

Lazarus Salii
Chairman

Ekpap Silk
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Benjamin Manglona

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Olter Paul

Minoru Ueki

MICRONESIAN POLITICAL STATUS DELEGATION

Capitol Hill

Saipan

Mariana Islands 96950

June 26, 1970

Honorable Harrison Loesch
Office of Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Harrison:

We did discuss the probable course of future proceedings on the status question in May, and Tom Whittington pursued the matter further with me after you had departed from Saipan. I also understand that Speaker Bethwel Henry had been approached in Ponape with words to the effect that your Delegation would welcome an invitation from the Congress of Micronesia to send observers who would also be available to testify on the United States position in the event hearings were held on the report of our Delegation.

Before going into the matter of an invitation, I would like to brief you on the manner in which our Delegation will handle the presentation of your Delegation's proposal in our report. The full texts of your Statement of Principles and the "Micronesian Constitutional Convention and Enabling Act" bill will be appended to our report. We will also devote an entire chapter of the report to the United States offer of Commonwealth status.

There will be absolutely no attempt on our part to distort the offer presented by your Delegation on behalf of the Executive Branch of the United States Government. Whatever analyses we may make of your offer will be based on the principles and legal rights presented in our Opening Statement and on the two legislative measures creating and defining the responsibilities of our Delegation. Our own Opening Statement will also be appended to the report.

Once our report is submitted to the Congress, our Delegation will technically be dissolved. At this point I could not predict in what manner the Congress might handle the report once it is submitted. It will depend on many factors, including the number of other important issues or measures which will be before it.

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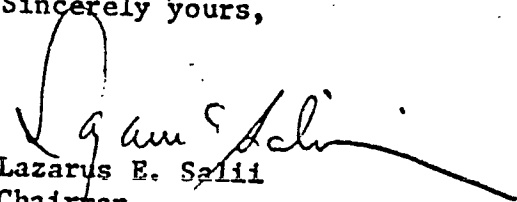
Honorable Harrison Loesch
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I would most certainly welcome your availability at some time during the session to discuss with members of the Congress your position on Free Association, Independence, and related issues, as well as your offer of Commonwealth status. I am quite certain other members of our Delegation feel the same. The only difficulty I see is the question of proper timing. I believe the members of Congress might desire a sufficient amount of time to absorb the report, which with the appendix, will be quite lengthy, before meeting with you and/or your representatives. Your preference for sometime in August therefore seems desirable, from our point of view as well as yours. Tentatively, I would say that around August 10 or 11 might be preferable, although as I stated earlier, this should be left entirely to our Presiding Officers.

Another matter which should be left entirely to the Congress is the observer on debates. However, it would seem to me that such an observer would be most welcome at all public debates and hearings on the report.

I therefore will transmit a copy of your letter of June 22, as well as this reply, to the Presiding Officers, with the hope that they may be able to inform you of any more definite arrangements on those matters.

Sincerely yours,


Lazarus E. Sali
Chairman

cc: President Amata Kabua w/encl.
Speaker Bethwel Henry w/encl.
Rep. Ekpap Silk w/encl.

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