

Private memorandum for Senator Salii

03  
5.6

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR SALII

October 2, 1972

The following memorandum covers the subjects discussed and the understandings reached in my conversation with Senator Salii on October 2, 1972.

1. I opened by saying that the American Delegation had met this morning to consider for the first time the Micronesian response to our opening statement. I said that I appreciated the effort that had obviously been made to address our concerns and to answer the questions we had put forth. I said that I hoped that he realized the serious nature of our questions and that we could not proceed down the path we had been pursuing until they had been clarified.
2. I said that I still had problems despite their response. For one, I said that there was still a degree of uncertainty about the effect of Ponape on the procedural aspects of the negotiations, that it continued to be our feeling that our joint approach had been modified. I said that he could probably understand our confusion since he had told me on the eve of the sixth round that he himself was confused by the meaning of the Ponape Special Session for the talks.
3. I went on to say that I was giving very thoughtful consideration to my response to his opening statement which I would present in the next plenary session. I said that our two situations were different. They could be certain that I was speaking for the Executive Branch and that the U. S. positions had been arrived at after advance consultation with the U. S. Congress. On the other hand, we could not be certain of the Micronesian position since we had no way of knowing what the majority position of his delegation would be in finally voting on any agreement that we might reach through the negotiating process.
4. I then proceeded to explain how my instructions had been arrived at and the limits of my authorization. I said that I did not have the power to negotiate

Omsn-91

03-411742

alternatives and that the U. S. position had been based on the assumption that the Micronesian Delegation had wanted to work toward a Compact of Free Association. I said we had attempted to modify our approach to take their desires into consideration and that my instructions and my consultations with the Congress had been limited to the joint approach we had been following. I repeated our belief that Ponape and their answers had changed this approach and that further consultations within the U. S. Government and with the Congress would now be necessary.

5. I said that his delegation had now said that it wanted to negotiate an independence alternative. I said that I did not have this authority but that since it had been raised, I would present the request to my Government. I said I had no way of knowing what the answer of my Government would be but that I assumed that it would require a reappraisal and a re-study of the entire question and the U. S. position toward change of status, including, of course, my current instructions. I said further that this new matter would require renewed consultations with the U. S. Congress and, again, I could not prejudge what position it would take.
6. I said that my Government in its consideration of a possible Independence alternative would certainly be asking me a number of questions as to what did the pro-independence advocates have in mind, how did they define independence, what kind of future relationship with the U. S. did they envisage, etc. Therefore, I asked Senator Salii whether he could arrange for an informal meeting with the members of his delegation who advocated Independence. I said that I hoped they would be able to share with me their thoughts so that I would have a better understanding of their views, and, in turn, I would be in a better position to answer the questions that I would surely be asked when I returned to Washington. Senator Salii agreed that such an informal meeting would be useful but suggested that we wait until Senator Nakayama arrived. We tentatively agreed that the meeting would be held on Wednesday morning with Senators Amaraich, Tmetuchl and Nakayama, and I said that I hoped he and Ekpap Silk could also attend.

7. I next turned to land and his letter to me about a possible meeting of the land sub-committee being scheduled during these talks. I said we were prepared to meet but that first I wanted to ask him if he still held to the view that the best approach was a joint one. I recalled our conversation in Washington on this subject. Senator Sali said he still thought that the joint sub-committee approach was best. I then said that the first step would be a survey of our needs in Palau. Such a survey had never been made and therefore we had no metes and bounds or maps and no exact locations in mind. I said that I hoped that his members of the joint sub-committee on land would cooperate with the American team in making such a survey.
8. I then asked Senator Sali about the Amaraich Committee and its plans for hearings on land in Palau in November. I said that it was my understanding that we had reached tentative agreement in Washington on our land requirements as set forth in Annex B, and that we had understood him to say on Saturday that the partial draft Compact was still the position of the Joint Future Status Committee. I asked Chairman Sali if our understanding was correct. He said "Yes" but reminded me that the Congress of Micronesia had not taken a position on land at Ponape. He then explained that at Ponape the Marshalls had indicated that the MLSC would represent that District and Marshallese land owners in land negotiations with the United States and that before proceedings in Palau, he wanted to determine the attitudes of the people of that District and how they wished to proceed. I said that the Amaraich Committee was thus not intending to reopen Annex B but rather to see how it could be implemented. I understood Senator Sali's response as confirmation on this point.
9. I said that I thought the November hearings in Palau were premature--since the U. S. did not know the locations of its requirements and, therefore, it would be impossible to say what land would be included. I said that I thought the more logical order would be the survey first and then the hearings. I said

further that if we were following the joint sub-committee approach, the U. S. would want to be represented so that it could explain our requirements and answer questions. I said some of these matters could be discussed here at Barbers Point in a meeting of the joint land sub-committee and we agreed that such a meeting would be held after he had consulted with his full delegation.

10. We next discussed finance. I said that following his statement in Washington that he would appoint/sub-committee on finance, I had appointed Frank Crawford to head the American group. Frank had written Bailey Olter and had set forth some general questions that might usefully be discussed. I said that if he thought it would be useful, our sub-committee was prepared to meet and that we thought we ought to take advantage of Ray Setik's and Mr. Toothman's presence to involve them in a general discussion of the finance question. I said that our view of the function of this sub-committee was different from the one he had expressed in his opening statement. I said that the actual drafting of the financial provisions of the Compact was outside of the jurisdiction of this sub-committee. I did say, however, that we thought that much could be gained by a general exchange of views at the sub-committee level. We agreed that the sub-committee would meet after he had consulted with his full delegation.
11. In closing, I thanked Senator Sali for the tone and spirit of his opening statement. I said that I was sorry that the uncertainty and confusion arising from Ponape had forced us to ask the kind of questions that we did. I said that the talks have been placed in a different perspective and that it was clear that the basic assumptions we had been operating under were now incorrect. I said that this did cause us real problems and I would be addressing them in my next plenary statement.

Franklin Haydn Williams