



OFFICE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY
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Joint Guam Program Office Forward
P.O. Box 153246
Santa Rita, Guam 96915

Attention Joseph D. Ludovici, P.E. (Civil)
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy
(Infrastructure Strategy & Analysis)

Re Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Secretary Ludovici:

When the plans to relocate Okinawa-based U.S. Marines to Guam were first announced back in 2006, like many others, I was concerned that a sudden influx of 8,600 military members and 9,000 of their dependents would have an impact too great for our island to bear. Fortunately, you and others in key decision-making roles heard our voices and recalculated how best to realign forces to achieve the goals of (a) reducing the Marines presence on Okinawa, (B) maintaining a rapid response force in the western Pacific and (c) not overwhelming Guam.

As I understand the present proposal, approximately 5,000 Marines would be transferred to Guam, some two-thirds of them on a rotational basis. The number of dependents who might come is estimated at 1,300. It is also my understanding that with the new plan, the military will be able to meet its needs on property that is already federally owned. In other words, there would be no need to acquire any private or Government of Guam land for the buildup.

The remaining issue that is generating concern within the Guam community is the placement of a live-fire training range complex (LFTRC). This is a NIMBY issue, that is, put it any place but Not In My Back Yard. The Marines have made it clear, however, that unless an LFTRC is situated on Guam, the buildup will not occur. If the Navy and Marines have their way, the LFTRC would be located in the vicinity of the former Northwest Field and not far from Urunao Beach and Ritidian. The former encompasses ancestral lands of primarily the Artero Clan and the latter is the site of the Guam National Wildlife Refuge.

Over the years, I have had the good fortune to enjoy myself as a guest at Urunao Beach and as a visitor to the Refuge. I know that Urunao is precious to its private owners and that the wildlife refuge at Ritidian does help preserve flora and fauna that is increasingly rare on our island. Fortunately the area that the Department of the Navy proposes to use as the LFTRC does not appear to erode the rights of private landowners or jeopardize the important cultural and environmental activities of the Fish & Wildlife

Importantly, the buildup will provide an economic stimulus to Guam. Jobs will be created, Guam tax revenues will be increased and the governments of the United States and Japan will contribute not only to the construction of facilities for the Marines but also for improvements to the island's wastewater system. The military's demand for electric service will add to the revenues of the Guam Power Authority. It is also likely that military members and their dependents would enroll at the University of Guam and Guam Community College, giving those institutions a boost in their student numbers and diversity and in their revenues.

I appreciate the steps that the Department of the Navy has taken to achieve its objectives while accommodating the concerns of island residents. While some may insist that the accommodations are not enough or that the buildup should not even occur, I disagree. I believe that we owe it to our children and grandchildren, our island and our nation to support the buildup. Accordingly, I endorse the buildup.

Senseramente,



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