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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

(24)

6 MAY 1974

Honorable Franklin Haydn Williams
The President's Personal Representative
for Micronesian Status Negotiations
Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ambassador Williams:

(S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I have determined that the developments outlined below dictate a change in the United States position regarding development of a coastal ammunition handling facility on Tinian and the attendant requirement to relocate the village of San Jose.

(C) As you recall, research of existing data conducted one to two years ago resulted in the early decision to use existing port facilities for an ammunition shipping facility which in turn required relocation of the village of San Jose outside the radius of a potential danger zone. Subsequently, a means of providing an alternate ammunition handling facility was deemed feasible as a fall back, should the people object to the relocation of their village.

(S) The on-site surveys and detailed planning conducted since last August, coupled with other developments, reveal that the US defense requirements, the desires of the Marianans and the safety of all concerned can be met best by constructing an ammunition handling facility within the base area at the outset. Thus, the safety arc would be eliminated from the existing port area, and superimposed only on land within the boundaries of the base, thereby releasing areas of prime importance to the civilian populace, such as: beaches, small boat moorings and sites of traditional significance. Additionally, the village as a whole would not be relocated, joint development of the harbor would be possible, and perhaps most important, the land area available for civilian use would be much larger.

(S) Some of the principal factors which make this change mandatory are:

- Recognition of the fact that safety considerations sooner or later will require a separate ammunition handling facility.
- Planning has progressed sufficiently to determine that far more efficient land use and base arrangement can be accomplished

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in this manner.

- The accomplishment of on-site surveys, full, detailed planning and a better appreciation of inflation in the Trust Territory indicate that costs of the previous position may be substantially higher than originally estimated.
- The determination that Tinian has a total acreage of 24,937 vice 26,210 acres as indicated in past records.
- The significant reduction in required acreage by the safety arc being entirely within the base area.
- The concern reflected by some members of the US Congress over any relocation scheme that did not have the full and enthusiastic support of the people.

(C) We understand that resistance to relocation may be growing among the Marianans. Hopefully this change in position will work to moderate that opposition. On the other hand, it is also recognized that this shift in our stated requirements at this time may engender some resentment among those who are in favor of relocation. On balance, however, we believe that the circumstances justify changing our negotiating position.

(S) We regret to notify you of this major change after you are well into the negotiations; however, as current factual data were accumulated concerning Tinian it became clear that a change in the initial position had to be made at this time. Obviously, this sort of development is a hazard of conducting base planning concurrent with the negotiations, but we are confident of your ability to turn it to the advantage of the United States.

(C) Estimated costs and maps depicting the exact boundaries and total acreages for the multi-service base on Tinian will be provided to you prior to the next round of negotiations. In addition, the Department of Defense Executive Agent is prepared to brief you in preparation for the next round of negotiations by explaining fully the base planning, justifying the amount of land required on Tinian, and presenting the conceptual plan for where various functional areas of the base will be located. One or more members of the same team also are prepared to present a similar presentation to the Marianas Political Status Commission during the next round of negotiations.

H. P. Clement

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