

U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES MARIANAS
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96630

IN REPLY REFER TO

15 March 1974

Tinian

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MEMORANDUM FOR AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS

Subj: Proposal for Production, Sale and Transportation of Tinian Grown Produce.

1. The history of attempts to improve the production, sale and transportation of Tinian grown vegetable and fruit produce is a long and unhappy one marked by repeated failures and futile efforts. At least five different attempts by assorted groups have been made to increase the production of a wider variety of produce at regular intervals for transportation to Guam on a scheduled basis. The primary reasons for failure in nearly all cases have centered on a combination of disinterest on the parts of both the farmers and the Trust Territory government (Dept. of Agriculture).

There is an apparent inability to coordinate growing cycles of various products, harvesting at proper intervals and sorting to meet specific standards of health and marketing. In brief, the farmers want to grow those vegetables easiest to harvest, pick and sell (e.g. bell peppers, cucumbers and watermelons), harvest them all at once and load the entire lot when they are picked. The TTPI Department of Agriculture is unwilling to spend time in educating, controlling, supervising and programming the process - even to the extent of purchasing the proper seed at the appropriate time. ||

2. In an effort to formulate a viable program that will work towards enhancing the military reputation on Tinian and increase our negotiating capacity in this regard discussions were held with Col. McCarthy, Air Force Wing, Commander at Andersen, Capt. McSwain, Commissary Officer at Andersen and Lcdr Bryant, Commissary Officer at Naval Station. Communications with the TTPI government have not yet been made, for various reasons, but they will be at the proper time. As a result, the following proposal is submitted for your consideration:

a. A joint military (Air Force-Navy) team, consisting of the Andersen AFB and Naval Base Commissary Officers, the Andersen, COMNAVMAR and TTPI Veterinary officers, the COMNAVMAR Environmental Health Officer, a Medical Officer and the TTPI Director of Department of Agriculture, go to Tinian for a meeting with the Mayor, the Dep Distad and the farmers (or their elected representatives). Suggest to the farmers the types, amounts, schedule and quality of produce desired. Determine if the desires can be met and whether the program is feasible. Set forth the standards - ripeness, size, shipping assortment, etc - required for sale to U. S. Military. State that U. S. Military will purchase all they can produce, but they must be of a variety and in accordance with specific standards.

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b. Suggest to the Tinian farmers that they request that a team of U. S. Dept. of Agriculture experts come to Tinian to teach, direct, supervise and monitor the establishment of the program desired. Recommend that this team consist of at least 3-5 people and remain in Tinian for a period long enough to ensure full development of the program required. In addition, a request should be made for a U. S. Dept. of Health team to be sent to Tinian to inspect all areas associated with growing, harvesting, selling and transporting of vegetable-fruit food products. This team should also educate the farmers so that these standards can be maintained year after year.

c. Col. McCarthy at Andersen has agreed to provide at least two flights a week for transporting produce to the military commissaries. If and when the need arises, he has indicated more are possible. This type of transportation plus the cargo capability of Air Micronesia (and Air Pacific to a much lesser degree) will insure the sale of all produce grown on Tinian to either military or civilian sources. Recommend military obligate itself to purchase ~~of~~ all produce if so desired but not to the exclusion of civilian sources that are willing to contract.

d. Requests for Dept. of Health and Dept. of Agriculture teams should be coordinated between TTPI, Military and strongly supported by OMSN. By bringing other government agencies into the act we do several things:


(1) Demonstrates to people of Tinian that U. S. Military is not only branch of USG that is interested in island.

(2) Forces TTPI government to greater activity and response, and removes a stumbling block in the way of programs.

(3) Provides greater expertise, more financial support and additional manpower to meet the problem.

(4) Builds for the future of Tinian.

3. If done properly, by the appropriate authorities with the necessary supervision over a prolonged period the program developed cannot help but increase production and incomes, develop agricultural expertise, make better use of the land, enhance the reputation of the military, familiarize the people with other branches of the USG, and smooth the road to negotiated agreement.


W. R. WESTLAKE
Commander, U. S. Navy

023176