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Recent Developments on the Future of the TTPI

*Prepared for EA - Amb Greene briefing*

Perhaps recent developments relating to the question of the future of the TTPI can best be presented by dividing them into two categories -- those taking place in Micronesia and those in Washington.

In Micronesia

The Congress of Micronesia met for its regular 45-day session on July 14. The Congress has spent a large amount of time considering the Final Report of the Micronesian Political Status Commission which, as anticipated, called for a self-governing state in free association with the United States. Although the Status Commission is not particularly specific in its recommendations, it does say that self-government means Micronesian control over all three branches of government, and its description of free association appears similar to the status of Puerto Rico or the Cook Islands. To date, although a resolution of endorsement has been introduced in the Congress, the Micronesians have not taken any action to approve or reject the Commission's report. Interior is unaware of the reasons for such inaction.

The Congress of Micronesia has passed a resolution calling on the President and the US Congress to consider the future of the Territory. [

There was some thought of seeking a US Congressional resolution in response, but this idea was killed by the House Interior Committee -- which said it would respond as it saw fit.

A representative from Palau [

has introduced a resolution in the Congress of Micronesia calling for independence. The resolution was co-sponsored by three representatives from Truk

] and the Vice Speaker of the House from the Marshalls. No information is available on the action taken on, or response to, this resolution.

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Mr. Edgar Kaiser, Secretary Hickel's Special Assistant dealing with the Future Question, sat in on the President's Guam meeting with Senator Sali, the heads of the two Houses, the High Commissioner and the two senior Micronesian civil servants. The President [ ] specifically invited the Micronesians to Washington to start discussions on September 2.

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After this meeting Kaiser went to Saipan and gave the Micronesians copies of the draft Organic Act with all the possible disclaimers. He is going back next week to try to get a feel of their reaction to this draft and to gauge their attitude toward the Status Commission Report. [ ]

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In Washington

The Interagency Committee created a subcommittee consisting of representatives from State (L and IO), Defense, Justice and Interior to rework the draft Organic Act into a more suitable form. The intention was that each Department would be represented by a lawyer and a policy type, with Justice just having a lawyer. This was to be a working-level exercise with subsequent review by the Interagency Committee and the Under Secretaries Committee.

After an initial false start involving consideration of the possible US Congressional resolution (see above), the Subcommittee got down to its task on August 4. [ ]

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In the meantime, the subcommittee has continued to review the draft act and has made some notable changes in it -- as indicated in the attached memo. It is in fact distinctly improved.

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With the redrafted act now needing only a final polishing, the next step will be for the Interagency Committee to forward it, presumably with State maintaining its reservation, to the Under Secretaries Committee which will meet probably

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August 28 or 29. Assuming all differences are then worked out, the US Government will be ready for the arrival of the Micronesians on September 2. [

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] In any case, the negotiations with the Micronesians are now scheduled to be completed by September 15 so that the final agreed package can be given to Congressman Aspinall no later than September 20 -- a date which probably no one expects to be met.

IO:UNP:SRPeale:jkb

August 15, 1969

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