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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Time: 11:00, April 5, 1972

Participants: Ambassador Williams  
Captain Crowe  
Senator Salii  
Rep. Silk

1. After a few pleasantries, Ambassador Williams led off by mentioning the Status Committee's letter of 4 April and delivered the U.S. response. He suggested that Salii and Silk might want to take time to read the letter right then, which they did.

2. Ambassador Williams then posed the question — What do we do now? What do you suggest as the next step? Then there was a long, long silence, punctuated by a little shuffling and nervous movement of hands. Finally, Salii said that this poses some problems for them, but that they could possibly make their termination presentation. Amb. Williams assured him that, if they needed more time, the U.S. had no objections. The conversation turned to some of the previous meetings between Amb. Williams and Salii where it was made clear that the U.S. was coming to Palau to listen rather than do all the talking. Salii seemed to agree that he had been warned of this.

3. Salii mentioned that his "foreign affairs and defense" subcommittee was working now on questions and the Micronesian views. He would present these to the U.S. when they were ready. Amb. Williams again volunteered informal meetings and U.S. willingness to answer their questions. Salii said, "We don't have any real trouble with defense. The three powers you mentioned seem to be all right."

4. He then turned to foreign affairs and expressed some reservations. He said it was the first that they had heard of the government-to-government business and that they were studying it. For example, would Micronesia have the right to conclude an immigration agreement for free entry of Nauruans into Micronesia? The Ambassador suggested that he put this question in writing and that we would respond. He further suggested that an informal meeting between the two applicable sub-groups might help the Micronesians decide what questions they wanted to pose. Salii said they would think about it.

5. Salii said that there was one thing about the presentation which disturbed him — the delegation of authority. The Micronesians feel very strongly that they are sovereign and that any delegation

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of power should come from them. While they believe it may be possible for the U.S. to have full responsibility for foreign affairs and defense (some confusion here, Amb. Williams does not recall the statement as being this strong) it must come from the Micronesians to the U.S., rather than vice versa. Amb. Williams again suggested that they put this in writing and that we discuss it. These are the kinds of questions which we must talk about and resolve, if we are to move ahead. Salii seemed to agree.

6. Salii only mentioned the Micronesian presentation on termination once (early on) and it never came up again. He did not connect termination with any other issue, or even hint at a bargain or exchange. Near the end he did attempt to reassure the Ambassador by saying that the purpose of their letter was not to delay the talks, but to expedite matters since they were not prepared to reply right away. (Very curious statement, since their letter never said this.) He did appear sincere in this statement and his whole mood exuded the air of a man who still anticipates a profitable negotiation and eventual agreement.

7. Before the conversation ended, Amb. Williams brought up the matter of the press. It was quickly settled that both delegations would explain that they were working and preparing for the next meeting, but no time had been set yet.

8. In parting, it was agreed that Salii would inform Amb. Williams as to the time of and nature of the next contact or meeting.

William J. Crowe, Jr.