


OFFICE OF  
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

March 9, 1972

Attached is a list of questions and suggested answers concerning pre-Palau press queries prepared by Roy Johnson for your perusal. I would appreciate your comments and suggestions on this matter by March 15.



William J. Crowe, Jr.



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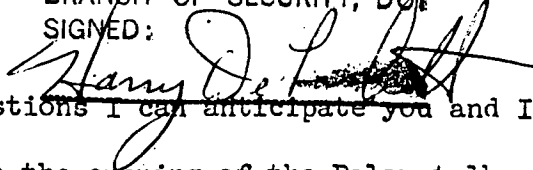
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To: Ambassador Williams  
Via: Captain Crowe

From: Roy Johnson

Subj: Pre-Palau Press Queries

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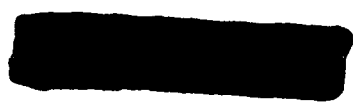


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The following are some questions I can anticipate you and I will receive from the press prior to the opening of the Palau talks and suggested answers. Please indicate concurrence in the answers or language you wish to substitute:

- Q. Has a replacement been named for Ambassador Hummel?
- A. No, not yet. Ambassador Williams has been very active himself in the preparations for the Palau talks. At this late date, it is likely that he will postpone his decision on the replacement until after the Palau talks.
  
- Q. Since the U.S. treaty on Okinawa allows for advance notice before the introduction of nuclear and other dangerous weapons to that area, why cannot the U.S. give the same assurances to the Micronesians?
- A. ~~As you know, we are withdrawing from Okinawa, so the introduction of nuclear weapons is not of present concern.~~ Our hard and fast rule has been that we cannot, for security reasons, divulge areas where nuclear weapons may or may not be stored. This should not be construed to mean that we do or do not have intentions to store such material in Micronesia or anywhere else. In the case of Japan, moreover, we have agreed on prior consultation. Japan, as you know, is particularly sensitive to the subject, being the only country struck by atomic weapons in a war.
  
- Q. Assuming that the U.S. and Micronesia come to an agreement, which is later ratified by the people of Micronesia and the U.S. Congress, how do you intend to get United Nations approval of the settlement

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of the trusteeship? Will not the Soviets or Communist Chinese be likely to veto any settlement satisfactory to the U.S.?

A. There is, of course, no set procedure for settlement of the trusteeship, since it is a unique strategic trusteeship. However, we cannot conceive of a veto of a settlement which has been approved by the Micronesian people.

Q. What about the threat of the Eniwetokese to return to their atoll this year?

A. The Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations has a specific mandate to work out a mutually satisfactory settlement of the future status of the trusteeship. This office is not involved in the day to day administration of the Trust Territory. I'll have to refer your questions on these and similar subjects to the Departments of the Interior and Defense.

Q. There has been a great deal of discussion in Micronesia, particularly in the latest session of the Congress of Micronesia, about various districts splintering away from the rest. Do you see this "fragmentation" as a good or bad sign for the U.S.?

A. Leaders of the Marianas<sup>^</sup> have for some time expressed an interest in a separate status, such as that offered in 1970 to Micronesia. However, we feel that the trusteeship must be settled at one time for all the islands, so we have negotiated with the Congress of Micronesia for the whole of Micronesia. We do appreciate the wish for closer association of the Marianas, which as you know was voiced by Senator Salii in his opening statement at Hana, and will not lose

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the Marshalls

sight of this in developing an overall solution.

- Q. What about other districts? There has been talk of ~~the Marshalls~~ also wanting to go their own way.
- A. There has been a lot of discussion on status in the TTPI, particularly since the Hana talks. However, our mission now is to work out a mutually-satisfactory settlement of the trusteeship with the Future Status Commission and that is what we are concentrating our efforts on.
- Q. The United States is asking for complete control of foreign affairs and defense matters. Why is control of foreign affairs so important to you?
- A. In order to properly fulfill our defense responsibilities in the area, we must be able to handle relations with foreign governments, particularly potential enemies.
- Q. Is the U.S. now prepared to give in on unilateral termination in exchange for control of defense and foreign affairs?
- A. These are subjects we intend to take up during the talks in Palau. Obviously, we cannot negotiate through the news media.
- Q. At Hana you talked only of issues. Are you now ready to draw up a document, or compact, outlining how the trusteeship will be terminated?
- A. That, of course, will depend upon the progress we can make in settling our differences. The sooner we can reach an appropriate agreement, the better.
- [REDACTED]

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Q. What about the transition period leading toward self-government?  
How will that work?

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A. The transition to self-government contains a lot of as yet unknown factors. We do not know, for example, which U.S. government services the Micronesians will wish continued. We do not know the level of aid necessary or desirable. These things will be determined to a large extent on the type of association resulting from the settlement.

Q. Congressman Wiliander said recently that a majority of the Congress of Micronesia supports the Independence Coalition. Is this an accurate statement?

A. I would not know how many members of the Congress of Micronesia are in the coalition. I had heard that eleven members were associated with it, but that was before Hana. You should direct your question to Congressman Wiliander.

Q. What will be the makeup of the U.S. Negotiating team this time?

A. About the same as at Hana, except that Ambassador Hummel will not be at Palau.

Q. Does this mean that the military contingent will be stronger in relation to the civilian agencies?

A. No, the military contingent remains the same. The same two officers who were at Hana. Also, though Ambassador Hummel has left the office, he maintains a continuing interest as deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific and is and has been available constantly for consultation on Micronesia.

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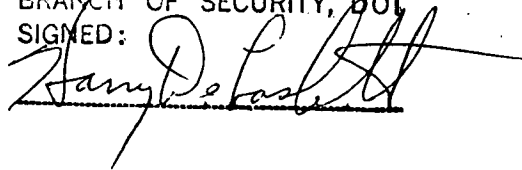
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- Q. Was this move really another example of Dr. Kissinger's supplanting the State Department in the field of foreign relations?
- A. Of course not. Ambassador Williams works through the Undersecretary's Committee, which is chaired by Undersecretary of State John H. Irwin. Our liaison with the White House is with Mr. John Holdridge, a State Department officer assigned to the President. Ambassador Hummel was named to his present post following the illness of his predecessor. This seems to us that the State Department was interested in the Trusteeship significantly enough to have named one of their top officers to our delegation, and to have assured his being available for consultation now and in the future.

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