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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

MEMORANDUM

TO : Chairman, Under Secretaries Committee
FROM : Martin F. Herz, State Department Member of Inter-Agency Committee
SUBJECT: Micronesian Status Negotiations

The following are our comments on Ambassador Williams reassessment of the Micronesian Status question and his recommendations.

1. We understand that the recommendation that there be a negotiating session in December to attempt to reach agreement on a draft compact with the Micronesian Joint Committee on Future Status (JCFS) has been withdrawn.

We believe that the questions raised by the recent letter from the Palau District Legislature opposing any military use of land in Palau require a re-study of our negotiating position regarding options for the use of Palau land by the Navy. The planned trip to Palau by a US land survey group should provide additional information helpful to that re-study.

2. Independence Option: We concur that the Under Secretaries Committee should direct the Inter-Agency Group to undertake on an urgent basis a thorough study of an independence option and we understand that the purpose of that study would be to reach agreement on a US position to be recommended to the President.

In view of the postponement of the December negotiating session, we believe that a US position on independence should be adopted rapidly in order to permit a negotiating session to be scheduled early in the new year. We consider that the negotiating situation was fundamentally changed by the August decision of the Congress of Micronesia instructing the JCFS to negotiate with us on an independence option as well as on free association. Our failure to agree to such negotiations

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could only be capitalized upon by the independence faction to our continuing disadvantage.

Pending the completion of this study it would appear preferable not to forward to the National Security Staff partial arguments in favor of and against an independence option. We could not accept, for example, the statement (page 9) that "It will be impossible to secure United Nations approval of any arrangement the United States works out short of complete independence, so the UN's views cannot be considered controlling." The UN General Assembly has gone on record more than once that independence is only one of the means of implementing self-determination, and it has in fact given its stamp of approval to a free association arrangement. Consequently, we are confident the Security Council would accept any agreement with Micronesia which has the broad support of the Micronesian people, provided that the option of independence is offered in any plebiscite terminating the trusteeship.

3. We believe that, in the meantime, it is highly advisable that within the limits of his existing mandate, Ambassador Williams inform the JCFS by open letter at least of the negative implications of independence for Micronesia. (A draft letter is attached.) Such a letter would strengthen the position of the Micronesian advocates of free association with the United States at the January session of the Congress of Micronesia and would deflate the position of independence advocates prior to the arrival in Micronesia of the Visiting UN Mission in late January.

4. Marshall facilities. Ambassador Williams made no recommendation with regard to the Marshalls. We regard it as particularly important that, as part of the study of an independence option, we examine the feasibility of urgently re-negotiating the lease arrangements for the US military facilities in Kwajalein. We recognize that there are substantial complications related to the fact that the leases are now largely with individuals, but the desirability of working out arrangements that would survive either independence or a later termination of free association argues strongly for completing those arrangements before further negotiations with the JCFS.

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5. Negotiations with the Marianas: Due to special sensitivities in the United Nations concerning the fragmentation of non-self-governing territories we expect to face considerable criticism over our separate negotiations with the Marianas. Although the ground has been well prepared for these talks and we can show that the initiative for the negotiations has come from the Marianans, even our allies represented on the UN Trusteeship Council have been concerned over the fact that we have not been able to secure the approval of the Congress of Micronesia for separate talks. Given the basic decision to proceed with the Marianas talks, we think that the UN reaction could be best managed if the negotiations were to proceed as rapidly as possible. Quick conclusion of an agreement with the Marianas would also, in addition to satisfying urgent Defense land requirements, allow us to demonstrate to the other Micronesians the solid advantages of close association with the United States..

We also believe it is important for the US side in the negotiations to retain the initiative in dealing with the Marianans in view of the complexity of our proposals and the inexperience and lack of cohesiveness of the Marianas status delegation. We question the advisability of probing for the desires of the other side in the initial meeting. This could encourage them to state maximum demands or set them on a course leading away from our proposals. Instead, the US delegation at the first round should try to surface as much of the substance of our position as possible including the general shape of the future political relationship and some idea both of the scope of our military requirements and, particularly, an indication of the scale of our future economic support.

Attachment:

Draft letter to Senator Salii

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Clearances: PM - Mr. Pickering
EA - Amb. Hummel
L - Mr. Stowe

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