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EA - Mr. Marshall Green

Through - EA - *Handwritten name*

EA/ANZ - Robert W. Moore

In-house Briefing of the Secretary on the Political Status Talks with Micronesia -- BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

You have been invited to an "in-house briefing" of the Secretary on the next round of the political status talks with Micronesia. The briefing will be held in the Secretary's office at 3 P.M. on Thursday, April 9, 1970. Mr. DePalma will do the briefing.

Last December the Secretary had a meeting with Secretary Hickel, Dr. Kissinger, and Assistant Secretary of Defense Nutter at which they agreed the Micronesians should be presented with a Political Status Act (an Organic Act) which would make Micronesia an "unincorporated territory" and which spelled out how the Micronesians would exercise self-government. Assistant Secretary of Interior Loesch visited Micronesia in January and left a copy of the Act with the Micronesian Political Status Delegation. Their reaction was negative. They have made it clear that they must write their own constitution.

The Working Group on this problem, therefore, composed of members from State, Interior, Defense and the White House, proposes that the U. S. Delegation to the next round of talks, in Saipan in May, put forward a draft constitutional convention bill which would prescribe the main elements of the proposed status and would authorize a Micronesian convention to write its own constitution, but only within the parameters provided by the draft bill.

The draft bill would reserve to the U. S. essentially the same powers as the earlier draft Political Status Act. To minimize the risks involved in a convention, the proposed constitutional convention bill would have to be passed by both the U. S. Congress and the Congress of

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Micronesia, and then by a referendum in Micronesia. And, after the President had certified the new constitution to be consistent with the authorizing legislation, it would be submitted to another referendum in Micronesia.

The purpose, then, of the meeting on April 9 is to get the Secretary's authorization for the Department's representatives to concur in the constitutional convention approach at a meeting of the Under Secretaries' Committee on Micronesian Political Status, scheduled for Tuesday, April 14.

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