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Authority EO 12958

**U. S. PACIFIC FLEET
COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES MARIANAS**

Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

In reply refer to:

FF5-9/10

NI-1

Ser' **3734**

SEP 24 1957

From: Commander Naval Forces Marianas
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: Rota District, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Encl: (1) HICOMTERPACIS ltr Guam ser 1342 of 9 Sep 1957 addressed to Mr. Anthony T. LAUSI, Director, Office of Territories, Department of the Interior

1. Enclosure (1), considered self-explanatory, is forwarded herewith for information.
2. The Commander Naval Forces Marianas is well aware that Rota Island and the Rotanese are in the Marianas Island orbit culturally, linguistically and economically as well as geographically. Further, the High Commissioner's justification for transferring Rota Island to the Saipan District can not be entirely refuted.
3. Should Rota be transferred to the Saipan District, the logistic problems experienced by the High Commissioner would not be entirely alleviated since only one IST and one AKL are available to support the Saipan District, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and the U. S. Naval Facility, Chichi Jima, Bonin-Volcano Islands including Marcus Island. Further, budget limitations for the Naval Air Station, Agana, Guam would limit air support to Rota comparable to that furnished by the High Commissioner.
4. While transferring Rota to the Saipan District may provide the Rotanese a clearer sense of belonging to the Marianas Islands from a cultural, linguistic, economic and geographic view, the logistic and administrative problem would not be entirely relieved since it would fall under the Naval Administrator, Saipan District for administration with logistic support from both Saipan and Guam.
5. The question raised by the High Commissioner as regards the possibility of comparing the Rota record of progress with that of the Saipan District should not be an issue since Commander Naval Forces Marianas is cognizant of the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the Rotanese.

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6. Commander Naval Forces Marianas interposes no objection to transferring Rota to the Saipan District provided sufficient personnel, funds and equipment are made available. A detailed study would be necessary to determine the requirements to assume this additional responsibility.



W. B. AMMON

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NAVAD Saipan
HICOMTERPACTS

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Authority E012958Guam Serial 1342
September 9, 1957For U. S. Government Use Only

Mr. Anthony T. Lausi
 Director, Office of Territories
 Department of the Interior
 Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lausi:

Based on observations over the past three and a half years, it is my opinion that the interests of the Rotanese could best be served by Navy Administration so long as the Navy is administering Saipan. Culturally, linguistically, economically, and geographically, Rota falls within the Marianas Island orbit. It was part of the Saipan District during original Navy days and remained so when the Department of Interior took over the administration of the Trust Territory from the Navy.

When the United Nations Mission visited Rota on February 15, 1956, the people of Rota officially presented a request that all of the islands of the Marianas be united as one unit again. This is not a new attitude, for the Rotanese protested quite vigorously in July, 1953, when they were told that Rota would be removed from the Saipan District. It was reported that the Rotanese were uneasy and unhappy over the turnover which removed them from the Saipan District. A delegation met with Admiral Litch, head of ComNavMarianas, to protest the transfer, and a petition against the transfer is reported to have been presented to Admiral Radford who was in the area at this time. In short, in 1953, the Rotanese tried every way at their disposal to influence the decision to stay under Navy administration which would keep them within the orbit of the Saipan District.

This 1953 protest is of significant importance for I do not feel it was adequately brought to the attention of Department of Interior officials at the time. A review of Navy correspondence indicates that Interior officials believed that the Rotanese desired to remain under Trust Territory administration even though it meant separation from Saipan. The strong protests that later resulted proved this inaccurate.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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You may recall in late 1952 when the decision was reached that for security purposes, the Northern Marianas should revert back to Navy control, the Department of Interior requested that Rota remain within the Trust Territory sphere of influence. The line of thinking at this time was that it was to the advantage of our administration that a successful toehold be retained in the Marianas, looking to the day when security considerations might no longer require administration of the Northern Marianas by an agency of the Defense Department.

It is my opinion that such a day is so far off in the future so as to make our retainment of a "toehold" of little consequence. The result, however, when Executive Order No. 10470 which amended Executive Order 10408, went into effect on July 17, 1953, was that Rota remained within our administrative control but in a sense became neither fish nor fowl since it neither belonged to a district nor was a district on its own.

In the period immediately following this turnover, the consensus of opinion in the High Commissioner's office was that Rota would not become a separate district but could be administered satisfactorily from the field office at Guam. Practical difficulties soon arose since under the provisions of the Code it was assumed that every part of the Trust Territory would be within some district. The legal difficulty was resolved by the Attorney General by regarding Rota as a separate community to be treated under provisions of Sections 42, 43, and 44 of the Code. This allowed us, for example, to establish a single court there to serve the purpose of the district and community courts. Thus an attempt was made to treat Rota as a political entity.

By spring of 1955 it had become self evident that administratively this ambiguous position of Rota was not a success. Accordingly on February 17, 1955, the Secretary of the Interior approved the issuance of an amendment of the Code of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands creating the Rota District. This became effective March 10, 1955 by the issuance of Executive Order No. 51 by the Acting High Commissioner.

While the establishment of Rota as a separate district did bring about many improvements in the lot of the people of Rota, it also highlighted local administrative problems and brought into sharp focus the similarities with the Saipan District.

The close relationship of Rota and the Saipan District has increased rather than decreased during the past two years. Since a sizeable portion of the original population of Rota moved to Saipan and Tinian during the period when Rota was part of the Saipan District, almost every Rotanese family today has close relatives on Saipan or Tinian.

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Much of the advanced schooling available to Rotanese children is secured in Saipan for to date only an elementary school has been maintained on Rota. Since the end of the war, Rotanese children of intermediate school have gone to Saipan for higher education. Our administration policy has been to subsidize the sending of the children to the intermediate school at Saipan, not only because the cost to us is less than maintaining a separate intermediate school on Rota, but also because the language at Saipan is Chamorro as well as the fact that children have relatives to look after them while they are in school.

Logistically, Rota has always been a serious problem with us. The shipping and supply situation has never been satisfactorily worked out. For sea transportation we have had to depend mainly on two small locally owned boats. When, as frequently occurs, these boats are in dry dock, Rota is cut off from Guam, and from time to time imported food supplies on the island becomes exhausted. We have a special air flight into Rota once a month, but this cannot, of course, take care of the shipping and supply situation.

Economically, Rota, like Saipan and Tinian, because of its proximity to the Guam market has developed a thriving vegetable industry. It would be much more economical and practical for Rota vegetable growers if their vegetable production and marketing procedures were correlated with those of Tinian and Saipan. The present situation often is one of confusion and leads to unnecessary competition which works to the disadvantage of both Rota District and Saipan District in their competition for the Guam market.

The people of Rota like those of Saipan have been Westernized to an appreciable degree through the long association of the Spanish colonial period. The result is that their cultural patterns if not completely Westernized are much more so than anywhere else in our Trust Territory. Dependence upon a money economy is stronger here than anywhere else. The Rotanese have come to regard a standard of living modeled somewhat on Western patterns as their goal.

This drive towards a higher and Western standard of living is oriented on the part of the younger people towards Saipan and Guam. It is with difficulty that we manage to convince young Rotanese who leave for education and training to return to Rota. The Navy wage scales in Saipan are appreciably higher than ours, and this serves as a magnet drawing off the most capable of the young Rotanese. This situation would be somewhat ameliorated if Rota were part of the Saipan District for this would make the wage scale in Rota for government employment similar to that of Saipan. The pull towards a larger urban center would, of course, remain; but Rota would look more attractive to its young trained workers if the wage discrepancy between it and the rest of the Marianas were not so great.

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An analysis of the background of Rota favors the re-absorption of Rota into the Northern Marianas unit. Here Rota definitely belongs from a cultural, a linguistic, an economic, and a geographic view. From a standpoint of family ties and social identity, the Rotanese consider themselves one with the rest of the Northern Marianas people, and are so regarded by the others.

There is no question also that transfer of Rota back to the Saipan District would relieve us of a perennial logistic and administrative problem whose difficulties increase rather than decrease with time.

On the other hand, I should mention that since Rota is the one island administered by the Interior Department in the Marianas portion of the Trust Territory, it might be contended that our record in Rota will be open to direct comparison with that of the Navy. It could be held that our release of Rota might be interpreted as admission that the Department of the Interior had fallen down on the job. In my opinion this contention is easy to refute for definitely we can demonstrate significant improvements achieved during our administration.

In view of the fact that I discussed the question of the transfer of Rota with Secretary Seaton during his recent visit to the Trust Territory, I feel you should be aware of my present attitude towards the proposal that Rota should be under Navy administration.

Sincerely,

D. H. Nucker
High Commissioner

ORIGINATOR: JdeYoung:vf:boc

9/9/57

R/S None

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Ser 01000

8 NOV 1957

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on COMNAVMARIANAS ltr FF5-9/10 N1-1 ser 3734 of 24 Sep 1957

From: Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Rota District, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Ref: (a) CNO CONF msg 022051Z OCT 1957 NOTAL
(b) CNO CONF msg 171649Z OCT 1957 NOTAL
(c) COMNAVMARIANAS CONF msg 050611Z NOV 1957 NOTAL
(d) CO BUSHIPS Management Office, WESTPACAREA ltr J15 (WP) ser 2280-22 of 11 Jul 1957 NOTAL

1. Forwarded.
2. References (a) and (b) requested information in addition to that included in basic correspondence.
3. The following personnel, based on present Trust Territory Government organization, would be required if the Navy should assume administrative jurisdiction of Rota:

1 - Administrator	GS-11
1 - Public Health Officer	GS-11
1 - Land and Claims Officer	GS-9
1 - Agriculturist	GS-9
1 - Construction and Maintenance Supervisor	GS-9
45 - Indigenes for clerical, skilled and unskilled positions	

Appropriated funds in the amount of \$80,000.00 annually would be needed. These estimates are considered minimum requirements.

4. Administration of Rota as a separate island district has been both difficult and expensive for the Department of the Interior. It has created problems of a cultural nature for the Rotanese by separating them administratively and politically from the other Northern Mariana Islands with which the Rotanese have racial, linguistic, economic and geographical ties. The proposal to transfer the administration of Rota to the Navy Department, which now has the responsibility for the balance of the Northern Marianas, has the advantage of relieving the High Commissioner of a problem and restoring the Rotanese to the Marianas orbit. Such a

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proposal, however, requires an expansion of the present Naval Administration Unit, Saipan, organization, an Amendment to Executive Order 10470 bringing Rota under naval administration, and a firm authorization for increased personnel. The addition of Rota would increase the population of the Saipan District by approximately 900 people.

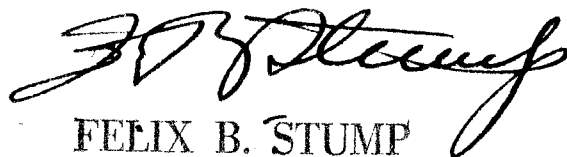
5. The High Commissioner is also faced with problems in providing logistic support. Both surface and air transportation have been difficult to furnish and has often been limited to irregular service. Schooling beyond the elementary level is not available on Rota. The policy of the High Commissioner has been to subsidize the sending of children to the intermediate school on Saipan. Transfer of the administration of Rota to the Navy will require a minimum firm funding of \$80,000.00 annually. Unfortunately, this additional expense to the Navy comes at a time when funds for military programs are being curtailed.

6. While little is to be gained by the Navy assuming administrative and logistic responsibilities for Rota, a military justification does exist. The Pacific Fleet has an urgent requirement for additional VLF communications coverage of the Western Pacific. Preliminary studies pin-point Rota as one of the more desirable sites for the installation of such a facility. The Chief, Bureau of Ships is now conducting a survey in order to make a firm determination of the most feasible site; reference (d) refers. Should Rota be selected, the installation of a naval communications unit will follow requiring the stationing of personnel for communications and security operations. The latest decision in regard to this proposal is unknown here.

*See also
attaching*

7. As noted in reference (c), the Rotanese Council unanimously desires to be integrated into the Saipan District. This is but a reiteration of the position taken in 1953, when the Rotanese vigorously protested the administrative separation from the Saipan District.

8. Naval administration in the Saipan District can be extended to include Rota, as outlined in reference (c). The Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet was prepared to assume this responsibility in 1953. Neither time nor circumstances have altered our capability to pick up the strands that were parted at that time. Should the decision be made to bring Rota under naval jurisdiction, it is recommended that the transfer be accomplished as of 1 July 1958, in order that proper budgeting and accountability may be arranged.


FELIX B. STUMP

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