

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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March 12, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: Tinian Referendum

Encl: (1) Tinian Municipal Council Ordinance 05-74  
(2) DOTA MEMCON with HICOM, 5 March 1974

1. The Tinian Municipal Council passed an ordinance, enclosure (1), calling for a local referendum on April 7, 1974 with regard to U.S. military land requirements on Tinian and relocation of the village of San Jose. The Mariana Islands District Code requires that such ordinances be submitted to the District Administrator for consideration. The DISTAD may approve, in which case the ordinance is officially sanctioned by the District Administration, or he may disapprove. In the latter case for this particular ordinance, the referendum can still be held but it becomes a local action and none of the district electoral machinery (ballot printing, ballot boxes, etc.) is authorized for use by the Tinian Municipal Council.
2. Status LNO and OMSN had concern with the referendum based on the presumption that the people of Tinian did not have adequate information about U.S. military land requirements or the options available to the people regarding village relocation. There was no question over the right of the Tinian Municipal Council to hold a referendum since this was considered to be a local matter. It was considered to be premature, however.
3. In order to make our position absolutely clear, Ambassador Williams called Senator Pangelinan on March 5, 1974. A summary of the telephone conversation follows:  
  
Ambassador Williams referred to the scheduled meeting on 7 March between Senator Pangelinan and DISTAD Frank Ada on the subject of DISTAD's approval of the ordinance. He then made the following points:
  - a. The U.S. does not wish in any way to interfere with what we consider to be a local matter. We hope, however, that Pangelinan as Chairman of the MPSC shares our view:
    - (1) That the vote on Tinian could not be binding on the MPSC or the U.S. in any future negotiations.

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- (2) That the referendum is premature and that it is not fair to the people of Tinian to vote on such things as relocation before they have full information and all the facts considering the various options presented on the referendum.
- (3) That the Tinianese have been influenced by people who do not possess the facts and who have been giving out misinformation.

4. Senator Pangelinan's response to the above:

The MPSC, regardless of its influence, cannot stop the referendum. He feels that regardless of the amount of information being disseminated on Tinian, all coming from a vocal minority, the silent majority on Tinian has not been given a chance to express themselves. He believes that this silent majority will support the U.S. position on 2/3 of the island and relocation of the village; however, there is no way to find out without a referendum.

5. Ambassador Williams then asked the question "What influence will the outcome of the referendum have on the MPSC?"

Pangelinan replied that if the majority approves 2/3 of the island and relocation the MPSC has no problem. However, if the majority votes for less than 2/3, then the MPSC must go back to Tinian to convince the people of the need for 2/3. Ambassador Williams then stated that the U.S. cannot negotiate on the basis of a popular vote of the people. The U.S. has moved back to a minimum position - the northern 2/3 is our minimum. He continued, making the following points:

- a. The Tinianese don't have full information.
- b. The U.S. has further options to discuss.
- c. People should not be asked to vote before they have this information.

He then asked if the MPSC plans to make known the U.S. position over the next month; does the MPSC expect to be involved in educating the people. Pangelinan responded in the affirmative and said the MPSC was in the process of translating into Chamorro the U.S. summary fact paper on land. He also said that he hoped he could persuade the Ambassador to participate in a joint meeting with the people of Tinian. Ambassador Williams said he did not object to this proposal but wanted to make it clear that the U.S. would also want to launch a unilateral education effort on Tinian. Pangelinan foresaw no problem with this.

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6. Ambassador Williams expressed the U.S. position that we consider the MPSC to be the negotiating body for the Mariana Islands. He then stated in a very precise manner that if the U.S. does not get its minimum land requirements there will be no agreement. Ambassador Williams asked Pangelinan if his and Joe Cruz's position remained the same as presented to the Ambassador last December, i.e., 2/3 plus safety arc. Pangelinan replied, "Yes".
7. In closing, Ambassador Williams said that he preferred that Mary Trent not be present during the meeting between Pangelinan and Ada. We do not want any one to get the impression the U.S. is trying to kill the referendum. It is a local issue and a local decision. Ambassador Williams then expressed the hope that Senator Pangelinan and President Santos would stand by for a meeting in mid-March and that if the U.S. can provide the funds, could they come to Hawaii.
8. Subsequently on March 8, Mary Vance Trent called to report that DISTAD Ada did not approve the Tinian Municipal Council Ordinance. She also reported that the HICOM said he had not heard from Washington regarding the Tinian referendum. Enclosure (2) reports the conversation between Jim Berg (DOTA) and the HICOM.

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