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EA - Mr. Marshall Green

July 23, 1970

EA/ANZ - Robert W. Moore

**Micronesia: Political Status Commission Presents its Report to the Congress of Micronesia**

On July 21, the Future Political Status Commission set up by the Congress of Micronesia reported to its parent body that it had found "profound differences" between its position and that of the United States Government. The Commission said that, in its meetings with USG officials, it had found the latter "unwilling or unable" to support the Commission's recommendation that Micronesia have a free association with the United States based on "four basic principles and legal rights":

1. The sovereignty of Micronesia resides in the people of Micronesia and their duly constituted government;
2. The people of Micronesia possess the right of self-determination and may therefore choose independence or self-government in free association with any other nation or organization of nations;
3. The people of Micronesia have the right to adopt their own constitution or governmental plan at any time; and,
4. Free association should be in the form of a revocable contract, terminable unilaterally by either party. (The Commission had recommended, if this "free association" not be given, that the sole alternative should be independence.)

Instead, the report continued, the U. S. had counterproposed commonwealth status for the Trust Territory, which the Commission found "unacceptable" on three counts:

1. The USG would retain the right to take land in Micronesia for military or other purposes and US citizens and corporations would have the right to own Micronesian land;

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2. Any laws passed in Micronesia would be subject to veto by the U. S.; and,

3. Most importantly, commonwealth status would be permanent and could not be changed unilaterally by the Micronesians.

The report ended by calling the present situation between the two sides "an impasse" and recommending that the Congress of Micronesia reject the offer of commonwealth status. The Commission did, however, urge the Congress of Micronesia to seek further negotiations, possibly with representatives of the U. S. Congress, noting that thus far negotiations had been held only with members of the executive branch of the USG.

The reaction of the Congress of Micronesia to the report is expected later this week or next week.

COMMENT: The recommendations of the Commission are consistent with the stand it has taken in the meetings with USG officials, and come as no surprise. Interior issued a press release on July 21 outlining in general terms the commonwealth status offer.

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