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October 26, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GENERAL COUNSEL, OSD

SUBJECT: Northern Mariana Islands

The attached is the position prepared by the Department of the Air Force with respect to acquisition and use of lands in the Northern Mariana Islands. I will discuss this in greater detail with Mr. Roche. I believe that a copy should be sent to the other Services in order to ensure that they are in agreement with what is said here, assuming that Mr. Roche has not taken such action himself.

Attachment as

Harry H. Almond, Jr.  
Office of Assistant General Counsel  
International Affairs

*[Handwritten signature]*  
Harry -

Has anyone prepared the documents necessary to turn back lands to the Marianas. It has been some time since the Secretary of Interior letter and I haven't seen any progress. I would like drafts of the documents soon.

DCS

*[Handwritten notes and signatures]*  
B.F. → *[Signature]*  
①  
② ~~No Marianas.~~

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON 20330



20 OCT 1977

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, INSTALLATIONS MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING,  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
(MANPOWER, RESERVE AFFAIRS, AND LOGISTICS)

SUBJECT: Northern Mariana Islands

This is in reply to your October 3, 1977, request for information regarding the Air Force's near term requirement for land in the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Air Force has no current near term need for leasing any of the land on Tinian, Saipan, or Farallon de Medinilla. The priority for dollars, and the current Pacific basing posture do not dictate a near term use of these lands by the Air Force. However, as indicated in the DEPSECDEF December 27, 1976, letter to the Under Secretary of the Interior, the requirement to lease approximately 17,800 acres for DOD use on Tinian remains a viable long range defense concept. As yet the Air Force has not determined when it might exercise its option to lease the land.

The Marianas covenant indicates that leasing the land will cost (a) \$17.5M for Tinian, (b) \$2M for Tanapag Harbor on Saipan, and (c) \$20,600 for Farallon de Medinilla. These costs are to be adjusted by inflation from date of signing the covenant. In addition to these costs, the Secretary of Defense in a December 7, 1974, message to Ambassador Williams (Presidential negotiator) indicated that Defense, after obtaining Congressional approval, would upgrade the existing harbor and airfield. Since these efforts are not service peculiar and are a significant part of satisfying DOD's commitment to the people of the Mariana Islands, OSD should consider funding these programs. The estimated cost for these projects for FY 79 through FY 83 adjusted for inflation is:

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Fiscal Year	Total Est Cost (\$000)
FY 79	\$29.5
FY 80	31.3
FY 81	33.3
FY 82	35.2
FY 83	37.5

The above costs include \$2M (adjusted each year for inflation) for a memorial park on Saipan. Ambassador Williams, in a meeting with DEPSECDEF on January 29, 1975, stated the land would be reserved by DOD but the money would not be in the DOD budget. Ambassador Williams indicated he would seek special legislation for the trust fund to develop and maintain the park. DEPSECDEF, in a letter dated March 24, 1975, conveyed this understanding to the Department of the Interior.

Although the Air Force has no near term requirements for land in the Marianas, the Navy requires use of Farallon de Medinilla for a gunnery range. Additionally, the Marines use Tinian for amphibious maneuvers. Pending a decision on leasing land, it is our understanding that CINCPACFLT will negotiate an interim agreement with the new government of the Marianas.

(Signed)  
 JAMES F. BOATRIGHT  
 Deputy for Installations  
 Management  
 Deputy Assistant Secretary  
 (Installations)