

DECLASSIFIED
Authority E012758

Op-09ER5/121
Ser 835109E2

8 May 1959

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My dear Mr. Corrig:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter of 1 April 1959 from fifteen leading citizens of the Saipan District, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, to the United Nations Trusteeship Council petitioning them to clarify the status of certain claims for compensation for losses during World War II. This petition also requests that the Trusteeship Agreement be modified to guarantee a just compensation for destruction of properties and lives that may result from future wars. It is forwarded as a matter under the cognizance of the Department of State.

As stated in the letter, these claims have been advanced in a general way on several previous occasions, to the administration officials, to the United Nations Visiting Missions and to visiting Congressional parties and other distinguished official visitors.

The people of the Saipan District have been repeatedly advised that the United States had assumed responsibility only for the claims for certain use of their land by U.S. forces and for the redemption of you picked up by the occupying forces. They have also been advised, as they were by High Commissioner Nucker, that there was little or no hope that general claims and claims against the Japanese Government would be paid. The tone of the petition reflects their understanding in this regard.

Following the 1956 visit of the United Nations Mission, during which one of the citizens of Tinian raised the question of the claims (no petition was presented) the Naval Administrator was directed to take statements and preserve evidence of the claims for use in the event that funds should become available to meet them. This was done, and the people were informed of the purpose of this action which is the source of the statement that claims were forwarded to "Higher Naval Authority in 1957 for their assistance."

The evidence forwarded as a result of this request covers combat caused war damage claims, death claims, and personal injury claims. One thousand and eighty-eight claims were filed. The amount involved is stated as \$ 5,995,375.56 plus \$2,005.00 in U.S. currency held at the time of invasion.

20 to 1 = \$ approx $\frac{\$300,000}{\$2,805.00}$
6 districts - About $\frac{\$302,805.00}{2,100,000.00}$

360 to 1 = $\frac{\$16,650.00}{2,805}$
 $\$19,455.00$

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The records have been retained in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations for use in the event that they were required to document claims in connection with negotiations being conducted by the State Department with the Japanese Government. It is noted that such records consist of single page statements of claims, without any substantiating evidence.

The impracticability of fixing the amount of compensation which is due any individual for injury, loss, or suffering and deprivation which resulted from general war engulfing the area in which he lived led to the conclusion that such assets or funds as may be or may become available should be used for the rehabilitation of the community as a whole rather than for compensation for particular individuals who may be able to document specific losses.

It is anticipated that the petition will be the subject of either direct referral to the administering authority or of questions in the forthcoming review of the United States administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The records and any other information held in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations relative to this matter will be made available to you on request for use in preparation of position papers or for other action in connection with the petition on these or other claims.

Sincerely yours,

 151 *E. T. Sands*

Mr. Benjamin Gerig
 Director, Office of Dependent Area Affairs
 Department of State
 Washington 25, D. C.

Copy to:
 CINCPACFLT
 COMNAV Marianas
 NAVAD SAIPAN
 HICOMTERPACIS

ORIG BY CDR CE MILLER OP-09E25
 X-54418 ... 5/7/59 .. Felker

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