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United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240



Memorandum

To: Ambassador Arthur W. Hummel, Jr.
Director, Office of Status Negotiations

From: Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Territorial
Affairs

Through: Assistant Secretary - Public Land Management

Subject: Strategy for Marianas Sub-Negotiation

By memorandum of September 14, 1971, we submitted the position of the Department of the Interior with respect to an optimum status for the Mariana Islands District, should it not be part of an overall settlement for Micronesia. As stated there, we consider integration with Guam to be the most favorable long-term solution from the U.S. point of view. The purpose of this paper is to discuss practical considerations involved in any Marianas subnegotiation toward the above objective, particularly any limiting factors to such discussions.

1. Need for Consultations with Guamanian leaders.

As discussed in the earlier memorandum, there is an apparent dichotomy of opinion on Guam with respect to the desirability of integrating the Marianas. Although the Guam Legislature appears anxious to do so, the last, albeit inconclusive, expression by Guam voters in 1969 showed little support for such action.

With this in mind, we believe it would be advisable at this point not to talk seriously to the Marianas delegates about integration until we have discussed the matter with, and have at least informal, bipartisan support from, the leadership in Guam. How such consultations might be handled is difficult to assess in view of the tenuous political balance of power between the legislative (Democrat-controlled) and executive (Republican-controlled) branches of the Government of Guam. At the present time, integration apparently has support from the legislature and the Democratic leadership, but we know of no position taken to date by the Republican Governor, who is, however, likely to accept the position taken by the national

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administration. The question of the confidentiality of any such consultations with Guam leadership should also be addressed.

2. Need for Consultations with U.S. Congressional leaders.

Just as it is vital to have support from Guam, general support from U.S. Congressional leaders, at the least, would be very desirable, particularly in view of the deep interest of some members in the Marianas situation. Because of this interest, we believe such consultations would have to be more extensive than those presently being undertaken. We have just informally received word, for example, that Congresswoman Mink is considering the introduction of a bill which has the objective of integrating the Marianas with Guam.

3. Need to Declare Guam a Self-Governing Territory for United Nations purposes.

The Trusteeship Agreement requires that the end product of the U.S. Administration be "self-government or independence." However, the United States continues to report to the UN on Guam and the Virgin Islands as being "non-self governing" territories. We considered discontinuation of reporting at the time of the initial gubernatorial elections in those areas last fall, but the State Department considers it important to have a popular plebiscite, or other evidence of public support, to back up a declaration. Such a vote, as an adjunct to the November 1970 election, was considered unwise because of the confusion it might create.

The next clear opportunity for a declaration would be upon the passage of the non-voting delegate (to the U.S. Congress) bill now awaiting clearance by the House Rules Committee; we believe the likelihood of passage to be good to excellent during this session of Congress. The actual election of such a delegate would also provide opportunity for a plebiscite to back up a declaration of self-government.

4. General Guidance and Strategy.

a. The "island telegraph" system is so well developed in Guam and Saipan, that any attempt to hold a serious integration

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proposal confidential will probably be futile, and possibly counterproductive. Rather, the issues should be discussed openly, but without commitment on our part.

b. The sensitiveness of possible charges of "divide and conquer" against the U.S. makes it desirable for us to publicly appear to be reluctant to consider the Marianas separation question, except at the behest of the people of the Marianas and the rest of Micronesia.

c. For the above reasons, as well as to protect our bargaining position vis a vis the Marianas, we should, to the extent feasible, allow the Marianas' delegates (and possibly others) to come to us and present their position concerning a close association, rather than take the offensive ourselves.

5. Talking points with delegates from Marianas:

-- We have been aware for some time of the expressed desires of the people of the Mariana Islands District for a close, permanent association with the United States, under which they would obtain United States citizenship, as well as the benefits and responsibilities thereof.

-- I wish to note that it has been our objective to work with you toward a politically and economically stable future for the people of Micronesia, and until recently, it was our best judgment, as well as that of a majority of leaders and officials in Micronesia, including the Congress of Micronesia, and the United Nations, that this goal might be accomplished by a future political status for the six districts as a whole.

-- If necessary, we will bow, as we believe the Micronesian leadership may already have done, and the United Nations may have to do, to the realities of the situation in Micronesia-- the expressed views of the people of the Marianas and of Micronesia, themselves. We have seen the widening diversity of opinion expressed by leaders in the Marianas and some of the other districts, and must acknowledge the sincerity of the positions taken.

-- Assuming the satisfactory termination of the trusteeship over all of Micronesia, we believe that we can assure the Marianas a close, permanent relationship of some sort with the United States, although the details of such a relationship would have to be worked out with all the concerned parties.

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-- Having reached this point, we are quite willing to discuss with the Marianas District delegates what sort of close association with the United States they visualize at this point. In fact, we would appreciate hearing your views now, if you would care to give them.

-- (If pressed on commonwealth for the Marianas alone)

We must point out, however, that there are practical considerations to any future status, one of the most important of which, as you are certainly aware, is the position to be taken by the United States Congress. While we have no way to gauge accurately the attitudes to be taken by that body, we do not consider great the likelihood that it would approve a commonwealth status for the Mariana Islands District alone. This might be caused either by the small size and population of the area, or by its proximity to an organized, unincorporated territory, the Territory of Guam, which has been in the American political family for many years.

-- (If pressed on integration with Guam)

We would certainly consider integration with Guam as one possible form of close association of the Marianas with the United States. As you are certainly aware, in addition to support by the people of the Marianas and the U.S. Congress, this proposal would require the approval of the Legislature and/or the voters of Guam. While we are therefore not presently able to take a position on this alternative, it is by your endorsement/inquiry today worthy of further, deep consideration.

Royston C. Hughes
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