

## Editorial

# Taipei-Guam Route.....

Again, Guam is being used as a pawn in a wild game of international politics, and we don't have a thing to say about it. It is just this kind of non-control over our affairs that is beginning to trouble the people of Guam, and is causing them to have second thoughts about our relationship with the United States.

Gerald Perry, speaking for Governor Carlos Camacho at a recent University of Guam Seminar, made an interesting statement that ties in to what we are saying: "Guam," he said, "must be allowed to assert an International posture!"

Despite a few dissenting voices, over the years our relationship with our Mother Country has been remarkably good in most areas. Even a Rep. Won Pat poll, while limited, showed a minuscule two percent would opt for independence for Guam. Part of this is practicality, based on economics, and part of it a genuine affection most people on Guam feel for the United States and its policies.

But more and more the island people want to run their own lives. It is true that Guam has a high degree of self-government, especially after we received the right to elect our own governor. There are some areas, however, that affect daily life on Guam, and over which we have no control. This is specifically true in immigration, air rights, and shipping laws. It is true to a lesser degree in customs and duty, and in such things as banking laws.

The latest bit of international politics affecting Guam and its future concerns the Republic of China, and eventually, the Peoples Republic of China. Again, Guam is in a position of having to sit back while our fate is decided for us in Washington, D.C.

How this all came about is because of Japan's hasty decision to recognize mainland China diplomatically, dropping diplomatic ties with Taiwan. We're not going to argue whether or not this was a wise move, but only to point out that the decision caused far ranging ramifications, finally reaching Guam.

After Tokyo recognized China, they suddenly had second thoughts, not wanting to cut off the lucrative business with Taiwan that they had built up over the years. Immediately a trade and cultural association was set up, and things went along pretty much as before without the formalities of maintaining diplomatic relations. However, in the next step in Sino-Japanese relationships the two major countries started negotiating on a new air accord with the Chinese Communists, who insist on changes in the Taipei-Tokyo air agreement. For one thing they won't allow Japan's Flag Carrier, Japan Air Lines, to land both in Taipei and Peking. And they will refuse to allow Chinese planes to set down in the same Japanese airports as does the flag carrier of the Republic of China, China Air Lines.

Taipei, on the other hand, has made it clear that the Republic of China will retaliate by forbidding Japanese airplanes to land in Taiwan if Japan yields to Peking's pressure to change the current flight agreement. In a statement, reiterated a few weeks ago, the Foreign Ministry of ROC said that they will "stop allowing any Japanese airplanes to land in or fly over" Taiwan if the current arrangement is disrupted.

The Ministry said: "We shall not hesitate to give up the right of our civil airplanes to land in Japan and to fly over the Tokyo Flight Information Region. At the same time, we shall on a reciprocal basis, stop allowing any Japanese airplanes to land in or to fly over the Republic of China."

Some of the changes the Japanese government is contemplating will seriously affect the national interest of the Republic of China, government officials in Taipei said. "We can never accept any such changes," they added. One such change is an addition of the word Taiwan to CAL, which Japan is considering. "Japan is planning to call our flag carrier CAL Taiwan," an official paper noted, saying that this wouldn't be acceptable. Tokyo is also planning to declare that CAL does not represent the Republic of China or the flag every CAL plane carries on its tail is not the national flag of the Republic of China, the Taiwanese say.

"None of these changes will be accepted," Taiwanese sources said, "but we are willing to discuss technical problems with the Japanese authorities."

How does all this affect Guam?

Well, the Taiwanese, in anticipation of being cut off at the pass in Tokyo, has just completed negotiations in Washington, D.C. for the opening of a new air route, Taipei-Guam and on to the West Coast of the U.S. They announced that China Airlines will continue to service Los Angeles, and San Francisco via Guam if any Japanese restrictions are made that are not acceptable to them. "Should we be asked to stop serving Tokyo," one official said, "we would fly to Guam en route to Honolulu, Hawaii, and on to San Francisco and Los Angeles." Its flights to the West Coast of the United States currently stop over in Tokyo.

Meanwhile CAL has made a series of test flights to Guam. "They were all successful," the source said. Washington has agreed to give CAL jetliners a practically unlimited "technical landing right" on Guam, essential for flights to the U.S. if CAL no longer has the right to fly through Japan.

Previously CAL had the right to make "technical landings" on Guam, but no more than 20 flights a year. This right, according to the recent agreement has been extended to daily flights. This means CAL planes can now land on Guam for refueling and maintenance on their way to or from the United States. But it does not include the right to pick up or discharge passengers, the sources said. Still, it means a good deal of additional revenue for Guam in the form of landing rights, and fuel taxes. And it does point out again, dramatically, Guam's location as an asset.

The U.S. State Department has agreed, "in principle" to give CAL "traffic rights" as soon as CAL loses its traffic rights in Japan for any reason. Traffic rights means stopping over for refueling, maintenance, loading or unloading passengers. What all this means is that Guam could get its fifth major airline (Pan Am, Continental, TWA, JAL), depending on what is decided by the Japanese and Chinese on their air agreement in Peking. And by the CAB and State Department in Washington. Of course, we on Guam have exactly nothing to say about the whole affair.

Naturally, we would welcome the Republic of China's flag carrier with open arms. In our mind there is only one small hitch here. What will happen in the next few years when Pan Am flies to Shanghai, and the People's Republic of China wants to fly a route to the U.S.? Will then Guam become the scene of still another battle? One over which Guam has absolutely no voice in? JCM.