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ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS  
FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (ISA) ROBERT ELLSWORTH  
FROM SENATOR GARY HART ON H.J.R. 549

03-02

1. Senator [redacted] Provide for the record copies of studies done by the military services since 1971 which discuss the value of the Marianas as forward bases, pull-back bases, or other defense-related uses.

Mr. Ellsworth The question you are asking pertains to information we have discussed with the Congress during CY 1975 hearings by the House Armed Services Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Armed Services Committee. For example, a comprehensive discussion of the value of these islands to our national defense posture was set forth in the February 26, 1975 hearings by the House Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations. During that hearing, the Department of Defense discussed our interests as a Pacific Power, the value of forward deployments, the importance of Micronesia in terms of our lines of communication, the scarcity of land for training in the Western Pacific, the logic of using U.S. soil for the future storage of war reserve material, socio-environmental factors which limit the future use of Guam for land-intensive activities, various uncertainties which led us to consider (1970-72) the development of an operational port and airbase on Tinian, the political and economic conditions which led us to cancel these plans in 1974, and the value of acquiring land on Tinian now as opposed to some later date.

I would also stress that the need to assess the value of the Northern Marianas to our defense posture stemmed from the desire of the people of these islands to know, at the outset of negotiations, what our long-range requirements would be. Thus, our tendency was to look at the islands in the broadest possible context of the type of support our forward-deployed forces, wherever they might be permanently based, would need over the next

fifty year was clear that large amounts of acreage--for training, logistic s, and other land-intensive functions--would be the most difficult : ement to satisfy elsewhere in the Western Pacific. It was also clear the acquisition of land on Tinian for such purposes would enhance the range potential of defense installations we already use on Guam to rt both strategic and tactical force deployments.

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3. Senator Hart. What are the principal U.S. strategic interests in the Northern Marianas? In the Marianas including Guam? In the Caroline Islands? In the Marshall Islands? In Micronesia as a whole?

Mr. Ellsworth. First, in the Northern Marianas, the location of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota relative to Guam is an important strategic consideration, because Guam has been a U.S. territory since 1898, 100,000 American citizens live and work on Guam, and extremely important U.S. defense installations are located on this island.

Second, with respect to the Marianas including Guam, location in the Western Pacific is an important factor, in terms of our strategy, our commitments, and our forward deployments. POLARIS submarines, SAC B-52's, units of the Seventh Fleet, and worldwide communications are all supported from Guam. The long-term relationship we establish with the Northern Marianas will enhance the future potential of installations on Guam to support our forward deployed forces.

Third, the Carolines are important, primarily in terms of their location to the immediate east of the Philippines and along the north-south route from the Lombok Straits to seaports in Japan. It is important that these islands be denied to any potentially hostile power; however, we do not necessarily desire to establish a military presence in the Carolines.

Fourth, the Marshall Islands are the site of Kwajalein Missile Range, used for the research, development, test and evaluation of ballistic missiles. Our investment in land, facilities, and equipment at the Kwajalein Missile Range is \$350 million, plus another \$350 million investment !

users of *this* installation. If we had to reconfigure for open ocean testing, *the* procurement cost of ships and other related equipment would be enormous. Thus, we feel that it is essential to protect our existing rights to *use* Kwajalein.

Finally Micronesia as a whole is important in terms of sea and air lines of *communication* between the State of Hawaii and Guam and between the United States and its friends, allies, and trading partners in the East Asia and Pacific Region. The capability to defend this line of communications, in a hostile environment, is an important element of our defense strategy.

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4. Senator ~~Hert~~ What Pacific areas are available for amphibious training?

Mr. Ellsworth In Japan (Okinawa), amphibious landing beaches are restrictive *in that* they generally allow only limited ingress and egress due to proximity *to* population centers and hazardous hydrographic conditions. In addition *to* restraints on weapon firing there are numerous restrictions in the Okinawa Terminal air control area which limit even dry ordnance runs by tactical air.

In the Philippines, small scale amphibious landings (company size) can be conducted in the Subic Bay training complex, if the political situation permits. In addition squatter clearance problems continue to exist in the area. Excellent maneuver/training areas exist on Mindoro. Use of this area has been denied previously except for combined exercises with the Philippine Marines.

In Korea, the utilization of training areas affords an excellent opportunity to carry out unilateral combined arms and/or combined exercises with local national forces. Political constraints, however, have caused cancellation of two battalion size landing exercises the last two years.

The Republic of China on Taiwan is enthusiastic about U.S. Marines using this training area. However, political considerations militate against using this option.

Thailand has excellent potential but is politically unacceptable.

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In Australia, capability exists to conduct up to brigade size landing.

Hawaii and Camp Pendleton, California provide amphibious training areas for use predominantly by forces stationed in each respective location.

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5. Senator *Hart*: How much military reserve land on Guam is not being used? How *much* this is surplus to need since the Vietnam war? What percentage of *land* on Guam is used or reserved by the Defense Department?

Mr. Ellsworth, Outside existing base areas, there are several bits and pieces of *land*, less than 100 acres in size, which are not being used for current military purposes and which the Government of Guam desires for community-related projects. Some have been released by the Department of Defense, in accordance with existing federal statutes; others may be released or exchanged for land in the future. There is one parcel of land, the Asan Annex to the Navy Regional Medical Center, which has become surplus to Defense Department requirements since the end of the Vietnam conflict. This has been reported to the General Services Administration in accordance with existing regulations.

Overall, the federal government owns about thirty percent of the land on Guam. Most is used by the Department of Defense; a much smaller amount is used by the Department of Transportation to support activities of the United States Coast Guard and the Federal Aviation Administration. Within existing base areas--naval station, naval magazine, naval air station, naval communications station, and Andersen Air Force Base--one sees quite a lot of unused land, but a great part of this is required by the technical criteria which applies to the reliability and safety of operations or environmental protection within and outside the base. These criteria encompass safety distances around airfields and high-powered transmitters, noise contours related to civil and military air traffic, the open space needed



around magazines and petroleum storage tanks, separation distances to avoid radio frequency interference, and the long-range requirement to protect watersheds or lens tables.

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6. Senator *Hart*. Describe the possible tactical and strategic utility of a future *air base* on Tinian. What possible military actions could this base *support*?

Mr. Ellsworth. There is no intention or authorization to build a tactical or strategic *air base* on Tinian. What this Covenant does is authorize the long term (100 years) lease of land for current training, future logistic support, and other land-intensive functions which are apt to arise in the years ahead. We believe that the lease of this land, in conjunction with the major installations we have on nearby Guam, will strengthen our national security posture in the Western Pacific and enhance the ability of U.S. forces to support both national and international security commitments over the long-term.

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7. Senator Hart. It has been said that Micronesia's importance to U.S. shipping routes is because it lies astride the sea and air lanes from the United States to Southeast Asia. Why were these lands not used for military purposes during the Vietnam War?

Mr. Ellsworth. Because no attempt was made by North Vietnam or its supporters to *interdict* our lines of communication. They were deterred from such action, *in part*, because of the heavy concentration of U.S. naval and air forces in *the* Pacific theater during this conflict.

*Facilities* on Guam, of course, were used to support SAC B-52's, patrol and *reconnaissance* activities throughout the Western Pacific, and communication *with* our operating forces. The ship repair facility also was very *supportive* during this period.

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8. Senator *Hart*. What major sea lanes transit Micronesia? How close is Micronesia to *Japan's* oil supply sea lanes and to sea lanes from the U.S. to Japan?

Mr. Ellsworth: *In* general, the peacetime routing of shipping follows great circle *routes*. Thus, we find most of the sea lanes from the U.S. to Japan passing *just* south of the Aleutian Islands, fairly close to the Kuril Trench, *and* hence to Yokohama. Between the Marianas and Japan lie sea lanes from *the* U.S. to the mainland of China, Taiwan, and all of Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and points west. Another route to the Malacca Straits passes from Hawaii to the immediate southeast of the Marshall Islands and hence southwest to the Torres Straits, between New Guinea and Australia. Because of depth limitations in the Malacca Straits, a route of growing importance for supertankers runs from the Persian Gulf to just south of the Java Trench, through the Lombok Straits, and hence north through the South China or Philippine Sea to Japan. Palau lies between the Lombok Straits and the Philippine Sea passage. In a hostile environment, of course, shipping lanes are restructured to provide the best possible protection against interdiction by submarines, while continuing to deliver essential raw materials and military equipment. The route from Hawaii to Guam and then through the Philippine Sea to other points in the East Asia and Pacific Region looks very good from a defense perspective, if we maintain our access to Micronesia.

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9. Senator Hart. What military installations and facilities now exist in Micronesia (including Guam)? Provide a list specifying purpose of activity, number of personnel assigned, and annual operating cost.

Mr. Ellsworth. The information requested is tabulated below:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>MILPERS/CIVPERS</u>	<u>FY75 Operating Costs</u>
<u>Guam</u>			
Anderson	SAC/MAC Support	5258/801	\$21.4M
Naval Hospital	DoD Medical Support	12/10	3.5M
Naval Magazine	Fleet Support	148/67	1.8M
Ship Repair Facility	Fleet Support	117/915	1.2M
Naval Supply Depot	Fleet Support	67/406	8.7M
Naval Air Station	Fleet Air Support	570/82	4.1M
Naval Station	Fleet Support	156/286	9.1M
Naval Communications Station	DoD Worldwide Communications	580/123	5.2M
<u>Marshall Islands</u>			
<u>District of TIPI</u>			
Kwajalein Missile Range	Ballistic Missile RDT&E	35/112 plus 2708 contractor personnel	87.2M

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10. Senator Hart. Would not Palau have a greater potential for combined air and harbor facilities necessary for a major operating base?

Mr. Ellsworth. The Marianas tend to be better, in terms of base support, because of the major installations we already have on Guam. Also, the Marianas have a more central location relative to the East Asia and Pacific Region as a whole. These islands are often called "The Crossroads of the Western Pacific."

With respect to land and facilities on Palau, the Department of Defense has stated that our only interest is an option to lease land for logistic support and access to Babelthaup for maneuvers, on a non-exclusive basis. The exercise of the lease options would be related to unforeseen contingencies which might develop in the next 15 years. The specific areas to be leased-- a 40 acres site in Malakal harbor and 2,000 acres on Babelthaup--are addressed in the draft Compact of Free Association.

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11. Senator Hart Could the Seventh Fleet be maintained in Asian waters at its same level of activity without Japan or Philippine bases, but with expanded Micronesian facilities?

Mr. Ellsworth. Technically, it is feasible to operate in the Western Pacific without extensive base support. I believe that this was proven, on an even larger scale, during World War II. This would require, however, a much larger investment in underway replenishment ships and forward-based tenders. Our access to bases in Japan and the Philippines, for logistic support and ship repair, helps us to avoid this cost.

By way of comparison, we would not look upon a Compact of Free Association with Micronesia as a substitute for the Mutual Security Treaties we have with Japan and the Philippines. Nor do we see Micronesia as a potential substitute for the very valuable facilities we use at Subic and Yokosuka. Nonetheless, it is important that Micronesia remain under the U.S. defense umbrella, for it is through this area that we would reinforce and resupply U.S. and allied forces in the event of hostilities.

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12. Senator Hart: Since the collapse of South Vietnam, what changes have been made in U.S. Micronesia defense policies?

Mr. Ellsworth: None. We have long believed that it would be in our national security interest for Micronesia to remain under the U.S. defense umbrella. Several factors, unrelated to Vietnam, contribute to this view: enduring national interests involving our access to overseas sources of raw materials, freedom of the seas and airspace above, and the defense of our own Pacific Island Territories; our international responsibilities and commitments as a Pacific Power; the location of Micronesia astride essential lines of communication; and our concern about the viability of Micronesia standing alone.

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36. Senator Hart. Has the Department discussed with Japan a possible Japanese naval presence in Micronesia? What is the Department's view of the strategic implications of the proposed oil storage port at Palau?

Mr. Ellsworth. We have not discussed this subject with the Japanese. The future authority of the United States over defense matters in Micronesia remains to be negotiated and, outside Kwajalein, no defense installations are planned in the near term. The proposed oil storage complex at Palau would increase the strategic importance of these islands, and I understand that the promoters of this project would very much prefer that Palau remain under the U.S. defense umbrella. However, we see nothing in the concept that would require us to establish a peacetime military presence on the islands.

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37. Senator Hart. Could either Tinian or Saipan realistically provide substantial support for major sea going weapons systems, for example, carriers?

Mr. Ellsworth. Apra Harbor in Guam is a much better site for a naval station and ship repair facility. Hence, there are no plans to duplicate these facilities on either Saipan or Tinian. However, Tinian will enhance the future potential of fleet support installations on Guam, by providing the additional acreage needed for training and the future storage of war reserve material, including conventional ammunition and petroleum. The target on Farralon de Medinilla also will be useful to the tactical air wings of any carriers which might be transiting through the Marianas, operating in the Philippine Sea, or using naval installations on Guam for upkeep.

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38. Senator HEPT. While Tinian and Saipan have the potential to be large airfields, would not their limited harbor facilities make them unsuitable as major operating bases for conventional forces?

Mr. Ellsworth. It is technically feasible to support air operations from these islands. Saipan served as a major operating base for the Japanese during World War II and, after its capture by U.S. forces, Tinian also served as a staging base for long range strategic bombers. In each case, harbor facilities were adequate to provide for the resupply of military forces with petroleum, ammunition, spare parts, and other consumables.

Today, of course, we have very fine fleet support facilities on Guam--the naval station, naval magazine, and ship repair facility. Hence, we see no need to duplicate these facilities on Tinian or Saipan. We do require, however, additional land for training, exercises, and the storage of war reserve material. Looking to the long-range, Tinian also has the potential to support fleet marine forces or various air operations, should we find it necessary to expand, consolidate, or replace existing support facilities.

With respect to facility improvement, the FY 1976 budget includes \$1 million for the planning and design of work necessary to rehabilitate the Tinian harbor breakwater, wharf, and causeway. On Saipan, there are no plans for facilities at Tanapag Harbor. However, the Covenant does provide for the long-term lease of 177 acres at this harbor, to support contingency operations from the new airport at Isley Field, should we find it necessary to exercise our joint use at this field in the future.

Again, I would stress that we are looking at Tinian and Saipan in terms of defense requirements which might arise five, twenty-five, or fifty years from now.

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39. Senator **Hart**, Do you foresee any contingencies which would make it necessary for the U. S. to maintain a large conventional presence in the Western Pacific?

Mr. Ellsworth, A contingency, of course, is one of those things which depends on ~~chance~~ or uncertain conditions. In general, the defense planner tries to reduce ~~the~~ element of uncertainty by considering the military capability, rather than the intentions, of a potential adversary. He then tries to determine what defense strategy will prevent that adversary from achieving a unilateral advantage over the United States in a wide range of potential options involving land, sea, and air forces. In this context, we continue to believe that the forward deployment of combat ready forces provides the best insurance against those sorts of contingencies which might affect our vital national interests, not the least of which is our resolve and preparedness to support both national and international security commitments.

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40. Senator Hart. What was the rationale for the \$300 million base construction that the Department of Defense proposed for the Marianas in the early 1970's why is that rationale no longer applicable?

Mr. Ellsworth. Plans for a training and logistic support base were developed in the 1970-72 timeframe when certain factors clouded the outlook for our future posture in the Western Pacific and seemed to require the early development of alternative facilities.

These factors included: the Vietnam conflict, when and how it would end, and our posture thereafter; the reversion of Okinawa to Japan and the apparent rapidity with which military reductions would occur; uncertainties in the Philippines, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea, and a lack of knowledge of future force levels and economic conditions.

These uncertainties dictated that a prudent course of action was to consider alternate facilities on Tinian over a phased 7-year period. However, since then the phase base development concept has been superseded by alternate, extremely modest plans to upgrade some very basic facilities on the island.

This change in original plans resulted from an overseas base structure which proved to be more stable than we thought in the 1971-73 time frame and severe budgetary constraints which forced a reassessment of many DoD priorities and programs. At present, there is no plan to use the land on Tinian for purposes other than training, unforeseen contingencies, and ability requirements which may dev

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