



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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May 24, 1972

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Memorandum of Conversation

Place: Office For Micronesian Status Negotiations

Subject: Marianas' Status Negotiations

Participants: Marianas Group: Rep. Herman Q. Guerrero, Sen. Edward DLG Pangelinan, Vice-President of the Senate, Olympio T. Borja, Vicente N. Dantos, President of the District Legislature
American Group: Capt. William J. Crowe, Jr., Franklin J. Crawford, Roy W. Johnson

The Marianas Group was in Washington, D. C., to discuss the upcoming talks to be held for their separate negotiations. They are to testify before the U.N. Trusteeship Council, in New York, on May 25 and 26.

Captain Crowe said that Salii had responded to a letter from Ambassador Williams, fixing July 12, in Washington for the next session with the Joint Status Committee, even though the Marianas representatives might be on the Status Committee for the time being, the USG would make it clear it was dealing separately with the Marianas. Mr. Guerro expressed their agreement to this approach.

Captain Crowe suggested that perhaps the Marianas Group would find it possible to stop in San Francisco to see Ambassador Williams, who would very much like to see them.

The next topic was the timing of U.S.-Marianas negotiations. Senator Pangelinan said it would be 90 days before the 15-man Marianas Status Committee was formed. Then there was the special session of the Congress of Micronesia in August and Micronesian (not to mention U.S.) elections in November. The group agreed that early October was the best time. Mr. Santos suggested Washington as a site. Captain Crowe said that travel expenses (which, incidentally, each side should bear for itself) being so high, perhaps meeting in San Francisco would be less of a burden on the Marianas group. They seemed pleased with the idea. Nothing definite was settled on, though.

Then there was a discussion of the procedures and content of the meeting. Senator Pangelinan said that his side would beforehand want to make comparative studies of forms of association with the U.S.

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(e.g., commonwealth, territory) and would look into the economic aspects of a relationship. In addition, they would seek legal counsel. Mr. Crawford said the U.S. would examine models of integration, e.g., territorial status, union with Guam, or a separate unique arrangement. He asked what subjects the Marianas representatives would want to discuss, and Senator Pangelinan replied that U.S. military land needs were of primary concern to them. Captain Crowe assured them that this subject would be one we would be prepared to go into promptly and in detail.

Next the talk turned to how best to conduct the negotiations. Senator Pangelinan said he hoped formal meetings and exchanges could be kept to a minimum. Mr. Crawford suggested that, in order to get the most of the negotiating sessions, both sides should be in touch beforehand to alert the other to questions, problems, and likely proposals. That way, there could be a continuous refining of issues up to the time of the meeting. Senator Pangelinan and his colleagues agreed enthusiastically with this approach, all of them emphasizing their desire for an informal and business-like atmosphere as an earnest of the Marianas' sincere wish to become a part of the United States. Captain Crowe pointed out that, if this was the feeling, both sides should be examining subjects related to the negotiations - nature of the relationship, federal programs needed or desired, land issues, military needs, financial problems - and come prepared to discuss these subjects and not merely exchange papers.

Captain Crowe went on to point out that Ambassador Williams' mandate made him the point of contact in the U.S. Government for these status negotiations. The Executive Departments would be represented on the U. S. delegation, it being probable that Interior would have a greater role because the anticipated union of the Marianas with the United States would bring the Marianas under Interior's aegis. Mr. Crawford said that the agreement we were seeking would probably end up as a proposal both for action by the U.S. Congress and for a plebiscite in the Marianas.

Senator Pangelinan asked about terminating the Trusteeship, whether this would have to be done all at once for the Trust Territory. Captain Crowe explained the longstanding U. S. position that it would have to be terminated for the Trust Territory as a whole, rather than in segments. There was nothing, however, he went on to say, to prevent the United States from singling out a district for separate administration. At this point, the Marianas representatives registered some concern over the loss of jobs in Saipan if the Capital of the Trust Territory was moved elsewhere. If the negotiations of

the Joint Status Committee proceeded apace with their own and were concluded in, say, no more than three years, there would be no problem. If the Joint Status Committee negotiations dragged out longer than this, then some changes would have to be made. The Marianas representatives simply wanted to make note of the problem; they were not overly worried about it. Nor were they particularly worried about the ability of the Congress of Micronesia or the other districts to make life miserable for them. On this score, Captain Crowe assured them that the United States did not wish to see them disadvantaged in any way because of the political choice the Marianas had made.

In answer to Senator Pangelinan's question about U. S. policy in the event another district asked for separate negotiations, Captain Crowe said we would face that question when it arose. But he referred to the longstanding Marianas pressure for political union with the United States and said we would have to judge whether another district's request actually represented a comparable longstanding desire on the part of its people.

There was a general discussion of economic development possibilities in the Marianas and of the studies and inquiries the Marianas Commission would undertake. Mr. Crawford cautioned them not to assume automatically that investment funds, foreign or domestic, were available. They should inquire carefully and realistically where such money was likely to come from before deciding how they would control or exploit it.