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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 8, 1973

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TO : EA - Mr. Godley

THRU : EA - Mr. Hummel

FROM : EA/RA - John C. Dorrance

SUBJECT: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands  
(Micronesia) -- Background Information

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REVIEWED BY *[Signature]* DATE FEB. 25 1987

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During our brief discussion of Micronesian war claims on June 7, you asked for briefing materials on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, or, as it is more commonly described, Micronesia.

Very briefly, the Trust Territory embraces some 2100 islands scattered over 3 million square miles of the north Pacific. The islands (total population - 115,000) lay in three main archipelagoes--the Marianas, Carolines, and the Marshalls. They have been administered by the U.S., as a United Nations Trust Territory, since 1947.

U.S. interests in Micronesia are almost entirely strategic. Essentially these are: (a) the need to assure denial of military access to the area by other nations; (b) continuing retention of the Kwajalein missile range test facilities (important to the development of an ABM and other advanced weapons systems); (c) acquisition of Tinian Island in the Marianas for early development of a major joint services basing complex (mainly for SAC); and (d) access to major land areas in the Palau Islands for contingency basing purposes.

The negotiation of the above requirements is with the broader framework of talks with the Micronesians directed at: (a) termination of the UN trusteeship and of the U.S. administration of Micronesia; and (b) establishment of a new political relationship with those islands. This will involve political fragmentation of the Trust Territory. The Mariana Islands (Saipan, Tinian, etc.) are moving toward a Commonwealth relationship with

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EA/RA: JC Dorrance

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the U.S. similar to that of Puerto Rico's. The remaining five districts (Palau, Yap, Truk, Ponape, and the Marshalls) are moving toward a "free association" relationship. As presently envisaged, a Micronesian state would enter into a "compact of free association" with the U.S. which would give the U.S. responsibility for the defense and foreign affairs of Micronesia, while granting unfettered self-government to Micronesia with respect to internal affairs. Either party to the compact will have the right to terminate unilaterally the relationship. This arrangement is similar to that between the West Indies Federation and Britain.

Increasing pressures for independence within the islands, centrifugal forces which could lead to multiple political fragmentation, and other factors have led to a stalemate in the free association negotiations. They probably will resume in August or September, after completion of a series of basic NSC interagency policy studies directed at re-examination of our interests, policies, operations, and negotiating goals in Micronesia. The major issues being addressed in these studies are:

-- The level and character of our strategic interests and defense land requirements in Micronesia; and,

-- Whether independence should or must be offered to Micronesia.

More detailed briefing data, including information on the significance of the area and the issues which involve us, are contained in the following attachments. (The first two tabs are draft chapters in a study currently under preparation for the President by the NSC Under Secretaries Interagency Group on Micronesian Status.)

TAB A - Background Data on Micronesia

TAB B - U.S. Interests, Requirements, and Negotiating Objectives in Micronesia

TAB C - Memorandum to Mr. Green on EA Responsibilities for Micronesian Affairs

TAB D - Map of Micronesia

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My own role in Micronesian Affairs has been that of a country officer directly responsible to Mr. Hummel (who serves as State Representative on the Micronesian Inter-agency Group). I will be happy to brief you orally on Micronesia, as you suggested, anytime at your convenience.

EA/RA:JCDorrance:mjh:  
6/8/73 ext 20260

cc: EA - Mr. Sneider  
EA/RA - Mr. Moore  
EA/ROC - Mr. Moser

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