

Routing Slip

DATE 3/9/73

FROM: LNO HONO

TO : NAME/TITLE	OFFICE SYMBOL	DATE		INITIALS
		IN	OUT	
1. <u>Ambassador Williams</u>				
2. _____				
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REMARKS

From this morning's paper.

Alolo

Bob Law

SIGNATURE

Micronesian challenges

These must be confusing times for American officials charged with negotiating a new political relationship with the people of Micronesia.

For a while it appeared that the new status would be one of "free association" between the U.S. and Micronesia. It was a compromise concept which left to the Micronesians control of internal affairs while assigning the U.S. rights and duties in the international area.

That plan has become less sure now as a result of a lack of political progress within Micronesia, disunity among the six districts of the Trust Territory and a growing dissatisfaction with America's role in the islands.

THE LATEST SESSION of the Congress of Micronesia, which ended recently at Saipan, was supposed to resolve some of these problems. Instead, the work of the Congress probably added to the confusion.

The next round of status talks will probably take place in Washington, D.C., sometime in May. These are the elements which will contribute to a difficult and trying session at that Washington meeting:

- The Congress of Micronesia hasn't acted to prepare the Trust Territory politically for an end to the trusteeship. Despite the urging of many political leaders, the Congress failed to pass legislation calling for a constitutional convention, an office to prepare for transition and a commission to study the matter of Micronesian unity. The reason given for the failure of these bills was "cost."

- Micronesians are divided themselves as to what they think their future should be. The Mariana District wants closer ties with the U.S., elements in the Marshalls and in Palau particularly speak of complete independence and some Micronesians feel the best course is to leave things as they are for the time being.

A resolution did pass the Micronesian Congress which states the Joint Committee on Future Status is the "sole" authority to conduct negotia-

tions on a new status for all six districts. But the resolution passed only narrowly and it seems clear the districts will continue to explore going their own ways.

- It is becoming more and more popular to criticize the American role in the Trust Territory. Despite an intensive education program in recent years, many Micronesians feel the Americans haven't done an adequate job. They complain that the education has been too oriented toward the U.S., that only the American political system is discussed.

THIS THEME was sounded many times for a visiting mission from the United Nations Trusteeship Council, which ends its trip to Micronesia this week. The mission was told Micronesians have not been taught enough about their own culture and have not learned about political systems other than the American one.

The mission will make its report to the full Trusteeship Council and undoubtedly will reflect this attitude.

There is also growing and more vocal opposition to American military presence or activities in districts other than the Marianas. This is reflected in moves which range from a proposed tax on missiles fired over Micronesian waters through court challenges to testing explosives at Eniwetok.

ALL OF THIS makes negotiations between the U.S. and Micronesia more difficult and confusing. This is unfortunate at a time when the need is for action and progress in the status talks.

Washington has its reasons for wanting this matter resolved. In an era of changing relationships throughout Asia, the U.S. will want to know just what the future is for these important mid-Pacific islands.

The people of the Trust Territory must act quickly to sort out their problems and decide just what kind of future they want. This is the immediate challenge for Micronesia's leadership.