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AMERICA'S ATTEMPT TO MILITARIZE AND CREATE
ANOTHER INDIAN RESERVATION IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

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15

Micronesia is a group of islands located in the Western Pacific. Supervision and administration of these islands is placed in the hands of the American Government by virtue of the Trusteeship Agreement of the United Nations signed in 1947. Actual administration of the islands rests mainly with the Department of Interior. Just recently the U.S. State Department under the leadership of a Nixon appointee, Special Ambassador Haden Williams, signed a covenant with the Marianas Political Status Commission with the intent of making the Marianas people become U.S. citizens. The covenant is tailored after the Puerto Rican-American political relationship of the "commonwealth status." Despite repeated attempts by Micronesia's national congress to stop the militarization of the Northern Marianas, the Department of Interior has issued an executive order setting June 17th as the definite date for the plebiscite.

Massive political education propaganda has been undertaken by local leaders who have been offered executive posts in return for persuading local inhabitants to vote "yes" during the plebiscite. The State Department has donated \$50,000. for this program and the American-administered government has detailed most of its employees to ensure the passage of the covenant on June 17th.

It is interesting to note that the U.S. military has successfully persuaded the Marianas Political Status Commission to a land lease arrangement for a 100-year term period with prices ranging from \$1.00 per acre per year to \$11.93 per acre per year while at the same time retaining the power of eminent domain. Aside from all these inequities, the military plans to extract from the taxpayers (American) an approximate amount of \$2 billion a year to run what is probably a useless military base. From the Micronesian point of view, the U.S. military had already influenced the Department of Interior to unilaterally by-pass the Congress of Micronesia, as it has done in negotiating separately without legal authority with the Marianas District. The purpose of these actions is to divide Micronesia and cut off political participation of the newly-elected Marianas delegation to the Congress of Micronesia.

In essence, this is another chapter of America's attempt to militarize and create another Indian reservation in the Western Pacific. Lucrative promises have been made to the people only to be broken in the future. America must recognize the right of the Micronesian people to self-determination. They must cease all military activities in Micronesia and promote the ultimate goal of preserving Micronesian unity as stipulated in the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement, without resorting to the tactics of divide and conquer. The proposal for the Marianas Commonwealth is nothing more than an attempt to legally steal our land for military purposes. America shouldn't ignite another Vietnam. Our relationships should be based on the foundation of friendship but definitely not ownership.

Marianas residents who will be going to the polls this June definitely have no choice but to accept the ever-lasting and heavenly good life which has been offered by the State Department. Our group believes in the sovereignty of all peoples and therefore can't recognize the covenant as legal until the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement for all the districts of Micronesia.

14279

Representative Oscar Rasa,
Congress of Micronesia