

EL:dm

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CONFERENCE ON MICRONESIAN STATUS

Room 5160  
Department of the Interior Bldg.  
Washington, D. C.

Wednesday, July 12, 1972

The conference was convened at 10:33 o'clock, a.m.,  
Ambassador Williams presiding.

PRESENT:

The U.S. Delegation:

Ambassador Williams

Captain Crowe

Mr. Lindsey Grant

Mr. Whittington

Mr. Carpenter

Mr. Marcuse

Colonel Smith

Mr. Stowe

Mr. Dorrance

Mr. Crawford

024759

PRESENT (Cont.)

The Micronesian Delegation:

Senator Salii

Representative Silk

Senator Tmetuchl

Senator Lanwi

Senator Amaraich

Senator Nakayama

Senator Tun

Representative Mangefel

Representative Paul

Senator Olter

Senator Pangelinan

Representative Guerrero

Mr. Paul Warnke

Mr. Carl Heine

Mr. Michael White

P R O C E E D I N G S

AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS: Senator Sali, Congressman Silk, the members of the United States Delegation join me in formally welcoming the Micronesian Joint Committee on Future Status to Washington for the fifth round of negotiations. This meeting, the third in nine months, could well be the most important one held in the series to date.

Its success will largely depend on whether we can confirm past agreements in principle and translate these understandings into the precise language of a draft Compact of Free Association between Micronesia and the United States.

After four rounds of negotiations, after carefully exploring through a formal exchange of views the major issues of importance to both sides, and after reaching the agreements in principle recorded in the Hana and Koror proceedings, we are now at the point, where we should soon be able to determine whether or not there is a sound basis and a mutual desire for agreement along the lines we are now pursuing. The next few days should give us the answers to these questions.

As we understand your mandate, you are seeking, upon termination of the Trusteeship Agreement, a new

024760

political status of Free Association with the United States. If this is what you want, what you are really talking about, then we are prepared to continue to pursue through these negotiations the feasibility and desirability of such a relationship.

Free Association means shared responsibilities and obligations as defined in international usage and established by precedent -- with one party having authority for internal affairs and the other party, authority for foreign affairs and defense.

This division of responsibilities is also consistent with the definition of Free Association used by the Micronesian Joint Status Delegation in its 1970 Report. If it is your wish to continue to seek Free Association with the United States, mutual acceptance of this principle must be the cornerstone of our future relationship.

Our first order of business is therefore to determine whether we are or whether we are not both seeking the same kind of future relationship. A clear and firm understanding on this basic question is essential before we can proceed to the details of the relationship.

It is, therefore, our view that our attention initially should be focused upon the fundamentals of the

relationship that would constitute Free Association. This means agreement on the basic division of responsibilities envisaged under the terms of a Compact and the nature and force of the Compact itself.

If these matters can be resolved, then we can move on to other important but subordinate questions.

The objectives of the United States in these negotiations have been stated at Hana and repeated at Koror. In brief, it is our desire to work with you in seeking understandings and agreements that will lead to your full self-government and a future political status that will be representative of the desires and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples of Micronesia.

We have also defined our National interests and the continuing responsibilities my Government will have for the maintenance of peace and stability in the Pacific extending beyond the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. These on-going interests must be protected in order to give the United States the ability to fulfill its national and international obligations.

What we seek, in short, is a reasonable and equitable solution, a new relationship freely entered into by the peoples of Micronesia which will serve and protect

their interests as well as ours.

In arriving at its present position, the United States Government has taken into full account your aspirations. We have studied your status reports. We have listened to your views. We have reviewed the proceedings of previous talks, and we have attempted to meet your basic interests.

The proposals we have put forward are in accord with the essential elements of your stated principles and your 1969 and 1970 Status Reports.

The United States has agreed that in the future, Micronesia would have full control over its internal affairs, its government, its laws, its land, its resources, and we have acknowledged the right of the people to change their future status if that be their wish.

Our position on sovereignty and the right of self-determination is clear. Both reside in the people of Micronesia.

We have thus met not only international precedents for, but also your own standards of Free Association. In the words of your delegation's own final press release on the Koror talks, "Micronesia's four principles and legal rights have been recognized."

Our interests and our minimum requirements will like-

024763

wise have to be recognized before a final agreement on Free Association can be reached that will be acceptable to my Government.

At Koror, the Micronesian Joint Committee on Future Status said in plenary session "both delegations accept the proposition that a Compact of Free Association would result from an act of the sovereign right of self-determination of the Micronesian people." We confirm our full acceptance of this principle which we put forward at Hana.

You said further, again in plenary session, that both delegations accept the principle that "the Compact itself will determine the respective rights and responsibilities of the Government of Micronesia and the Government of the United States," and agreed that "all powers and responsibilities would derive from this source."

Again we confirm our agreement with this principle and your statement from the proceedings of the fourth round as to the nature and force of the Compact.

These statements of agreement in principle taken from your presentation of April 10, 1972, were embodied in the final Koror Joint Communique as were the earlier understandings reached at Hana with respect to laws and land. The signed Joint Communique stated further that both parties

had reached basic understandings that the Compact "will constitute the basis of the respective rights of the parties," and that "Under it the people of Micronesia will vest in the Government of Micronesia authority over their internal affairs, while authority over and responsibility for foreign affairs and defense will be vested in the Government of the United States."

These agreements, arrived at after patient negotiations, represent significant achievements. This was noted in the Micronesian Delegation's press release at the conclusion of the Palau talks which said:

"The Micronesian Delegation is pleased at the progress made in the fourth round of talks on Micronesia's future political status. With the end of this round of talks, we find ourselves closer than we have ever been to self-government in Micronesia."

The release also stated that the talks had resulted in "Micronesian recognition of the U.S. need for defense and foreign affairs authority in Micronesia" and concluded with these words:

"We see the emergence of a new and unique political status, a self-governing Micronesia in



Free Association with the United States. It is a status the Micronesian Delegation believes can be recommended to the Congress of Micronesia and the United States and to the people of both nations -- an honorable end to the Trusteeship and the beginning of a new national life in Micronesia."

The statements I have read from the Palau transcripts, the agreements summarized in the final Joint Communique and the words I have quoted from your own assessment of the Koror negotiations are important to the success of these talks.

As we turn to the drafting of a Compact, we believe that first things must come first and that the first order of business is to confirm agreements on the basic nature of the proposed relationship and the role of the Compact in vesting responsibilities in the Governments of Micronesia and the United States.

Once this has been done, the drafting effort can then turn to other important but subsidiary questions. This is consistent with your long held view that agreement on basic principles must come first.

Assuming that there will be no unilateral repudiation

024766

/in principle  
of the agreements/already reached regarding the essential character of the proposed relationship, we are now at a stage where it is possible to begin drafting, delineating and defining the respective rights, responsibilities and obligations of Micronesia and the United States that will derive from the Compact. Abstractions and philosophical questions can be put aside, for, as your chairman said in April, in the end, the Compact will speak for itself.

The drafting of a Compact will not be easy. Broad areas of understanding do not mean that all of the issues within these areas have been resolved. They will have to be hammered out by further patient negotiation.

The joint drafting process will surface whatever specific difficulties and problems remain to be resolved. This method will prove to be the real yardstick of just how far we have come and how far we have to go before we can reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

Annexes relating to agreed land arrangements for U.S. military purposes, a jurisdictional agreement on the stationing of forces, and possibly other specific subjects will also in time have to be negotiated as an integral part of the final Compact. It is our hope, however, that the most important elements of the Compact can be addressed

and resolved in the days ahead.

Procedurally, we would suggest that rather than attempting to draft language in plenary session that this responsibility be initially assigned to a joint drafting committee. The members of this working committee can remain in close and continuous contact with their respective full delegations. Problems as they arise that cannot be settled can be referred back to both delegations.

If formal consultation between the chairmen of the two delegations do not succeed in resolving questions referred to them, it might then be necessary to take such issues up in formal sessions. However, it is my hope that plenary meetings can be held to a minimum and that our fifth round effort will be more of a working and drafting session with a less formal format than followed in our earlier meetings.

In attempting to define the goals we have set for the fifth round, I should make it clear at the outset in order to forestall any misunderstandings, that the draft Compact which we hope will emerge from these talks, will not apply to the Marianas. The Marianas and the United States will be conducting separate talks in response to the wishes of the people of that District for permanent political

024768

association with the United States.

The United States, of course, will continue to work with the Joint Status Committee toward a single solution of the status question for the Marshalls, Ponape, Truk, Yap and Palau Districts. It is our hope that these districts will continue to go forward together.

In closing, let me say, since this is the first time that I have seen all of you since my visit to your home districts following the Koror talks, that I very much appreciated the courtesies that were showed me, and I was particularly grateful for the invitations I received to meet with various interested groups in Micronesia and being accompanied in many instances by members of the Micronesian Status Delegation.

These meetings gave me an opportunity to answer questions and to review the highlights of our negotiations at Hana and Koror. I was pleased with the active interest being taken in the status question in each of the Districts.

There are, of course, differences of opinion as to timing and what is the best alternative political status for Micronesia. This is to be expected in a free society.

In short, it was a valuable and pleasant experience.

Senator Salii, this brings my opening statement

024769

to an end. We now wish to proceed without any delay to the task at hand. We do not wish to replough ground already covered. We hope this will not be necessary.

We are ready to move forward /toward /the only kind of agreement that would be mutually acceptable and satisfying -- one that is best suited to the needs, interests and aspirations of the people of Micronesia -- and one that at the same time recognizes and protects the interests of the United States.

Thank you, Senator Salii.

SENATOR SALII: Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

The Joint Committee on Future Status welcomes the opportunity to meet here in Washington to begin the final steps toward the establishment of the relationship of Free Association between Micronesia and the United States. We believe that agreement in principle has been reached in the prior sessions on the major items of concern. Admittedly, there remain some details on which a complete meeting of the minds has not been achieved.

We are convinced, however, as I am sure you are, that nothing will be gained by seeking in the abstract to argue out these remaining details and possible nuances of difference. Instead, we think that our attentions should

be turned immediately to the job of drafting a compact.

In the course of this drafting effort, any remaining problems of substance will surface and, hopefully, can be resolved. It is possible, moreover, that some apparent differences will prove to be more semantic than real.

In view of the wide area of agreement, we believe that a major part of the compact can be agreed upon with expedition. It should be possible to dispose of any residual problems by the exercise of good faith on both sides.

We, therefore, endorse the suggestion by your side that a draft subcommittee be appointed and begin to work immediately.

As significant sections of the compact are agreed upon in subcommittee, they might perhaps be considered and accepted in plenary session. By this process, it should be possible to reduce to a minimum the remaining matters on which further negotiation by the full Delegations will be required.

It is good to see you, Mr. Ambassador, and all the members of the new Delegation, all the members of your Delegation as well as the new members you have such as Mr. Carpenter. All of us are very happy to be in Washington and we are ready to work immediately.

024771

Thank you very much.

AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS: Thank you very much, Senator Salii.

As we agreed yesterday, perhaps you and Ekpap and Bill Crowe and I can meet shortly to discuss further the formation of the Joint Drafting Committee.

We too are ready to go to work, and we look forward to being with you all this evening at 7:30 in the State Department.

I have no further business this morning.

The first session is then adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 10:55 o'clock, a.m., the meeting adjourned.)