

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958

AL-2

HiComTerPacIs  
File: AL-2

Serial: 00234

and

Serial: 006

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS  
Office of the High Commissioner

14 SEP 1949

**SECRET**SECRET

From: Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet, and High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

To: Deputy High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Via: Commander Naval Forces Marianas.

Subject: Pagan Island - Change in Status of, request for.

References: (a) DepHiComTerPacIs secret Ser 006 of 8 June 1949.  
(b) ComMarianas secret Ser 0090 of 9 July 1949 (1st end. on ref. (a)).

1. By reference (a) the Deputy High Commissioner requested that the continuation of Pagan Island as a training area be reconsidered and that Pagan Island be made available for civilian use. By endorsement, Commander Naval Forces, Marianas (reference (b)) recommended that the Deputy High Commissioner's request to resettle Chamorros on Pagan Island be denied and that Pagan Island be retained as a training area for the Armed Services.

2. It is not feasible to resettle 400 Chamorros on Pagan Island at this time. The High Commissioner is desirous of utilizing for the benefit of the native peoples all arable land in the Trust Territory, not otherwise committed to military use, but the fact that Pagan Island is uninhabited is a prime factor in its being chosen as a training area. Further, Pagan Island offers an excellent site for amphibious training involving the landing of troops and their maneuver ashore, combined with the realism provided by the delivery of actual naval gunfire, air bombing, and artillery fire. Consideration has been given to the possibility of using other islands in the Marianas, but they are not as suitable as Pagan.

3. It is true, as stated by DepHiComTerPacIs in reference (a), that the United States holds all former Japanese land in the Trust Territory (which includes Pagan Island), "as trustee for the benefit of the native inhabitants of the Trust Territory" and that the High Commissioner has been authorized to "hold, use, administer, liquidate, sell or otherwise deal with the property in the interest and for the benefit of the Native inhabitants of the Islands". It is also true that article 73 of the United Nations Charter recognizes the principle "that the interests of the inhabitants of these Territories are paramount", and that trustees of non self-governing territories should "accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to

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the utmost, within the system of international peace and security established<sup>1</sup>  
 by the present Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories  
 ...". It should be noted however, that under the terms of the Trusteeship  
 Agreement (Article 5) the United States is entitled "to establish naval, mili-  
 tary, and air bases and to erect fortifications in the Trust Territory." 3  
 Moreover, the United States Representative on the Security Council made it  
 quite clear, during debate on the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement, that in  
 a strategic Trusteeship of the character under consideration, "the security 65  
 objective must be an over-riding consideration." CinCPacFit/HiComTerPacIs  
 is of the opinion that the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement completely just-  
 ify use of Pagan Island as a military base. At the same time HiComTerPacIs 01  
 feels that if the United States deprives the natives of land which is held  
 in trust for their benefit, a fair compensation should be made. Since it is  
 considered that Pagan Island is necessary to the military requirements of the 00  
 Navy, and acquisition of such land has not been listed by CNO in his letter  
 serial 006P22 of 25 March 1949 as a permanent military development by the  
 armed forces, steps should be initiated to request that such action be taken.  
 DepHiComTerPacIs is directed therefore, to establish the fair value of a  
 leasehold to Pagan Island, taking into consideration such rights of usufruct  
 as may be granted to the natives, consistent with the use of Pagan Island as  
 a military reservation. Upon determination of this fair value by DepHiCom-  
 TerPacIs, ComMarinas is directed to initiate a request to CNO, via HiComTer-  
 PacIs/CinCPacFit, to set aside Pagan Island as a military reservation.

A. W. RADFORD

ORIGINATOR: CDR W. C. MOTT (63) 8-17-49 - mn



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