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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

In reply refer to: 19 MAR 74  
1-4149/74

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INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY AFFAIRS

*Duplicate?*

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Defense-Interior Meeting on Saipan Memorial Park (U)

Participants:

Department of Defense

Deputy Secretary of Defense - William P. Clements, Jr.  
Chairman, The Joint Chiefs of Staff - ADM Thomas H. Moorer  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense - Dennis J. Doolin  
Assistant for Trust Territories of the Pacific - CAPT Edward C. Whelan, Jr.

Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations

Director, Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations - CAPT Richard Y. Scott  
Assistant for Military Affairs - COL A. Smith

Department of the Interior

Secretary of the Interior - Rogers C. B. Morton  
Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation - James Watt  
Director, Office of Territorial Affairs - Stanley Carpenter

Time: 1100-1140 hours, 1 May 1974

Place: Secretary Morton's office, Interior Building, Washington, DC

1. (C) Introductory Remarks. Secretary Morton, prior to introducing Mr. James Watt, briefly recalled that Micronesia was the setting for many of the major engagements of World War II. Since that time, through the creation of memorials, pilgrimages, tourism, and cultural programs, Japanese presence is being reasserted, and that some believed the Japanese presence may be a "contrived" effort. On the other hand, the United States has practically no memorials in the Trust Territory. The Secretary concluded by stating that he and Ambassador Williams believed we should be flying the flag more in Micronesia.

Classified by DASD/EAPA  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED  
AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS. DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DEC 82

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2. (U) Interior's Conceptual Design for a Memorial Park. Mr. James Watt briefly outlined a conceptual design for a "living" memorial park on 240 acres of the military retention area #1, Tanapag Harbor, Saipan, Mariana Islands. He stated that this design had been shown to Ambassador Williams and Marianan political leaders in March 1974. He pointed out where a marina could be built, possibly using abandoned bulkheads and foundations in the harbor, and where an arboretum could be developed. The location of other facilities such as athletic or playing fields, swimming pool, parking lot, comfort stations, paths and monument area was described. In addition to picnic facilities in the park, he suggested that a nearby island be incorporated in the park for similar purposes. Mr. Watt concluded by describing the encroachment of hotels (2) on the area and emphasized how much the local people wanted such a park. Attached are copies of Interior's issue paper and cost estimates.

3. (C) Military Presence in TTPI. Secretary Morton emphasized that the US military should firmly "stake out" a presence throughout Micronesia. He described how this would help the negotiations, and future good relationships with the people. This presence could start on Saipan with the park. Admiral Moorer pointed out that such a use of the land would put it "on ice" if needed for future military requirements. Secretary Morton agreed and expressed his concern for what was happening to our military posture around the world.

4. (U) Status of Land in the Trust Territory. Deputy Secretary Clements initiated a discussion on land in the Trust Territory by inquiring how the hotels had acquired their land. It was explained that the hotels had leased privately-held land. Mr. Carpenter went on to describe the extensive US holdings of "public lands" which are being returned to the people, and also mentioned the military retention lands which DOD holds on long term leases. Secretary Morton reiterated that the Japanese were setting the pattern throughout Micronesia and that something ought to be done by the United States. Deputy Secretary Clements asked if Interior was suggesting that Defense operate the park on Saipan, to which Secretary Morton responded in the affirmative, pointing out that Interior did not have a charter to establish or maintain parks in the TTPI. Admiral Moorer then suggested that the authorization and funding for the park be included in the US Congressional bill which would establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. Secretary Morton countered that DOD ought to establish the precedent in Saipan, and eventually Defense could establish monuments where appropriate throughout the world. Besides, he pointed out, the site was some of the best land in Saipan and with the increasing tourism (including the opening of a direct Saipan to Tokyo air route) that the park area would become the Waikiki of the Marianas.

5. (U) Expressions of Support. Following a brief discussion of Tinian there were general expressions of support for the concept. Deputy Secretary Clements indicated that the idea sounded good, and later commented that the conceptual design could even include a museum of World War II relics.

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Admiral Moorer agreed that the US Government ought to work it out, but pointed out that the question was how can it be done? He highlighted the research that had been done with the Battle Monuments Commission and indicated that the design of a monument had been proposed. Secretary Morton interjected that we didn't need a big monument at this time, only a flag pole and maybe a parking lot were all that was needed initially. Admiral Moorer pointed out that the problem was still how to finance the venture. Deputy Secretary Clements then offered to lease the DOD retention land to the Department of the Interior at a nominal sum so that Interior could build its park on Saipan. After much laughter, Secretary Morton regretted that Interior couldn't fund such a park. Mr. Doolin pointed out that Defense had even less responsibility and authority to fund parks.

6. (U) Agreements Reached in the Meeting. Mr. Watt volunteered that the next step was for the Department of Defense to designate an Executive Agent to deal with this matter (Navy is being designated at this time) and to get some Seabees (CBs) in there to commence cleaning up the site. Deputy Secretary Clements cautioned not to commit the Seabees to too much -- they already were heavily tasked. Secretary Morton explained that they were not talking about major projects, just simple things first. Deputy Secretary Clements responded by asking that Interior develop a master plan for the park, developed in phases which could be stretched over time. This way we would have something to look at and Ambassador Williams would have something to show the Marianans. Then we could ease into it. Secretary Morton agreed to do this, and then reiterated his theme that we needed to counter Japanese efforts and economic encroachment -- a memorial should be established early. Additionally, he pointed out that if we were pushed out of the Philippines, we would be glad to have these toeholds (i.e., Micronesia) in the Western Pacific. Captain Scott asked if the National Park Service could maintain the park after it was established. To this, Secretary Morton replied that he did not think so. He mentioned difficulties they were experiencing with establishing a park on Guam. He indicated that if the Guam problem was resolved and a precedent set; then, perhaps, Interior could do something in future years. At this point the meeting was terminated.

7. (C) Post-Meeting Comments. Two significant conversations occurred after the meeting:

(C) Mr. Doolin approached Secretary Morton and agreed with his comments on a greater military presence in Micronesia. Mr. Doolin then pointed out that that was why DOD was scheduling the small amphibious exercise on Tinian in June. Secretary Morton understood this, but commented ... "some of my guys are concerned over the timing of the exercise and possible adverse reaction elsewhere in Micronesia." When it was pointed out that the High Commissioner, TTPI, had no problems with the exercise, Secretary Morton paused and indicated that he would defer to Ambassador Williams' judgment on this. In a parting comment, Secretary Morton stated to Mr. Doolin, "Go ahead and do whatever you think best."

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(U) As they were departing the Interior Building, Admiral Moorer and Deputy Secretary Clements discussed the legal and funding difficulties for DOD to develop or maintain a park. They agreed that the best way to proceed was to include the authorization and appropriations for the park in the bill presented to the US Congress on the Marianas Commonwealth.

Memorandum of Conversation

Prepared by: *EW* CAPT E.C. Whelan, USN

Attachments  
a/s

Approved by:

*W. Bentley*

Date:

*May 22 1974*

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ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED:

1. Should we build a Memorial Park in Saipan?

Recommendation: Yes

Control of approximately 240 acres of land at Micro Beach, which will make an ideal park, will be vested in the Federal Government through purchase or long term lease.

2. Who should design the park?

Recommendation: The Department of the Interior with the advice and counsel of the Department of Defense and the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations. The Department of the Interior has the professional capability and experience to design a living memorial that would be attractive to the residents of the Marianas.

3. Who should develop the park?

Recommendation: The Department of Defense

- a. The park would be established as a memorial for those American soldiers who lost their lives in the Pacific Theater.

- b. Land will be acquired within the status negotiations for contingency use of the Department of Defense.

4. Who should operate and maintain the park?

Recommendation: The Department of Defense

The Department of Defense will have control of the land and will have manpower in the immediate area, i.e., Tinian or Guam, to provide proper maintenance or supervisory control as they determine needed.

5. When should development of the park begin?

Ambassador Williams' progress at the status negotiations will determine that answer. However, it is believed that preliminary work and some development could be started as early as July-August, which would be prior to the conclusion of the negotiations.

Prepared by: Department of Interior  
Bureau of Outdoor  
Recreation  
April 1974

SAIPAN PARK - PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE

ITEMS	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
Swimming Pool Complex - includes Bath House and Filter System	1	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
50-Unit Picnic Area - includes Tables, Fireplaces, Shelters, Comfort Stations and Playground Equipment and Utilities	2	95,000	190,000
Court Games - includes 3 Tennis Courts and 4 Basketball Courts	4	44,000	44,000
Softball and Baseball Fields	4	3,500	14,000
Comfort Station	2	20,000	40,000
Walks and Trails - includes paving and site preparation	12,000 L.F.	12	144,000
Parking	200 Cars	1,000	200,000
Landscaping - includes Amphitheater			100,000
Contingencies	10%		\$ 882,000
Plans, Specifications and Supervision	15%		88,200
Location Factor	2.0		\$ 1,102,500
		Estimated Cost	\$ 2,200,000