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GUAM

Dominating the news for the past year on Guam was the issue of the pending relocation of 8,600 US Marines and their several thousand dependents from Okinawa to Guam, the building of a new aircraft carrier wharf and facilities, and the establishment of a new army ballistic missile defense base over the next few years. At the same time, facilities at Andersen Air Force Base are being upgraded. This combined military buildup has already begun to impact many aspects of the island's political, economic, and social landscapes as well as the cultural life-ways of its people.

In November 2009, the Department of Defense (DOD) released its official “Draft Environmental Impact Statement” (DEIS) for public comment. The purpose of the 11,000-page document was to detail the impact of the relocation on the local community. The military buildup is expected to occur over a multiyear period with peak activity to be reached by 2014. According to the report, at the buildup's height, almost 80,000 people will be added to the island's existing population of

170,000—a population increase of 45 percent. About half of this population growth will be due to “transient workers,” meaning construction workers and other personnel coming to Guam for initial construction and other preparatory activities. Even after these workers have departed, the buildup is projected to push Guam's population above the 200,000 mark. The report noted that, without the buildup, Guam's population would not have reached this number for another twenty years. Guam residents responded in force, with 10,000 written comments noting their concerns about various proposed actions (*PDN*, 1 Jan, 29 June 2010).

One of the more controversial revelations in the report was the federal government's plan to acquire at least 2,200 acres to add to its current inventory of Guam land. At present, the US government owns nearly one-third of the island—most of which is in DOD hands. Huge tracts of these federal lands, however, are not only unused but also completely undeveloped. According to the environmental impact statement, the additional acreage would be for a number of purposes, including a live firing range in the Pãgat/Sasayan area in the northeast part of the island (*PDN*, 1 Jan 2010). There are community concerns about increased traffic and denial of access to recreational lands as well as the fact that the site includes the Pãgat cultural historic site (Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans 2010). The live firing range is currently planned for a bluff right above this prehistoric indigenous site, which is listed on both the Guam Register of Historic Places and the US National Register of Historic

Places. Pãgat contains the remains of ancient Chamorro village structural stone foundations known as “latte” as well as mortars, pottery, and tools dating back to AD 700 (Guam Preservation Trust 2010; Craib ND). In May 2010, the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced that Pãgat was on their “11 Most Endangered [US] Historic Sites List.” After this announcement, the DOD point man for the buildup, David Bice, announced that access to the site would be ensured, though this did little to mitigate public concerns (KUAM, 26 May 2010). By mid-2010, the Guam Preservation Trust was considering filing a lawsuit to stop the military’s plans for Pãgat (KUAM, 26 July 2010). Aside from the military’s direct land use plans, University of Guam Richard F Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Director John Peterson raised concerns about the consequences of the resulting urban sprawl on non-military land and its impact on historic sites (PNC, 22 June 2010).

The DOD land acquisition plans also caused an uproar among local landowners who might lose their land through federal eminent domain proceedings, as well as those who want to keep Pãgat open and free from what they feel are culturally insensitive and offensive impacts of a live firing range. Although the process would compensate Pãgat landowners on the basis of the fair market value of their land, this was not considered acceptable to landowners, who either did not want to give up their land for various reasons including familial ties to the land, or were not willing to accept a federal court’s determination of its value (KUAM, 29 Dec 2009). The DEIS land

use plan also included the dredging of Apra Harbor to make room for berthing nuclear-powered aircraft carriers (PDN, 1 Jan 2010).

Local officials likewise criticized the report for not answering the question of how to upgrade existing island infrastructure to cope with the massive influx. Although the report noted that local tax revenues and employment opportunities would increase significantly, local officials remained concerned about how to fund the requisite \$3 billion in new roads, water systems, hospital expansion, and other improvements. Guam officials have consistently stated that the local government cannot possibly afford to pay for this needed infrastructure. Federal officials outside the Defense Department have also voiced this same view. Commenting on just the water infrastructure needs, one US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) official was quoted in March as saying that Gov-Guam agencies “cannot by themselves accommodate the military expansion,” and further, “It is not possible and it is not fair that the island bear the cost” (Harden 2010).

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the DOD overall plans came under fire from other US government agencies in formal reports. In November, the General Accounting Office, an arm of the US Congress, issued a report noting that the Guam government needed more timely information from the Defense Department about the military buildup (PDN, 1 Jan 2010), and that the buildup would “substantially” tax the island’s infrastructure (Harden 2010). In February, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) issued its own

report grading the DOD buildup plan as “environmentally unsatisfactory”; further, they said that the plan “should not proceed as proposed” (USEPA 2010, 1, 2). The USEPA report echoed the General Accounting Office’s concerns about the impact on the island’s infrastructure. More alarmingly, the US Environmental Protection Agency stated that the buildup could result in water shortages that would “fall disproportionately on a low income medically underserved population” (USEPA 2010, 3). The agency further stated that the planned buildup would overload sewage-treatment systems and that this might “result in significant adverse public health impacts” (USEPA 2010, 1). The USEPA report additionally criticized plans for dredging Apra Harbor, citing an “unacceptable” impact on seventy-one acres of vibrant coral reef (Harden 2010). Guam’s delegate to Congress, Madeleine Bordallo, also noted, in an address to the Guam Legislature, that the plan lacked provision for the disposition of all the dredging material (Bordallo 2010).

Guam officials also had reservations about the thousands of guest workers to be recruited. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement projected that transient workers brought in from off-island would receive the bulk of the 33,000 new jobs created from the buildup (*PDN*, 1 Jan 2010). Congresswoman Bordallo spoke for many when she voiced her concern about the lack of comprehensive planning for the housing and health-care needs of these incoming workers. She also stated that she would not support any appropriations or authorizations in Congress that would bring 80,000

people to Guam by 2014 as envisioned in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Bordallo 2010).

In response to the environmental impact statement, the Guam Legislature passed Resolution 275, sponsored by Senator Rory Respicio, which set forth the legislature’s position. The resolution criticized the fact that only ninety days were allowed for review of the voluminous document. It also called for a Civil-Military Advisory Council to resolve ongoing problems. The resolution further identified six key problems with respect to the buildup that must be resolved: land acquisitions and use, the proposed dredging of Apra Harbor, health care, sociocultural impacts of the buildup, infrastructure upgrades, and pollution control. In particular, with respect to land, the legislature asserted that the buildup activities must be confined to existing federal land without new acquisitions. In this same vein, Senator Benjamin J Cruz had sponsored a bill requiring a voter referendum before any Government of Guam (GovGuam) lands were ceded to federal control. At the time of this writing, the bill was moving forward in the legislative process but had not been voted on by the full legislature (Bill 66, Guam Legislature).

Concern about the buildup was at the center of the Seventh Meeting of the International Network of Women Against Militarism. This was the first time the group had met on Guam, having previously held conferences in San Francisco, South Korea, the Philippines, and other locales. With the theme of “Chinema‘ Nina‘ maolek yan Inarespetu para Direchon taotao” (Resistance, Resilience and Respect for

Human Rights), more than a hundred women met 14–19 September 2009 on Guam to discuss their concerns about the buildup, including violence against women, environmental harm, adverse economic impacts, and sociocultural impacts (WGS 2010).

Activists also took the issue of the buildup to the United Nations. In June, a group of Chamorros from Guam and Saipan testified before the UN Special Committee on Decolonization, insisting that the international community pay closer attention to Guam's continued colonial status as the United States substantially increases its already large military presence on the island (Achakma, 22 June 2010). The delegation, including former Guam Senator Hope Cristobal and members of We are Guahan and Fuetsan Famalao'an (a women's group), specifically requested that the United Nations send delegates to Guam to investigate the consequences of militarization (PDN, 24 June 2010).

Looming over all these issues was concern about the social impact of such a sharp increase in the island population and, in particular, the impact on the Chamorro culture. The environmental impact statement itself speculated that the expansion of the non-Chamorro population would affect the proportion of Chamorro officeholders as well as the outcome of future Guam plebiscites (Resolution 275, Guam Legislature).

Predictably, concerns about the buildup renewed discussion about Guam's non-self-governing/colonial status and the limited control that Chamorros, Guam's indigenous people, have over decisions about their homeland. Representing the

sentiments of many, one Chamorro elder, former Senator Carmen Artero Kasperbauer, was quoted in the military daily *Stars and Stripes* as saying, "We hate being possessions to the federal government. That's why people are angry." In a sentiment reportedly shared by most Chamorros, Kasperbauer did not direct her anger at the troops: "I'm not talking about the uniformed military. We love the uniformed military. Our son . . . helped liberate the Kuwaitis. But he can't help liberate me" (*The Nation*, 3 May 2010). In perhaps another sign of concern about the status of the Chamorro people and their culture, Governor Felix Camacho in February signed an executive order requiring all GovGuam agencies to use "Guahan" instead of "Guam" (PDN, 17 Feb 2010); Guahan is considered by many to be the name given to the island by the native population prior to European contact in the sixteenth century.

The buildup also factored into other social debates of the community, such as the push to raise the drinking age from eighteen to twenty-one. By the end of June, the measure was on track to become law. Initiatives to raise the drinking age had twice been rejected by voters in recent years (KUAM, 02 July 2010). One past opponent of this legislation, Senator Rory Respicio, stated that he now supported the bill, largely due to the implications of having the community absorb thousands of young people of drinking age all at one time as a result of the influx of the marines and other military personnel (pers comm, June 2010). Other local social issues making news and creating controversy were legislative bills to establish civil

unions for same sex couples (*PDN*, 1 Jan 2010) and to legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes (Bill 423-30, Guam Legislature).

As elsewhere around the world, Guam had taken a hit as a consequence of the global financial crisis in late 2008. By 2010, the economy was expected to be growing again, largely due to military construction (*PDN*, 1 July 2010). Over the long term, the business community looked forward to the buildup because it would significantly boost the economy (*KUAM*, 1 Feb 2010), and there were some indications that delays in the expansion were adversely affecting real estate prices (*PNC*, 13 April 2010). And yet even among local business leaders who expect a strong economic expansion overall there are concerns that economic activity will be confined to the military bases and may “not spill over to local community” (*NOW on PBS* 2009).

There was good news on the health-care front as the island’s only civilian hospital, Guam Memorial Hospital, received a preliminary accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Organizations, after it had lost accreditation some twenty-six years ago. The final formal accreditation award was expected in July (*PDN*, 11 July 2010).

Guam’s public grew increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of constructing a new John F Kennedy High School due to the construction procurement process being challenged in court (*KUAM*, 19 Feb 2010). The school had been closed years earlier, with students attending classes elsewhere on a temporary basis. Procurement disputes caused construction to

be placed on hold as of 30 June 2010 (*PDN*, 13 July 2010). On a positive note, \$83 million in federal funding under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (President Barak Obama’s economic stimulus measure) became available for educational capital improvements for the University of Guam, Guam Community College, and the public schools, as well as for government computer systems (*KUAM*, 26 March 2010).

There were major changes in the leadership of the law enforcement community during the year under review. After a controversial raid on news offices, Chief of Police Paul Suba was asked to resign by Acting Governor Mike Cruz. He was replaced by former Police Chief and Senator Frank Ishizaki, who later returned Suba to duty in his former position as a police captain (*KUAM*, 14 May 2010). In early 2010, President Obama appointed Guam Attorney General Alicia Limtiaco as US Attorney for Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands (*KUAM*, 30 April 2010). Governor Camacho appointed John Weisenberger as her successor; he will hold the position until a new attorney general is elected in November (*PNC*, 18 June 2010).

Considerable excitement was generated in March with news that President Obama would stop by Guam as part of an overseas trip that would take him to Australia and Indonesia. Local leaders and residents were hoping to meet with the president regarding several concerns, including the military buildup (*KUAM*, 23 March 2010). The “We Are Guahan” organization submitted a petition signed by 11,000 people asking that

Obama speak directly to the people of Guam during his visit (KUAM, 11 March 2010). Unfortunately, the entire trip was twice postponed due to deliberations in Washington regarding national health care reform. Obama was then rescheduled to visit in June, but early that month the White House announced that the trip had been postponed for a third time (*Saipan Tribune*, 5 June 2010).

Also in March, a special election was held to fill a vacancy in the Guam Legislature caused by the resignation of Democratic Senator Matt Rector. With only 16 percent of the electorate turning out to vote, Republican Tony Ada prevailed in the six-candidate contest (Jamesvw 2010). Despite this, Democrats retained their legislative majority with a 9 to 6 edge (KUAM, 22 March 2010). In 2009, ethics complaints had been filed with the legislature's Ethics Committee against Rector. The most serious complaints related to a past misdemeanor burglary conviction that Rector did not disclose when he ran for the legislature in 2008. Rector explained that, more than twenty years ago, he and some friends who had been drinking had "stupidly" entered an unlocked door of a closed shopping mall and had subsequently been arrested. But because Rector had filed an affidavit with the Election Commission in 2008 asserting that he had no criminal record, questions were raised as to whether Rector had committed perjury and whether he could legitimately hold office (PDN, 01 Jan 2010). Before the Ethics Committee acted on any of the ethics complaints, Rector resigned (KUAM, 19 Jan 2010). At the end of June 2010, Rector appeared in court

and pleaded not guilty to charges of making a false statement under oath and unsworn falsification as a misdemeanor. His trial was set for August 2010 (KUAM, 30 June 2010).

By the end of June, the 2010 race for governor was taking shape. Legislative Minority Leader Eddie Calvo and Assistant Minority Leader Ray Tenorio announced that they were running for the Republican Party (GOP) nomination for governor and lieutenant governor. Although the team of incumbent Lt Governor Mike Cruz and Senator James Espaldon had not yet announced, it was nevertheless clear that they would also be competing in the GOP gubernatorial primary set for 4 September. On the Democratic side there was considerable speculation in June that attorney Mike Phillips might run for governor. However, it soon became evident that the ticket of former Governor Carl Gutierrez and Senator Frank Aguon Jr would run unopposed for their party's nomination. Gutierrez made it clear that the military buildup will be a central issue in the general election and that he was campaigning as the candidate who would "stand up to the military and the US government" (PDN, 26 June 2010).

Two Chamorros in the military received considerable public notice. The 2010 documentary *Restrepos*, about US soldiers in Afghanistan, in part featured a Chamorro soldier, Angel Toves (KUAM, 6 July 2010). The year also saw the promotion of the first Chamorro to reach the rank of US Navy Rear Admiral—Peter Aguon Gumataotao, who assumed the post of Commander, US Naval Forces Korea (Bordallo 2010).

Among those who passed away over the last year were Jose R Duenas, former Democratic senator and his party's 1990 nominee for lieutenant governor; former Judge Cristobal Duenas, who was the first Chamorro appointed to a federal judgeship; former Chalan Pago Mayor Ben San Nicolas; and former Agat Vice-Mayor Jesus B Chaco. Businessman John Gerber, who passed away in May, was known for a variety of accomplishments, including the recent founding of a small World War II museum in Maina. Condolence resolutions for all of these were adopted by the Guam Legislature.

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MARSHALL ISLANDS

The period under review for the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has been one of unprecedented events, including the removal of a president and a potential constitutional crisis, the unsatisfactory resolution of numerous issues related to the Compact of Free Association with the United States, a variety of health issues and diplomatic forays that thrust the islands into the global spotlight, and a pair of international incidents that have painted the nation in an unfavorable light in the eyes of the world press.

By far the most important event of the last twelve months was the stunning and historic vote of no confidence that ousted President and Iroij Litokwa Tomeing in October 2009. While Tomeing had survived two previous attempts to drive him out of office in October 2008 and April

2009 and seemed to have solidified his administration's legitimacy during the summer recess, tensions were high even before the regular session of the Nitijela (Parliament) convened in August. The *Marshall Islands Journal* reported prior to the meeting of the Nitijela that a motion of no confidence was planned but that there were no specifics as to what lay behind such an initiative, nor was information given about whether anyone in either political party was preparing to step in should the vote succeed (*MIJ*, 21 Aug 2009). Indeed, the rumors surrounding the proposed vote were so vague that the only compelling aspect of such a possibility was that the vote was being considered by a coalition of leaders from both the United Democratic Party (UDP) and Aelon Kein Ad (AKA); the prospects for this third vote of no-confidence against Tomeing in the first eighteen months of his administration (and only the fifth such vote in the nation's history) seemed to rest entirely on a blurring of political party ideology and a desire simply to remove him from office.

As the Nitijela met through its regular sixty-day session, it seemed that the government's priority was the resolution of the land use agreement between the RMI government and Kwajalein landowners, the most prominent of whom is former President and Iroijlaplap Imata Kabua. While Kabua had been instrumental in Tomeing's rise to the presidency in 2008, continuing frustration over the lack of a land use agreement took center stage. In a letter to the editor of the *Marshall Islands Journal*, Kabua complained that his rights as a landowner had been stripped by the RMI gov-