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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Origin

ACTION: Amembassy CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

Info:

INFO: Amembassy LONDON
" WELLINGTON
USUN NEW YORK
Amconsul SUVA (BY POUCH)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY <u>W. Vitell</u>	DATE FEB. 25 1987
RDS <input type="checkbox"/> or XDS <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. DATE _____	
TS AUTH. _____	REASON(S) _____
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STATE

SUBJ: TTPI

REF: Canberra's 809

Poliana
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1. President sent message to Congress August 21 urging Congressional support for Joint Resolution which would establish Presidential Commission to study future political status of TTPI. As proposed, Commission would consist of 17 members, 8 members chosen by Congress, 8 members plus Chairman selected by President from Executive Branch and public life. Commission would study and assess all factors bearing on future of TTPI and make its recommendations to President and Congress within 8 months after beginning work concerning best means to provide for "such a degree of self-government as will permit the people of the Trust Territory freely to express their wishes as soon as possible, and not later than June 30, 1972, on the future status of the Trust Territory."

DISAPPROVED BY JS/B
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Drafted by: <u>WFE</u>	Tel. Ext. 3115	Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: <u>IO - David H. Popper</u>
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This action by President taken in response to 1966 Congress of Micronesia Resolution requesting President to create such a commission.

2. As appropriate, Embassy may wish to explain confidentially to Foreign Office that number of recently introduced Congressional proposals to establish TTPI status commission precipitated Administration's proposal which, as Fonoffs know, was under consideration for some time. Congress may not, however, act in time to establish a commission this year. Dept unable to state with certainty what the nature of recommendations coming out of commission will ultimately be. We will inform Congress and commission members that to terminate Trusteeship Agreement Micronesians will have to be offered choice which includes independence and some form of self-government in continued association with US. Our general expectation is that choice would be through plebiscite with some appropriate UN involvement to be held not later than but also not much before June 1972.

3. Dept briefed Woodard (Australia), Gilmore (UK), and Shepherd (New Zealand) August 23 and gave them copies of Joint Resolution and President's letter to Congress, including detailed explanation of Joint Resolution. All three agreed that President's proposed status commission was an appropriate step forward. Although he subsequently withdrew second adjective as result our comments, Woodard termed

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President's initiative as "significant and radical" step, clearly implying Australian desire to have been consulted on matter prior to ~~make~~ public announcement. ~~XXXX~~ Australian anxiety about offer of alternative of independence contrasted expectedly with Shepherd's repeated emphasis on need to offer Micronesians independence as ~~one~~ option in plebiscite.

4. In response to questions we acknowledged important strategic considerations ~~involve~~ involved but did not stress full extent to which they have been a motivating factor in Administration's decision. We also passed on our assessment that within time span contemplated ~~clear~~ majority of Micronesians would choose ~~some~~ form of continued association rather than independence. Finally, we noted that in advance of Commission recommendations we could not speak with assurance about ~~XXXXXX~~ termination of the Trusteeship Agreement.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ As result of briefing believe we have lessened appreciably Australian apprehensions concerning likelihood of TTPI becoming independent and timing of plebiscite.

5. Dept sending by airgram memcon of August 23 meeting, text of Joint Resolution and President's letter to Congress including detailed explanation of Joint Resolution.

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END

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