

Military Buildup in the CNMI

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Military Buildup in the CNMI

Introduction

The military buildup in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has been a recurring issue throughout these past years. There have been implications with the proposed military buildup in the CNMI as there are many factors needed to take into consideration. This research project presents information on the military buildup based on literature and the progress that the student researcher had made regarding the issues with the military buildup in the CNMI. This research will focus specifically on three main factors that must be considered for the military buildup in the CNMI. The first factor that must be taken into consideration are the terms negotiated in utilizing lands for military development within the CNMI Covenant. The second factor that must be considered is how this affects the lives of the people and how this affects the economic growth in the CNMI. Lastly, the third factor that must be considered are the comparative advantages and disadvantages, the possible outcomes, as a result of the increased military in the CNMI by comparing the outcomes of the military buildup in Guam.

Literature Review

The student researcher had gathered a minimum of five literature resources about the military buildup in the CNMI by searching through the library database of Northern Marianas College. The website link the student researcher had used to access the library database is: <https://library.marianas.edu/> This database includes collections of peer-reviewed academic journal title and comprehensive reference information from EBSCO, Britannica, and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). The student researcher has searched for peer reviewed, scholarly articles and journals regarding the historical land use agreements between the United States and the CNMI, as well as the terms negotiated with utilizing the lands for military training within the CNMI Covenant. The student researcher has also gathered scholarly articles, data, and statistics regarding the outcomes of Guam's increased military and its economic growth in relation to the military buildup in the CNMI.

According to Frank Quimby on his article *Americanised, Decolonised, Globalised and Federalised* (2013), the CNMI was the first insular area to voluntarily join the United States, as most of the population of the CNMI greatly desired US affiliation. In June 17 1975, the voters of the CNMI approved the negotiated political status agreement, the Covenant, by a 78.8% majority and in 1978, led to the agreement of the Covenant between the United States and the CNMI. (Quimby, 2013, p. 464, para. 1). This political agreement was considered as a breakthrough for the CNMI. With the agreement of the Covenant, it provided the people of the CNMI with US citizenship and the affiliation they had highly sought after.

The terms negotiated and agreed within the Covenant, regarding the United States utilization of lands for military development must then be taken into consideration. According to the CNMI Covenant, it limits land ownership to residents of Northern Marianas descent and mutual consent is required before key self-government provisions could be modified. In regards to the utilization of lands for military development, the United States Department of Defense included a lease payment of US\$32 million for more than 18,000 acres for 50 years, with an option to renew, at no additional cost, for another 50 years. The land included about 17,799 acres or two thirds of the island on Tinian, 177 acres in Saipan's Tanapag Harbor, and all 206 acres of uninhabited Farallon de Medinilla for an aerial and naval target range (Quimby, 2013, p. 467, para. 3). For Tinian bases, the Pentagon conducts periodic US Marine Corps training and is studying whether Tinian is capable to support its military facilities for a proposed relocation of US Marines from Okinawa to Guam. However, the United States has not fully exercised its options of the acquired lands in the CNMI.

The primary factor that must be considered with the military buildup is how this will affect the lives of people and the economic growth of the CNMI. One of the main concerns are the noise that occurs from live fire training and its effects on the daily lives of the people. According to the honorable Kilili Sablan, "Loud noise occurring with random intermittency has been associated with impaired hearing, reduced productivity, sleep disturbance, annoyance, and other physical and psychological effects." (Erediano, 2016, para. 5). Another concern is how the military buildup affects the economy of the CNMI. The CNMI have tourism based economies and the concern is that it may turn into a militarized zone more than a tourist destination as a result of the military buildup. Furthermore, the military buildup may cause adverse effects of the environment. Despite these concerns, the advantages of the military buildup in the CNMI must

be considered as well. With regards to the live fire training concerns, Kilili addressed that the effects of the artillery and impact zones “cannot be well understood without direct observation and experimentation.” (Erediano, 2016, para. 11). This implies that Kilili is suggesting to let the military implement its live fire training and have the people of the CNMI observe the live fire training first before addressing whether this will be an issue. Furthermore, having an increase in the military will enable the CNMI to be well prepared against threats.

With regards to the current military buildup proposal in Guam, according to Frank Quimby on his article *Fortress Guåhån* (2011), the Guam military buildup has been the largest proposed military buildup on Guam since World War II. According to financial analysts, this expansion is expected to exceed the tourism boon of the 1980s and 1990s, a record economic growth for Guam. All the relocations, constructions, and support services could generate US\$2.1 billion in gross receipts and taxes for Guam between 2010 and 2020 (Quimby, 2011, p. 372, para.1). With this military buildup, it is expected to generate many permanent civilian jobs, an estimate of 6,000 jobs, in addition to temporary construction jobs. US officials including Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality Nancy Sutley and Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn, the senior US official directly overseeing the build-up, has visited Guam to reassure local leaders that the United States understands their concerns and ensures to adjust plans to address their issues. According to Lynn, the US government had a US\$100 million commitment, along with US\$740 million provided by Japan, to upgrade Guam’s commercial port, improve infrastructure, schools, health care, and public safety (Quimby, 2011, p. 376, para.1). With this, the US government ensures the local leaders and the people of Guam that their concerns about the military buildup are being addressed. William Lynn has also brought up the Environmental Impact Statement, making it

clear that they will not exceed the capacity of Guam's infrastructure as they construct the military facilities, ensuring them that they have many solutions in controlling the military buildup. Furthermore, because of the US strategic environment in Asia, Guam bases will play a bigger role and the military buildup ensures the security of allies, quick responses to disasters and humanitarian needs, and address any threats that may occur.

Methodology

The student researcher's methods to gather his primary sources are: through an online survey and an email to three government officials to set up an interview or an optional questionnaire that has been provided for them to respond to, in the event that they are not able to schedule an interview.

The first method that student researcher had used to gather his primary sources are through online surveys. He has been conducting a survey which consists of three sections. The first section includes background information about the military buildup in the CNMI to give the person an understanding of the history behind the military buildup in the CNMI. The second section includes demographic questions to provide the student researcher a distribution of the majorities and minorities of people taking the survey. This section includes questions such as gender, in which the 77.8% responded where female and 22.2% where male. Furthermore, this section includes questions such as age and ethnicity where the majority are locals of the CNMI. The third section includes questions that asks their opinions on the military buildup in the CNMI. Questions in this section includes a rating from 1-10 on how concerned they are with the military buildup. Furthermore, this section included answer choices regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the military buildup. Lastly, this section of the survey included a comment response question asking them what they could suggest to government officials and military personnel to work better together and the people regarding this issue. The method that the student researcher had used to gather his responses for his survey is shared online through this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/xgccRuptxzYH2b7g1>.

From what he had gathered from his survey, 44.4% believes that the military buildup will be bad for the future of the CNMI. While 33.3% indicated that it would be good for the future and 22.2% had no opinion. This question indicates that the majority believes the military buildup will not be beneficial for the future of the CNMI. The survey also indicated that 88.9% believed that the CNMI will be better prepared against threats as a result of the military buildup with 88.9% believed that the noise from live fire training and the effects on the environment will be a disadvantage as a result from increased military presence on the CNMI. The survey also noted that communication and having compromises between the CNMI and the military was the biggest suggestion given when asked what advice they would give to the military and local government officials to work better together and with the people of the CNMI.

The second method the student researcher had used to gather his primary sources are through interviews or a questionnaire. He plans to formally interview three government officials with prepared questions. These government officials are: Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan, Representative Angel Demapan, and Governor Ralph Deleon Guerrero Torres. The student researcher had sent them an email kindly asking them to schedule an appointment for a formal interview either through skype or in person. If an interview is not possible, included in the email is the questionnaire for them to respond to instead. The questionnaire includes three questions: what the advantages and disadvantages may be as a result of the military buildup on the CNMI, how this issue will affect the lives of the people and the economic growth of the CNMI, and whether they support or are against the military buildup.

According to Honorable Gregorio Kilili Sablan in his response to the questionnaire, it is too early to tell what advantages, disadvantages, or socioeconomic impacts will result from any military buildup in our islands until all of the environmental and socioeconomic studies are

completed and the Department of Defense issues a Record of Decision. He stated that a Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is currently being developed, and studies are underway on impacts to coral, potable water, local transportation, and socioeconomic effects on surrounding communities. The Revised Draft EIS is expected to be released for public review and comment in late 2017 – early 2018. Honorable Gregorio Kilili Sablan encourages citizens to take the opportunity that will be available to voice their concerns about the proposed buildup of military activity on Tinian and the expansion of training to Pagan. He states a Record of Decision by the Department of Defense is expected to be issued in 2019 where it will give the public a clear understanding of what the U.S. military plans to do to the CNMI. Furthermore, Honorable Sablan states that until the studies are completed and a Record of Decision is released, he is unable to say whether or not he supports the military buildup in the Marianas. He does oppose the bombing of Pagan and the use of howitzers, a type of field artillery that fires on high trajectories at low velocities, on Tinian. Honorable Sablan noted that he has opposed this activity many times. He also noted that how Pagan and other public lands of the Commonwealth are used is a local decision, to be made by the Commonwealth government

The student researcher believes that the methods to gather his data and responses for this research project are the right choice as the online survey allows a wide variety of responses. As for the interview, he will be able to gather opinions and perspectives regarding the military buildup from experts. The questionnaire allows the student researcher to ask the experts in the event they are not able to schedule an interview.

Conclusion

The proposed military buildup in the CNMI has many implications and many factors to be considered. The CNMI must consider their obligations with the United States and the agreements that was made with the Covenant. The United States must consider how the military buildup will affect the lives of the people, the economic growth, and the environment in the CNMI and ensure the local leaders and the people of the CNMI that these concerns will be addressed. Although the proposed military buildup has many implications and many factors to be considered, there must be a compromise between the CNMI and the United States for the proposed military buildup to be agreed upon.

References

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doi:10.1080/00223344.2011.607606

Research and Writing Schedules

Dates	Tasks	Progress
Sept 12th - 16th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revision 1: Proposal Paper draft on Turnitin 	
Sept 19th-23rd	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designing survey and interview questions. 2. Reading through gathered literary resources 3. Type up the Process Essay with updated schedule and additional reading 	
Sept 26th-30th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schedule an appointment with government officials and military personnel for formal interviews 2. Begin handing out surveys and gathering opinions on the military buildup 3. Review planning, drafting and revision 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shared pilot survey online 2. Revisions for final survey to distribute
October 3rd-7th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise research report, including gathered resources and additional readings. 2. Research Report Draft 1 Submitted to Turnitin 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shared online survey
October 10th-14th		
October 17th-21		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed reading notes
October 24th-28th		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorm and outline process essay 2. Gathered data from survey

October 31-Nov 4		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed and turned in process essay
Nov 7th-11th		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Started with expository outline, essay
Nov 14- 18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2nd Draft Research Report Upload 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turned in expository essay 2. Received questionnaire responses from Honorable Gregorio Kilili Sablan 3. Updated essay and included responses
Nov 21-25		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turned in research essay draft 2. Done!

Military Buildup Outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Introduce the topic of the military buildup in the CNMI
 - b. Describe the three main factors that must be considered for the military buildup in the CNMI.
- II. Body
 - a. Discuss the history of the CNMI regarding its affiliation with the United States. Also, the terms and conditions made when the CNMI Covenant was agreed upon both the CNMI and the United States
 - b. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the military buildup the CNMI. How it will affect the lives of the people. How it may affect the economic growth. How this may be beneficial.
 - c. Discuss the outcomes of the military buildup in Guam and relate to what may happen to the CNMI
 - d. Discuss methods of gathering primary sources
- III. Conclusion
 - a. Briefly restate the three main factors that must be considered for the military buildup in the CNMI.
 - b. Suggest that there should be a compromise

Reading Notes to fill out when reading course and outside reading materials for assignment

Note Taking Sheet: Reading # 1

Name: Leowell Cristobal

Course: EN101ON1 Fall 2016

With many sources to read and evaluate, you need a way to keep track of the material you may use in your research paper. You need to record where you have looked, what you have found, and how to find each piece of information again (this is for your bibliography).

Directions: Fill in the information below, and keep with all of your resources. This will help you when it is time to write both your outline, paper, and annotated bibliography.

1. Author's Name: Quimby, Frank
2. Author's Credentials:
 - a. Was city editor of the Pacific Daily News and taught journalism at the University of Guam.
 - b. Senior public affairs officer in the Secretary of the Interior's Office of Communications in Washington, DC
3. Publisher [or title of organization]: Journal of Pacific History
4. Heading of Section [title of reading]: *Americanised, Decolonised, Globalised and Federalised*
5. Year Written: December 2013
6. Pages: 21
7. Website URL: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=4&sid=3dfae6f8-2f38-45fe-80f2-7b1a90d7a305%40sessionmgr1&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=93257981&db=rlh>

Main Ideas/Points	Important Quotations	Supporting Details	Relevance to Your Assignment
<p>Military Buildup on the CNMI</p>	<p>“Most of the Northern Marianas’ Chamorro population avidly desired US affiliation”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In June 17 1975, the voters of the CNMI approved the Covenant, by a 78.8% majority. 2. United States Department of Defense included a lease payment of US\$32 million for about 17,799 acres or two thirds of the island on Tinian, 177 acres in Saipan’s Tanapag Harbor, and all 206 acres of uninhabited Farallon de Medinilla for 50 years, with an option to renew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This source is relevant to the assignment as it includes the history of the CNMI regarding the terms negotiated in utilizing lands for military development within the CNMI Covenant.

In this article, is it possible that any of the authors might have a bias about the subject matter?

No. provide examples if needed.

Is the article timely or a bit outdated? Timely, this article was published in December 2013.

Was it published in a reputable source? Yes.

It is an academic source.

Other important information: Referred readings and sources on the topic.