

March 16, 1973

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Congressional Hearings on the Status of the
Micronesian Negotiations; Present Congressional Structure

The House Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs held hearings the afternoon of March 15, 1973, to be briefed by Ambassador Haydn Williams on the status of negotiations with Micronesia. Although Ambassador Williams was the only witness who made a statement or responded to questions, he was accompanied at the witness table by Mr. James Wilson and Captain William Crowe, Jr. I attended the hearings and talked briefly afterwards with the subcommittee staff member, Nancy Larson.

Ambassador Williams opened with a prepared statement regarding the status of the negotiations. He said nothing new or unusual, and generally tried to be optimistic. For example, he did not highlight the change in attitude of the Joint Committee on Future Status at the negotiations at Barbers Point in September-October 1972, nor did he mention possible problems with terminating the U.N. Trusteeship. His statement is attached; I marked a few items of interest. (Also attached are some financial summaries of Trust Territory expenditures; Williams supplied these to the subcommittee.)

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The discussion which followed covered a number of issues. Three especially interesting points developed.

1. Terminating the U.N. Trusteeship. Jonathan Bingham, Democrat from New York, predicted the U. S. might have "deep difficulty" terminating the U.N. trusteeship if the U. S. reaches separate agreements with the Marianas and the rest of Micronesia. (Bingham has been associated with the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. in the past.) Bingham thought that, unless the U. S. can demonstrate in the U.N. that a majority of the entire population of the territory favors the separate agreements, the U.N. will not be satisfied. He did not think it was sufficient to have a majority of the Marianas people favoring separation.

Williams answered quickly and confidently that: first, the U.N. position on separate negotiations was consistent with Article 76 of the U.N. Charter and paragraph 6(1) of the Trusteeship Agreement; second, there was a precedent for separate arrangements in the termination of prior U.N. trusteeships -- e.g., the Cameroons; and third, that he found it inconceivable that the Trusteeship Council or Security Council would stand

in the way of self-determination by the people of Micronesia if that is what they want.

Bingham thought it relevant whether the eventual Micronesian plebiscite would include an option for independence (or freedom)? Williams said he was not sure what the exact arrangement for the plebiscite would be. As for having an option of independence on the ballot, he stated that the Micronesians have consistently said they want free association with the U. S. and are seeking to negotiate a draft compact along these lines. If and when the Micronesian people reject free association, then will be time to consider other options.

2. Disposition of lands in public trust. Ambassador Williams expressed concern that the disposition of lands now held in public trust might create difficulties both during the negotiations and subsequently. He noted that there were conflicting claims regarding these lands.

3. Guam and the Marianas. Mr. Antonio Borja Won Pat, a non-voting representative in Congress from Guam, noted that Guam had voted in a 1969 referendum not to enter into an association with the Marianas. However, he believed that only about one-third of the eligible voters in Guam had been registered at that time and he thought

that a new referendum might find Guam in favor of association.

Congressional Committees

1. House of Representatives. For issues regarding the future political status of Micronesia and the Mariana Islands, the appropriate committee in the House of Representatives is the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, chaired by James A. Haley, a Democrat from Florida. The appropriate subcommittee is the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs chaired by Representative Phillip Burton, a Democrat from California. Burton is an acknowledged liberal and apparently believes strongly in the right of the people of Micronesia to self-determination. It is unclear exactly what his views are with regard to the separate negotiations with the Marianas. The other Democratic members of Burton's subcommittee include: Roy A. Taylor (N.C.), Thomas S. Foley (Wash.), Robert W. Kastenmeier (Wis.), Patsy T. Mink (Hawaii), Lloyd Meeds (Wash.), Robert G. Stephens, Jr. (Ga.), Joseph P. Vigorito (Penna.), Jonathan B. Bingham (N.Y.), Yvonne Brathwaite Burke (Calif.), Antonio Borja Won Pat (Guam), Ron De Lugvo (V.I.). The Republican membership of the subcommittee includes: John P. Saylor (Penna.), Craig Hosmer (Calif.), Joe

Skubitz (Kans.), Don H. Clausen (Calif.), Philip E. Ruppe (Mich.), Manuel Lujan, Jr. (N. Mex.), Keith G. Sebelius (Kans.), Ralph S. Regula (Ohio), Joseph J. Maraziti (N. J.), James G. Martin (N. C.). The staff member on the House subcommittee is Nancy Larson who apparently shares the view of Congressman Burton.

2. Senate. The appropriate Senate committee is the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, chaired by Henry M. Jackson, a Democrat from Washington. The subcommittee is the Subcommittee on Territories and Insular Affairs, chaired by the new Senator from Louisiana, J. Bennett Johnston, Jr. The other Democratic members of the subcommittee are: Henry M. Jackson (Wash.), Lee Metcalf (Mont.), James Abourezk (S. D.). The Republican members include: Paul J. Fannin (Ariz.), James L. Buckley (N. Y.), Dewey F. Bartlett (Okla.). The staff member for the Senate subcommittee is James Gamble, who reportedly is knowledgeable about the Micronesian situation.

Barry Carter