

*Submerged lands - Includes  
Rebuttal of Roger St. Pierre*

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

MISC. COMM. NO. 1-174  
(HOUSE OF REP.)

AUG 3 1978

Mr. Oscar Rasa  
Speaker  
Northern Marianas Commonwealth  
Legislature  
P.O. Box 129  
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Speaker Rasa:

I am writing in further reference to my letter to you of July 7, 1978, which responded to your June 9, 1978, letter concerning a legal opinion on the status of submerged lands in the Northern Mariana Islands.

As you probably know, the Micronesian News Service date-lined a story July 25, 1978, with the caption "Undersea Lands Ownership Questioned" that reported on the Assistant Solicitor's opinion which I forwarded with my July 7, 1978 letter to you. The article also reported Roger St. Pierre, Legal Consultant to the Legislature, as stating that this opinion "is not relevant to the situation in the Northern Marianas". Enclosed is a copy of the July 25, 1978 article.

I have received a memorandum from the Assistant Solicitor dated July 31, 1978, with respect to this news article that I wanted to share with you. Enclosed is a copy of this memorandum that further explicates the legal status of these submerged lands in the Northern Marianas.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely yours,

*Ruth G. Van Cleve*

Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleve  
Director  
Office of Territorial Affairs

Enclosures

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