



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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TO : The Acting Secretary
THROUGH: S/S *OR*
FROM : *IO* - Joseph J. Sisco *'S*
SUBJECT: Proposal for Talks with Congressman Aspinall
about Legislation for TTPI Status Bill
ACTION MEMORANDUM

6/17/68

As you know, the Senate on May 29 passed a slightly modified version of the Administration's proposed joint resolution establishing a Status Commission for Micronesia. The House, however, will not act during this Congress unless we can persuade Congressman Aspinall to cooperate. He has stated with crusty stubbornness that he does not wish to take action this year, and he has repeated his opinion that the House Interior Committee could perfectly well serve as a Status Commission. A number of other members of the Committee see merit in the Administration's proposal or are at least willing to hold hearings.

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Even though the odds for success are not good, I believe we should make a high-level effort to try to get Aspinall to go along with the Administration's proposal. I have in mind that you, Secretary Udall, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Nitze might jointly see Aspinall, using the fact of the Senate's action, to review the national security considerations underlying our program for the TTPI as well as the reasoning behind our specific proposal for a Status Commission. Since I have spent a number of hours with Aspinall on this business, it might be useful if I were to go along with you.

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BY: CMS

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I understand that Mr. Nitze is definitely willing to join in such an approach to Aspinall. Interior has strongly recommended to Udall that he participate but Udall has not made up his mind partly because of Aspinall's attitude and partly because of other interests vis-a-vis Aspinall which have to be considered. Nevertheless, the Secretary's staff believe there is a reasonable chance Udall might be persuaded to join you and Mr. Nitze.

Although this might seem a rather "heavy" approach to one Congressman, it is one of the few feasible ways we could underscore the importance and urgency of our plans. Moreover, our failure to press Aspinall would probably confirm his suspicion that the Administration is not really united behind a definite plan and that he may be able to play around with short-cut methods of extending U.S. sovereignty over the Territory. Even if Aspinall could not be prodded into action this session, an approach now would improve prospects in the next Congress.

Recommendations

1. That you telephone Secretary Udall to discuss the idea of a joint approach to Mr. Aspinall.
2. That, if Secretary Udall agrees to the procedure, you join him and Mr. Nitze in calling on Mr. Aspinall to urge the scheduling of the earliest possible hearings on the proposed joint resolution so that the President can appoint a Commission within the next few months.

Approve ✓ *Wick per [unclear]*

Disapprove _____

Concurrence

H - Mr. Macomber *[initials]*

Reck: Joint approach is best, but individual high level approaches would be o.k.

IO:UNP:WGleysteen:gs *[initials]*

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