

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Oct. 17, 1969

Micronesian Talks

Amata Kabua, President of Micronesian Senate
Bethwell Henry, Speaker of the House
William I. Cargo, Director, Planning and Coordination (S/PC)
Claus W. Ruser, S/PC

Mr. Cargo and Mr. Ruser had cocktails with the President of the Micronesian Senate, Amata Kabua, and the Speaker of the House, Bethwell Henry, on Thursday evening, Oct. 16th. Subsequently, Mr. Ruser invited the two Micronesians to dinner.

Major Points:

It developed that Kabua and Henry had not been kept informed by the delegation on the status of the talks. However, in the course of the evening, several interesting points emerged.

1. Association with the U.S.: Kabua and Henry said they did not feel the Micronesian people were "ready" to join the U.S. In this connection, Kabua anxiously inquired about the foreign relations and defense provisions proposed by their delegation. (The provisions, as tabled by the delegation, envisage a sovereign Micronesia, whose foreign relations would be conducted, on its behalf, by the U.S.)

2. Timing: Kabua and Henry seemed anxious that the status question be settled before next year's elections for the Micronesia Congress. They expressed concern over the rise of a younger, more nationalist, group of politicians. They seemed to have some doubt as to their own reelection prospects.

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3. Feasibility of Plebiscite: Kabua questioned the feasibility of a plebiscite. He thought the procedure very time-consuming and complex, requiring a lengthy educational campaign.

4. Termination of Current Talks: Kabua and Henry said that the delegation had originally planned to leave on October 15. A longer stay was ruled out by the delegation's limited appropriation.

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