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Ambassador Franklin Hayden Williams  
Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations

July 8, 1973

Thru : Director, Office of Territorial Affairs  
High Commissioner

**Tinian Master Planning**

At 0900 July 3, 1973, a meeting was held in the office of the High Commissioner to discuss various aspects of the Tinian Island situation. Present at the meeting were High Commissioner Johnston, Deputy High Commissioner Coleman, District Administrator Francisco C. Ada, Territorial Planner Phil Chamberlain, and Marianas District Planner Tom Sheehan.

Distad Ada and Tom Sheehan clarified the purpose of Mr. Sheehan's visit to Tinian on or about June 4, 1973. Mr. Sheehan had gone to Tinian at the request of the Speaker of the Tinian Municipal Council. The purpose of his visit was to explain to the members of the Council that due to the Marianas separate status talks and in view of imminent military requirements on Tinian, progress in developing a master plan for Tinian would be suspended. A further purpose of Mr. Sheehan's visit was to retrieve from the Council the only set of preliminary presentations, which were in a working draft stage. Mr. Sheehan was unsuccessful in that the members insisted on retaining the drawings, which had been in their possession for approximately a month, until after they had met with Ambassador Williams. It should be emphasized here that there is no official master plan for the island of Tinian and that all efforts toward developing one were still in a preliminary stage at the time such activity was suspended. In 1968, master planning for the Marianas District was officially started. The island of Saipan was master planned first, followed by Rota. At the conclusion of the Rota plan, work was begun on Tinian, long before the Marianas separate status talks began. Plans also call for master planning Pagan Island, and these plans will now be given priority over the Tinian Plan.

During the meeting, Distad Ada gave assurances that the District has not only suspended the preliminary efforts toward a master plan, but fully understands that no land leases or homesteads (other than deeds on homesteads already approved) where government land is involved will be issued. In fact, it was pointed out that a

building to house the Head Start Program has been held up, and all present at the meeting were in agreement that this particular project should be allowed to continue in view of the fact the Grant-in-Aid funds had already been made available and that there would be the likelihood of losing Head Start funds if the building is not completed. We would, therefore, hope that we may be quickly given permission to proceed with this project so vital to the young people of Tinian. Distad Ada and Tom Sheehan pointed out that there is presently great pressure from Tinian citizens for new homesteads and that this pressure will certainly continue and probably increase; however, we are assured that the District, in line with our policy, is resisting this pressure.

In regard to an alleged transfer of homestead land which has become private land from Herman Manglona to Olympio Borja, there is no record of this transfer thus far in the District Administration office, but Distad Ada will continue to check on it. In this respect, it might be pointed out that at least five, and possibly more, members of the Marianas Status Commission do own land on Tinian which was formerly homestead land but is now privately-owned land which is free of any incumbrance. Contrary to the rules and regulations of most homesteading programs in other areas, once a Micronesian citizen has fulfilled the requirements of homesteading a piece of property, he is issued a quit claim deed to the property and it can be dealt with in the same manner as any other privately-owned land. As provided for in the Trust Territory Code, the Government relinquishes all title to the land to the individual.

It was agreed by all present at the meeting that no action of any kind will be taken on economic planning or land transactions on Tinian without specific written approval from the High Commissioner after he has conferred with the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations. In this respect, it should be pointed out that the Government of the Trust Territory has no control whatsoever over transfers of individually-owned land from one Micronesian citizen to another.



Edward E. Johnston

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Tinian

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Addendum to Memorandum Concerning Tinian  
Master Planning

Just before the attached memorandum was placed in the mail, I received a telephone call from the District Administrator, Francisco C. Ada, informing me that he had finally received the specific information concerning the alleged transfer of property on Tinian, referred to in the penultimate paragraph of the attached memorandum. The official records now indicate:

1. On May 24, 1973, Herman Mangiona purchased Tinian property of 40,100 square meters from Maria O. Dala Cruz for \$25,000. The document of transfer was notarized by Senator Olympic Borja.
2. Four days later, on May 29, 1973, Herman Mangiona transferred the same property to Senator Olympic Borja for \$85,000. This document of transfer was notarized by Mayor Vicente E. Sablan of the Saipan Municipality.
3. Mr. Ada expresses some doubt as to whether any conceivable amount of money actually changed hands, but we felt we should convey to you what the official records show concerning this rather unusual transaction.
4. It should be remembered that although this land was at one time homestead land, it had been conveyed to Ms. Dala Cruz as private land which she could then dispose of at her discretion.

  
Edward E. Johnston

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