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Mr. Stanley S. Carpenter
Director
Office of Territorial Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Carpenter:

Reference is made to Mr. Radewagen's letter of October 2, 1974, and to our interim dispatch reply, of October 15, with respect to Tinian homesteading problems.

People concerned with Tinian homesteading have been assured there is no restriction on homesteading outside the areas covered by the U.S.-MPSC Joint Communique of last May, and as affected by our policy statement of December 14, 1973. We have now obtained a copy of the survey map prepared recently for the United States to show the southern boundary of the area desired by the U.S. As soon as it is confirmed by the U.S. and MPSC, the District Administrator and his staff can proceed with development of homesteads in the area outside the military retention land.

There are 141 applications for Tinian agricultural homesteads, 39 of which were received after May 8, 1973. No permits have been issued due to lack of boundary surveys. The Mariana Islands District has not budgeted for surveying Tinian homesteads. However, funds are available to Headquarters Lands and Surveys Division for identifying and mapping public lands. Our plans for surveying and mapping the public lands of the Territory call for aerial photography of Tinian to be conducted during the second half of 1975. At that time we can assist the District Administrator in surveying the homestead lands. To attempt to do it earlier would disrupt the present mobilization of the contractor who will conduct the survey in the Marianas, Truk, Ponape, and the Marshalls. A major change in the work schedules would be prohibitive in cost and waste of time.

There have been 75 agricultural homestead deeds granted on Tinian since the program started, 35 of which are within the proposed military retention areas. Three deeds are being processed in Headquarters and will be issued in the near future.

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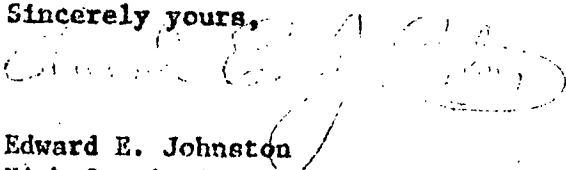
One hundred thirty village lot homesteads have been conveyed and 61 permits have been issued. Deeds will be issued for the pending homesteads when they mature. There are 11 village lots available for homesteads. Applications received before May 8, 1973, are being reviewed in order to issue entry permits in accordance with District policy with respect to homesteading. There are 16 applications dated prior to May 8, 1973, and 34 applications have been received since that date.

The Ad Hoc Land Policy Review Commission which was established by the District Administrator has had two meetings and has organized for the study of homestead problems. The recent election campaign has occupied the time of nearly all members of the Commission. As soon as possible the Commission will meet for further study of the homesteading program. We certainly concur with your comments on what the Commission should undertake at the earliest possible date.

The District Administrator and his staff are making every practicable effort to carry out your request with respect to informing all concerned that homesteading is a local matter, and that there is no moratorium on homesteading. However, we need confirmation of the area of Tinian that is outside the land desired by the United States. Enclosed is a copy of the survey map prepared by Lyon Associates Inc., showing the land desired by the United States. Please show this to Ambassador Williams and obtain his confirmation that the line shown on the map reflects his desires with respect to Tinian land. When the map is returned we can then obtain confirmation of the Marianas Political Status Commission and proceed further with Tinian homesteading.

Enclosed are copies of communications pertaining to Tinian homesteading as requested by your telex received this date.

Sincerely yours,


Edward E. Johnston
High Commissioner

- Enclosures: (1) Marianas Land Survey, Tinian,
NAVFAC Drawing 7,304,754, September 13, 1974
- (2) Communications between District Administrator,
Marianas and High Commissioner re Tinian homesteads

H.C. r.f.

H.C. s.f.