



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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September 14, 1972

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

To: Ambassador Williams  
From: State, S/PC - Lindsey Grant  
Subject: MIC SIX: Rebuttal to SJR117

I attach some draft language to deal with the problems raised by SJR117.

This draft is based on the assumption that you will wish to take the initiative in raising SJR117 in your opening remarks. If you fail to do so, it will be thrown at you, and you will be put in a defensive position, answering some very specific questions about independence. By taking the offensive, you can make a statement to which you can later simply refer specific questions.

Let us not seem uptight about the Resolution. After all, the Status Committee has always made clear that it would like independence if it weren't for the money problem. The subject should perhaps be handled somewhere towards the close of your remarks, and in an incidental fashion.

In a way, the Resolution gives us an opportunity. It is manifest from the Resolution and the legislative history that the Micronesians are hoping that they can negotiate a substantial payment for denial and base rights, as an independent nation. If you can shake them up on that assumption, your opening financial offer will begin to seem more attractive. This suggests that some pretty straight language is in order.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY B.H. BULAS DATE 9/23/87

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In any event, we will always be in trouble if the Micronesians believe that they can have independence and money, too. You have spoken to this issue before, but apparently the message has not come through clearly enough yet.

I assume that, somewhere in the opening remarks, you are planning to express regret that the Congress of Micronesia decided not to go ahead with a Constitutional Convention. The fact that they dragged their feet on this is a point from which we will be able to extract considerable capital in the UN and elsewhere. Your theme would be that, with so much work to be done to describe the nature of a future Micronesia, it is too bad that the Congress of Micronesia did not take up the task, which must be finished before any change in Micronesian status is possible.

Attachment:

Draft comments on SJR117.

cc: Delegation Members

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of association. I do not see the grounds on which we would expect to make such a contribution if we were not both accepting obligations such as the Compact spells out.

As a matter of orderly procedure, I recommend that as a first order of business at this Oahu round of negotiations, we continue with our effort to see whether we can draw up a mutually acceptable Compact of association. From the legislative history of your Senate Joint Resolution 117, I assume that you see advantage in attempting to complete our exploration of a draft compact before moving on to the independence question raised by that Resolution. Such a procedure would also answer the needs of those speakers at your most recent Congress session who expressed the desire to withhold judgment on free association until they had seen a complete Compact.

From our standpoint, it is essential that we see whether free association is, or is not, a real alternative. The only way we can find out whether it is a real possibility is to see whether we can describe such a compact on paper. If we cannot, this fact in itself will strongly suggest that the basis does not exist for free association -- that there is no formula which your side believes to be satisfactory which at the same time is worth our entering into. If we can draw up a compact, we will know that free association is indeed a real possibility. My Government is unlikely to frame a view of other alternatives until it knows whether free association is indeed an alternative.

I have said before, and I repeat, that I believe that you are fully entitled to talk about independence. My only suggestion has been that there be no confusion -- that you not anticipate the benefits of free association along with those of independence.

While I do not expect to be able to provide answers to specific questions which you may raise at this negotiating session concerning the independence question, I

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would be interested in learning what thoughts you have on the matter, particularly when we have completed consideration of the draft Compact. In fact, it may be mutually useful if you could clarify some questions which are posed by this new Congress of Micronesia Resolution. Let me attempt to phrase some of these questions.

First, does this Resolution mean that the Congress of Micronesia does not expect to give its endorsement to a compact of free association, if we should succeed in writing such a document? We had proceeded on the assumption that any such compact would be offered with the joint endorsement of my Government and the Congress of Micronesia. If this is not the case, it may influence our thinking as to the Compact itself. If, for instance, your proposal is simply to offer the Micronesian voters a choice of several alternatives, my Government might believe it desirable to offer a closer form of association, just as the Congress of Micronesia might advocate offering it the alternative of independence. The role of the Congress of Micronesia -- whether it was recommending a future form of relationship or simply offering alternatives -- would presumably also affect our thinking as to the form in which we eventually offer a choice to the voters of Micronesia.

Second, recognizing that attitudes concerning future association vary from district to district, and that independence is a major and probably irreversible step, what would Micronesian attitudes be on the question I have raised earlier in these remarks as to whether the voters should decide Micronesia's future on a one-man-one-vote basis, or whether individual districts should have the right to avoid taking a step which the majority in the particular district did not favor?

Third, would an independent Micronesia have the authority and the police power to force individual landholders or individual districts to terminate existing land contracts which provide for the existence of US facilities such as at Kwajalein? Or, in a somewhat

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different case, would the Government of Micronesia have the authority to sign leases and collect rents for such areas, even if necessary forcing the original leaseholders to accept the arrangements?

I do not anticipate final answers to such questions at this session. Rather, I am setting forth the kind of questions for which we would need answers before we could make our decisions. I assume that you would need authority from the Congress of Micronesia before you could give a definitive answer to the first question. For the second question, I should imagine that you would need some expression of opinion from the districts, and I am not sure how you could give a definitive answer to the third question in the absence of a Constitutional Convention which would spell out the nature of a future Micronesian government and the relative powers which will be assigned to the center and to the districts. These are complex questions. Other questions like them will arise as you carry out your Congress' mandate to explore the independence question. (Here lead on to regrets re Constitutional Convention resolution failure.)

Drafted: S/PC:LGrant:cv  
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