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United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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February 16, 1973

Memorandum

To: John H. Holdridge, NSC Senior Staff Officer
From: Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams
Subject: Micronesian Status Negotiations

Should questions on Micronesian status arise in the course of your forthcoming stop in Guam, I am forwarding brief notes on the current state of the negotiations and on the question of Marianas separatism. It is conceivable that the latter subject might arise in a conversation between the President and Governor Camacho of Guam.

I. Current State of Negotiations

The third round of talks with the Micronesian Status Committee in Hana last October went a long way in defining all and resolving some of the issues which had stood in the way of negotiating a final political settlement leading to the termination of the U.S. Trusteeship in Micronesia. There are major issues yet to be resolved -- U.S. authority in foreign affairs and in defense matters and the all-important question of the means of termination -- but I believe we have re-established a dialogue which should give us cause for measured optimism.

Our plans are to meet with the Status Committee in Palau in April. In the meantime we are re-examining our basic instructions and the assumptions which underlie them in order to be certain that our current stance remains viable in the light of developments of the past year.

Copies of my report to the President and to the Under Secretaries Committee are attached for your background information.

II. Marianas Separatism

There have been repeated indications over the past few years that the people of the Marianas want an association closer to the United States than that envisaged by other districts in Micronesia. The Status Committee made official record of this

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at Hana last October by stating that it recognized this aspiration of the people of the Marianas. At Hana and subsequently in Saipan in December Ambassador Hummel spoke with members of the Status Committee who come from the Marianas to tell them that the United States was sympathetic to their interests and would not force an association on them which they found unpalatable. He went on to say that, while negotiations were underway with the full Status Committee representing all of Micronesia, it would be inopportune to begin separate talks with the Marianas.

The people of the Marianas have not been entirely consistent as to the kind of close association they want. Although earlier sentiment favored integration with Guam, there was some drawing away from this posture as the Marianas began to have some reservations about living in the shadow of the richer, more advanced Guamanians. This attitude has now been replaced to some extent by rather guarded notions that integration with Guam is perhaps the best ultimate solution to their status problem. This change came about at least in part by it being brought home forcefully to them that a form of association independent of both Micronesia and Guam was most unlikely.

What is being contemplated now is a form of integration by stages, with full association to come about only after a period of years. To this end the Marianas representatives have had conversations with Guamanian leaders (Lt. Governor Moylan and Gregorio Sanchez, Governor Camacho's right hand man) which have been described as having gone "very well."

In connection with any potential union of the Marianas with Guam it needs to be noted that there may be difficulties terminating the Trusteeship as it applies to the Marianas. The terms of the Trusteeship Agreement call for a status of self-government or independence. Since Guam is a non-self-governing territory, according to UN definition, it could be argued in the UN, regardless of the Marianas attitude, that a merger of the Marianas with Guam diminished rather than enhanced its status.

It seems probable that, whether or not agreement in principle with Micronesia is achieved at Palau in April, we will have at that time, or shortly thereafter, to acknowledge

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publicly in some fashion our sympathetic attitude towards the Marianas and begin negotiations with them. Our way would be considerably eased if the Congress of Micronesia passed a resolution supporting such negotiations, but this turn of events which at one time seemed at least possible is now highly problematical.

Franklin Haydn Williams
The President's Personal Representative
for Micronesian Status Negotiations

Encls: (Booklet form of Williams' Report to the President and Williams' Report to the Under Secretaries Cmte. (10/21/71) are enclosures)

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