made to close the Tinian base, to make the land available to the people of the Marianas through some kind of covenant within the purchase arrangement. There is some precedent for such a procedure. However, such a qualification would in turn have a marked effect on the initial purchase price which the U. S. was able to pay.

One other comment is in order regarding the acquisition of land. Your statement addressed the procedures for determining land values and suggested some rather unconventional criteria. By law and regulation the U. S. cannot employ any other standard than current fair market value. Where the U. S. Government is concerned appraisal procedures are carefully circumscribed and these prohibit the consideration of speculation on future growth in the determination of land values. As previously stated, the thorough evaluation of U. S. acquisition costs will be part of the preliminary planning process.

Extent of Land RequirementsFarallon de Medinilla

The two delegations appear to agree that the United States requirement for an island for target practice can be met. The U. S. has suggested Farallon de Medinilla. The island is being currently used as a bombing range. While it has been acknowledged that it is uninhabitable and inaccessible, the Marianas Commission seems to have some reservations about its use which the U. S. finds confusing. You have asked for our response in writing on two questions which are provided herewith.

From the U. S. standpoint, its distance from Guam and Tinian are of importance economically. To use one of the more distant Northern Islands for target purposes would not be desirable, either operationally or economically. For example, if one of the more distant islands were used, most fighter aircraft would not have enough fuel remaining when arriving over the target area to permit the multiple bombing passes that are required during practice missions and also to permit a safe return to the base on Tinian or on Guam. In addition, these aircraft would not have enough fuel to practice other required training maneuvers enroute to and from the target area due to the distances involved. These operational considerations are extremely important and the economic advantage of a closer-in target area is obvious.

With regard to your concern over the safety precautions within the target area, the United States has established elaborate safety precautions to insure that there is no hazard to personnel or property outside of the target area. Due to the distance of Farallon from other islands there is no possibility that injuries could occur to inhabitants of the nearest islands

as a result of the target practice. The island will be used for air-to-ground and ship-to-shore target practice only. It will not, I repeat will not, be used as a ground-to-ground missile target area. In this regard, if you desire, the U. S. Delegation will make available a copy of the pertinent unclassified U. S. Air Force safety directives regarding such ranges. In essence, no more risk would exist under the new proposal than exists today. Furthermore the U. S. ^{is} not aware of a single complaint regarding the safety of the practice operations that have been conducted intermittently on this target area since 1970.

Saipan

The U. S. Delegation was a little puzzled by your general comments regarding the possible future U. S. military land needs on Saipan. I can assure you that this side of the table has no lack of confidence in the ability or desire of the future commonwealth to honor its responsibilities. It has been the U. S. Delegation's impression that you would prefer the United States to arrange for its land requirements as a part of these negotiations rather than to put them forward to some future date when economic development might either preclude or make it difficult to satisfy such land needs. U. S. experience bears out the wisdom of this procedure. The earlier settlement is also in the interest of the U. S. Government since it has no guarantee that uncontrolled, private, permanent improvements around a harbor or airfield will be compatible with subsequent military needs for access to that harbor or airfield. It does not appear therefore unreasonable to us to attempt to be farsighted in projecting possible U. S. future needs. Indeed this would appear to be a wise and prudent course.

In the case of the requirements put forward by the U. S. on Saipan, I refer back to my remarks made at the conclusion of your statement on Friday. The U. S. has some 4,966 acres of retention lands on Saipan. The U. S. military has shown over the past several years a willingness to share the use of this land. For example, the retention land in the vicinity of Tanapag has a number of private commercial activities on it and the number has increased steadily over the years. Kobler Field, your commercial airport, is in retention land and the U. S. has just within the last few months signed an agreement permitting civilian use of Isley Field which remains military retention land. Moreover, the FAA has just authorized the expenditure of several million dollars for the improvement of Isley, based in part on representations that the field would be jointly used. In the final analysis the U. S. is not requesting permission to use retention land on which it already has rights but is ^{that it wishes} stating/to retain some 800 acres of the land, ^{ing} while returning the remainder of some 4100 acres to your future government.

Now as to specific parcels:

Isley Field

Your position regarding the 500 acres south of and adjacent to Isley Field, which is currently retention land, does not appear reasonable to us. While no near term development is planned, the U. S. requirement for this acreage is not hypothetical but contingent; that is, it will be needed immediately if we ^{if} were to move out of some other location or/ another location could handle a new requirement. The U. S. planned use of the area for aircraft

maintenance and repair facilities as well as limited logistical support would be compatible with any reasonable master plan for the airfield vicinity. Even in the most optimistic view, the U. S. cannot conceive that within the next twenty years airfield-related activities will be developed to a level beyond the capability of the 3700 acres of retention land to be returned.

Tanapag Harbor

The bulk of the current industrial development in the Tanapag Harbor area is in the 320 acres the U. S. is prepared to release. An additional deep water dock could be constructed in this area, but such a project would probably be extremely costly. While it might be some time before local commercial shipping needs could justify another deep water dock, it is recognized that the Marianas may eventually have a legitimate requirement for such an improvement. Consequently, the U. S. Government is willing to consider reducing the size of the area described in its requirements in order to release some of the land/south of Charlie Dock, provided that assurances can be given that no activity will be built adjacent to a new dock which is not directly harbor-oriented. The exact lines of the boundary to accommodate your possible future needs for a new dock should be the subject of direct discussions between the two delegations.

The U. S. will still want to retain the remainder of the 320 acres to the south of Charlie Dock.

Access to this area will be particularly important in the event it becomes necessary to utilize the small parcel of retention land adjacent to Isley Field or if it becomes necessary to locate a ship and small craft repair facility there or a small shore logistic support facility. The U. S. is,

of course, prepared to continue the practice of allowing harbor-oriented activities to be placed on this land, such as the Mobil Oil installation and the Micronesian Construction Company yard which is presently using military retention land for private commercial purposes.

Tinian

The U. S. Delegation is heartened by the statement in your paper to the effect that the Commission is prepared to negotiate for that portion of Tinian required for military purposes. We view this as an important step forward, one that sharply narrows the issues. The only question in this regard now appears to be whether the U. S. needs for its operational base, all the 18,500 acres it is asking for. While these requirements may appear large to you, let me say they are small compared to comparable facilities elsewhere. We could have asked you for three separate facilities in various parts of the Marianas; an airfield with its own docking facility, a training area with its own air and docking facility, and a supply and logistics facility with its own airfield and dock. We decided to combine them in order to save land among other things and have tailored the size further to meet the special Tinian situation. In this same connection I should also point out that the U. S. Congress would not appropriate funds for land or a base which is not needed. You can rest assured that the U. S. Congress is no more willing to spend money recklessly than you are to relinquish land unnecessarily.

The U. S. Delegation has attempted to describe the planned uses for the proposed base and to satisfy your reservations--not only through formal presentations but in extended question and answer sessions. It is difficult to know exactly what more specific information you are seeking about the base proper. Your specific questions in your paper of June 1 are all we have to work with and these suggest that perhaps we are not too far apart.

I will deal with them briefly:

(a) You have asked for a response in writing about the location and orientation of the proposed airfield. While the exact location of this runway at West Field has not yet been determined, the approximate location was picked after careful consideration of many operational and technical factors. First, prevailing winds determine runway direction since aircraft must take off and land into the wind. Second, the West Field location provides the flattest surrounding terrain which is necessary for safe flight operations in marginal weather. Third, the runway location on Tinian must be planned in consideration of the proposed development of Isley Field to avoid conflicting traffic patterns. North Field is beneath the final approach and departure zones for Isley Field and restricts the development of North Field for safety reasons.

The exact runway location on Tinian will be determined by qualified engineers who will consider safe flight operations as a primary criteria. Other considerations will include the use of existing runway and taxiways to the maximum extent possible. An effort to change the existing terrain will not be undertaken because of the cost and the negative effect on the landscape.

(b) You are likewise concerned about the choice of San Jose Harbor. Preliminary planning for the Tinian port facility has been based on the use of the existing harbor as it is located at the only site on the island reasonably suitable for harbor development. The waterfront property and the anchorages are protected from the prevailing easterly winds. The piers are built within the only protected reef area on the west coast large enough for deep draft ships; moreover, the adjacent offshore anchorages are in the

only location where the depths are less than 100 fathoms and where the area is extensive enough to provide an adequate anchorage. Our present information suggests no other location on the island possesses these natural characteristics.

In addition, a preliminary study of the island revealed that a suitable alternative site to construct a harbor is not available. Our studies to date show that to develop another harbor would be technically extremely difficult and as to cost, prohibitive, because of the required construction in deep water and because of the amount of earth to be removed from the shoreline in site development. Also a harbor in a location other than the existing site would very likely be only marginally useable because it would be unprotected, unsheltered, and lacking in suitable depth for an anchorage area.

An in-depth analysis of harbor engineering and a rehabilitation program will be made as soon as our engineers visit the island to complete the initial on-site surveys and refined planning estimates. Certainly, the consideration of alternatives would involve a whole complex of cost factors and is a complicated process. Again, however, I must reemphasize that the U. S. Government must reserve the right to make the judgment whether alternatives are feasible either operationally or in terms of cost.

(c) Similarly, the U. S. wishes to reassure the Commission that joint use of the harbor is acceptable and compatible with military requirements. Civilian use would include construction of certain harbor-oriented facilities and the normal commercial operation in the port, except when loading and off-loading of ammunition takes place. It is predicted that ammunition handling which would limit harbor activity would occur very

infrequently during a typical year, with well over 90 per cent of the time available for normal port operations. In practical terms, areas within the safety arc could still be used for agricultural and recreational purposes by the people of Tinian. This would include the use of the present beach site at San Jose Harbor. Warehouses could still be built and of course the necessary equipment and offices for handling and processing civilian cargo. Historical sites would be left untouched. The church would likewise remain undisturbed/ and could be used. Civilians could work on normal activities in the area, except safety rules were in effect during periods when / . occasioned by ammunition handling operations, but this should not unduly limit the regular civilian functions of the port.

(d) As to a possible dramatic future growth of the population of Tinian, I should point out that the military requirements were generated independently of this prospect. Using your own projected rates of growth in the Marianas, it hardly appears that the Tinian population will become excessive for many decades unless there is an uncontrolled and massive influx from outside Tinian. Future natural population growth, of course, poses a problem to the Marianas as a whole and to many other areas of the world/ as well. It is a problem which has serious economic and social overtones irrespective of the land question.

A large portion of your statement was devoted to the U. S. proposal to acquire the southern one-third of Tinian and future civilian-military relationship on Tinian. The United States included in its land requirements the southern one-third of Tinian in order to prevent undesirable conditions and consequences which could possibly result from the presence of a major military base and which would not be in the interests of either the local residents or of the U. S. military. Your statement acknowledged these concerns

as legitimate and welcomed the U. S. desire to protect the present character of community life on Tinian. This seeming agreement in principle as to an overall social objective should serve as a good point of departure for our further discussions and negotiations.

The manner in which we achieve these objectives is another matter, of course. You have expressed confidence that your own government would be able to cope with any problems arising as a result of a military presence on Tinian. The general experience of the military has been that despite good intentions, local communities are often vulnerable to the pressures which can be brought to bear by speculators and entrepreneurs who submit to the temptations of quick gains offered with little regard for the long term good of the community as a whole. In the quest for quick profits the rewards of slower paced and more rational development are often overlooked or lost. Our proposal was hopefully structured to strike some kind of rational balance in solving this possible threat.

As the Commission looks to the future, it has rightfully shown an interest in some of the U. S. long-term plans. With respect to Tinian, the U. S. would likewise be very interested in being informed as to what plans you might have for controlling immigration, restricting undesirable businesses, coordinating business development with the needs of the base, and the local people in mind and in generally controlling a possible rush on the situation by speculators to cash in/without regard for the local community.

Let me reemphasize that the U. S. Government also has a stake in this matter. Not only is it interested in the welfare of the people of Tinian, but it is also vitally interested in the operational effectiveness of the military base, the well being of men and women who serve on that base,

and the efficient expenditure of the large sums of money which the U. S. will depend on Tinian

In regard to utilities for Tinian, if economical and reliable commercial power is available from civilian sources, the U. S. would normally prefer this method of meeting its military requirements. From a practical standpoint, however, it is difficult to see how a power complex of the size and complexity required could conceivably be constructed locally in the time frame required. It has never been the intention of the U. S. to insist that the residents of Tinian depend upon the military for their essential services. As we have previously stated, separate civilian utilities can be provided when feasible, if desired by the Tinian people. However, it would be up to the people of Tinian to run them, maintain them and expand them if that became necessary.

As to the resettlement the U. S. reaffirms its desire to plan the resettlement of the civilian community of Tinian as a joint military/civilian effort. However, I must emphasize that it is not our intention to integrate this planning directly into Phase I of the Commission's economic program for the Marianas as a whole. The new community planning is part of the USAF Phase I actions in the schedule for base development. Completion of this planning must be time-phased with other military planning actions. While the specific procedures for consultation have yet to be established, I nevertheless wish to assure you that the Commission and the Tinian people will participate in the planning for the southern one-third of the island. I must point out at the same time that where planning concerns the military base itself the responsibility cannot be shared but must rest solely within the U. S. Government.

The Commission and the residents of Tinian will, of course, desire the maximum flexibility in the overall resettlement process. The size and type of home and the community development which have been presented are to be

considered only as illustrative and in no sense final. As I have said again and again, our planning has not progressed to that point. Detailed housing plans will be developed only after preliminary planning is conducted on Tinian and that will involve consultations with the Tinian people. Every consideration will be given to providing safe, decent sanitary homes and a modern viable community that meets prescribed HUD standards. Several different designs can be included from which families can choose. At the same time I should stress that the flexibility of the U. S. Government will be limited by U. S. law which is designed to meet the practical problems of moving large groups and is not necessarily tailored to each individual's desire.

You have asked for a response in writing on integrated housing. The United States notes the Commission's acknowledgment that some of our military personnel must live on the base. Over and above this requirement there may be opportunities for development of suitable housing or apartments within the relocated San Jose village for military rental purposes. In such an event, the U. S. would welcome the development of private housing to meet this need. However, I can assure you that this kind of a limited land use would not reduce the overall U. S. military land requirements on Tinian.

As to employment and training opportunities, it continues to be the position of the United States that preferential treatment should be given to the residents of Tinian because of the inconvenience they would be put to by the U. S. plans on Tinian. There should be more than enough employment on the base, however, to satisfy the desires of other people of the Marianas, as well, if they desire to commute to Tinian. In this regard, the U. S. anticipates that there will be some type of privately owned and operated rapid transit ferry system established connecting Tinian and Saipan.

Finally, a brief word about the use of local contractors. Military procurement regulations and publications are available to the Commission and can readily be obtained by your advisors in Washington D. C. You have asked for a response on procurement regulations. Specifications and materials lists relating to proposed military construction have not been prepared and will not be available until after Congressional approval of the project. At that time, the Commission will be provided copies of these documents. The U. S. can and will include specific language in its contracts to ensure use of local contractors wherever possible and particularly with respect to small business contracts and non-competitive bid contracts.

Before leaving the subject of Tinian, some general comments are in order about the overall joint planning process. The U.S. proposal was structured to offer and insure that the people of the Marianas and of Tinian in particular have a voice in planning the future development of an ideal civilian/military complex on the island of Tinian. The requirement to acquire the whole island of Tinian was set forth to enhance the prospects of achieving such an objective. The U. S. is of the opinion that by acquiring the southern one-third of Tinian to be reserved for civilian development and the other two thirds for the purposes of a military complex that these objectives can be successfully achieved.

Finally, I must reemphasize that in effecting the various steps such as the prospect of resettling the population, furnishing utilities, increasing economic opportunities and developing training programs, the U. S. cannot abdicate its responsibility or voice in shaping such programs. While the U. S. Government will be laying out a substantial investment which can be of great economic benefit to all the Marianas, the primary objective must be constantly kept in mind--

that is to build a need installation to meet U. S. defense requirements in the Western Pacific.

I now turn to the last subject--the procedures for facilitating further negotiations and for making the necessary arrangements to carry out our agreements. In this area I believe we have a substantial meeting of the minds.

The United States Government will commence in the very near future on-site surveys and engineering studies within the Marianas which are necessary to make refined estimates, to complete the planning for military construction, and to gather the data to advise the Commission and the people of Tinian on matters concerning any possible resettlement of some of the residents of that island

Moreover there is agreement that a joint consultative group be set up composed of members of the Marianas Political Status Commission and members of the U. S. Delegation whom I will appoint to continue the process of working on land questions. I would suggest that the details of this arrangement be worked out between Senator Pangelinan and myself within the near future.

Lastly, I believe we are in accord on the formation of a Tinian Civilian/Military Community Relations Committee early in the planning process under the auspices of the Marianas Political Status Commission and the U. S. Delegation. I would suggest that this group be composed of representatives of the U. S. military and the people of Tinian to jointly address questions concerning future relations between the civilian community and the military base

It is clear from the foregoing that we have come to some meaningful

understandings on some rather significant principles although a number of important questions remain to be resolved. I believe we have made progress and the U. S. looks forward to further fruitful exchanges on land in the near future.