

03  
7,5

I-15029

3 November 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR CAPTAIN GORDON SCHULLER, USN  
ISA/EA&PR

SUBJECT: Micronesia - the Option for Independence.  
Working Paper - Preliminary Comments.

I call the following comments to your attention with respect to Micronesian independence. Should the Micronesians opt for independence, then with respect to -

1. Theory of Pleibiscite.

The immediate issue is the extent to which the pleibiscite might be subjected to "conditions," e. g. that independence is conditional upon United States securing bases, on its terms, or securing other outcomes, which it demands. There is no question in my mind that this would be improper and probably treated as unlawful both by the United Nations and separate countries including friendly countries and allies. It would in addition lead to an undesirable precedent as respects similar action by other States. Under these circumstances, the pleibiscite must be without qualifications, and the options available to the Micronesians made clear without interference.

2. Problem of Independence.

Once independent Micronesia becomes a "sovereign State." Under these circumstances she has the same powers, competence, authority, rights - and duties - as any other State. She has no direct obligations to the United States except those she chooses to enter into. Therefore, she can choose to deny us bases or prevent us from denying other States military access to the area. Politically and legally speaking we should not allow ourselves to be placed in

63590 48

a position in which these matters are tied to independence, nor dependent upon an independent Micronesia meeting United States demands.

3. The Marianas.

The extent to which a severance of the Marianas would be traced to improper conduct by the United States by an independent Micronesia is controversial. If it were traced to United States interference in Micronesia affairs, difficulties could arise which are self evident.

On the other hand, an appropriate severance of the Marianas may - depending upon policy and military considerations - lead to the United States salvaging much of what might otherwise be lost in the event of independence.

4. Negotiating Bases and Denial.

In view of the above remarks, the need to negotiate bases and denial as an important United States objective tends to be clouded. The argument can be made and must be effectively rebutted that the United States is not forcing its compact upon Micronesian representatives, foreclosing the ~~exercise~~ of other options, foreclosing a proper plebiscite, and foreclosing their securing appropriate popular consent to the Compact, and the like. Should the above argument stand, the United States would be faced with third States and the United Nations, hostile or made hostile and adversary to the United States positions, and unquestionably an unstable Micronesia, unsuitable to United States defense interests.

Secondly, should the United States be alleged and shown to have interfered in the process of Micronesia securing political coherence - either by the naked attempt to sever the Marianas or otherwise, unfavorable outcomes similar to those just mentioned could be expected.

SIGNED

Harry H. Almond, Jr.

Office of Assistant General Counsel  
International Affairs

cc: GC

Chron  
Circulating

File: ILP - TTPI  
R&C Ofc, ISA

