

12/15/73
Dec. 15 ¹³/₂₅₄/₁

AMB. MR WILLIAMS' RESPONSE REGARDING PRIVATE LAND SITUATION IN MARIANAS

Talking Points

- During our Phase I discussion, you raised several questions concerning private land survey and adjudication.
- Your main point was you do not want new government burdened with this type of work - I agree fully.
- Would say here that accelerated public land survey and adjudication programs promulgated along with U.S. policy paper on return of public lands - will most likely coincide with Phase I - but work will actually begin as soon as funding is finally approved by U.S. Congress and contracts have been let.
- Although land survey and adjudication question is fully an administrative matter of TTPI - I will attempt to be just as responsive as possible to your question.
- The information that I have, however, has always been available at both headquarters and Marianas district lands and survey offices.
- Survey and adjudication work - generally called land cadaster work - has been going on in TT for several years - not always successful.
- At Headquarters - administrative responsibility lies with chief of lands and surveys - at district level - this is work of land commission which receives personnel support from land management office.
- For FY 1975 - operating budget for these two offices is approximately \$330,000. - This FY 1975 has not been reduced from past levels because of accelerated public land program.
- For FY 1975 and 1976, \$330,000 figure not truly reflective of cadaster operation budget for Marianas - because of accelerated public land program to which my government is committed.

As I have mentioned - accelerated land survey and adjudication program in the Marianas will -

-- Provide approximately \$1.6 million

-- be contracted out by TTPI.

-- will provide an increased survey capability and allow present land commission survey teams to concentrate completely on private land.

-- of the \$1.6 million, \$230,000 specifically earmarked for expansion of present adjudication effort - thus \$230,000 direct assistance to same body (land commission) which makes administrative adjudication for private land.

- In addition: on the important question of survey, the accelerated public land program can substantially assist in the private land situation in the following ways:

-- the contiguous or peripheral boundaries of the public land will be identified. Thus - periphery of private land will also be determined - this will speed up work of district survey machinery which will be working only on private land.

-- This alone will clear up most outstanding claims once it is adjudicated. Also, will clear up the homestead claims.

-- Photogrammetry system will be used - this involves placement of small film sensitive panels on the claimed boundaries of public land - airplane records these panels - experts and adjudication authorities study master map - determine exact meets and bounds of public land.

-- TTPI informs us private claimants may also panel their claimed land - they can get panels free of charge and put them on their claimed boundary.

-- After master map is made - private claimants may go before adjudicating authority and present their best evidence as to their claims - a determination will be made - adjudication authority will also have been substantially expanded as I have mentioned.

--- In order for this to be effective for private claimants, a public information effort explaining over radio and through printed material is necessary.

--- TTPI stands ready to make its facilities and personnel available for this public information effort.

--- I would suggest MPSC - as leaders of Marianas and because you are concerned - to involve yourselves in this public information effort.

- With regard to claims between two private land owners not involving public land - or surveys needed before title to uncontested private property can be passed from one private owner to another - may I suggest the method used in Guam and the U.S.

--- A private land owner simply pays for his own survey work and for his agent to present any evidence before the title adjudication authority.

--- We consider this a proper charge incident to transfer of private land.

--- U.S. delegation feels these comments and views will be helpful to you in assisting as you see fit your people. Again, point out that this is an administrative matter of TTPI.