

Palau

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1 Peleliu Municipality to conduct an on-sight inspection of
2 the Peleliu drydock and shipyard facility.

3 After leaving Palau on Saturday, Setik's group will
4 travel on Saipan where they will conduct similar hearings
5 into the Marianas District budget next week. The two groups
6 will then jointly review the TT Headquarters budget on March
7 28 and 29.

8 (WILLIAMS BEFORE SUBCOMMITTEE)

9 SAIPAN, March 22, (MNS)---United States Ambassador
10 Franklin Haydn Williams, commenting on the negotiations
11 on the future political status of the Trust Territory, has
12 told a subcommittee of the House Interior Committee in
13 Washington that "considerable progress" has been made in
14 the negotiations, but that uncertainty within Micronesia
15 is making the status negotiations "more difficult."

16 Williams, who is President Nixon's Personal Representative
17 for Micronesian Status Negotiations, made his comments in
18 testimony before the subcommittee March 15. Portions of the
19 testimony were received on Saipan by dispatch from Washington.

20 The Ambassador presented the lawmakers with a picture

1 of where things stand at the moment in the talks. He also
2 noted that, following the Washington round of talks last
3 summer at which a partial draft compact of Free Association
4 was drafted, Senator Lazarus Salii, Chairman of the Joint
5 Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia,
6 said "The partial draft compact represents...an agreement
7 which meets and exceeds all of our minimum requirements,
8 if not our every desire." It is a "compact...which we can
9 recommend to the Congress and ultimately to the people of
10 Micronesia."

11 "This is where we stood at the end of last summer,"
12 said Ambassador Williams. "We had made progress as far as
13 reaching agreements with the Micronesian Joint Committee on
14 Future Status in a number of important areas. Our work,
15 however, was only partially finished. Remaining agreement
16 had to be reached on areas of finance, trade and commerce,
17 nationality, transition and termination. In addition further
18 negotiations with respect to U.S. military land needs in the
19 Palau District in particular had to be completed before
20 signing the compact," said Williams.

1 However, the Ambassador added, "I must also report that
2 the Congress of Micronesia has neither approved nor rejected
3 our joint agreements as reflected in the partial draft compact.
4 Opposition to the terms has been voiced to the Congress by
5 certain individuals and groups in Micronesia. Some opponents
6 want greater future Micronesian control over foreign affairs
7 and defense and some object to any future U.S. Military
8 presence in Micronesia. Other opponents also strongly favor
9 having more alternatives to Free Association put to the people
10 of Micronesia in the same plebiscite.

11 "Second," he continued, "It is not easy to determine what
12 the people of Micronesia really want. There are wide differences
13 of opinion on the future political status question within
14 Micronesia. Some want to maintain the status quo, the Trusteeship,
15 feeling that they are not as yet ready to decide on their future.
16 Some want close association with the U.S., and have asked that
17 the Commonwealth offer be reconsidered. Some want a looser
18 relationship than Free Association. Some want a permanent
19 association. Some want only a short term association enroute
20 to still another status, and some want full independence now.

1 These differences between districts and within districts are
2 mirrored in the Congress of Micronesia and even within the
3 Joint Committee on Future Status itself. This situation makes
4 the talks more difficult, both for the Micronesian delegation
5 as well as ours.

6 "Another problem facing Micronesia is the question of
7 Unity," the Ambassador said. "In a political sense these
8 islands have never been united. In fact more than one
9 Micronesian leader has said that the major force for unity in
10 Micronesia today is the U.S. Another has said that, "Today
11 there is no Micronesia--if there is to be one tomorrow we will
12 have to create it." The U.S. has sought to find a common
13 solution for all of Micronesia. While it has acceded to the
14 freely expressed wishes of the people of the Marianas for
15 good reasons, the U.S. hopes that the other five districts
16 will be able to find the basis to go forward in union toward
17 a common future.

18 "In this regard," Williams went on, "the U.S. since Koror
19 has invited and urged the Congress of Micronesia to move forward
20 with the convening of a constitutional convention. The U.S.

1 has repeated its invitation to the leaders and people to begin
2 the process of framing its own future governmental institutions,
3 its own law-making procedures, its own concepts of division of
4 powers, its own design for a future central government and its
5 relationships with the district governments, its own laws with
6 respect to land, and so forth.

7 "The last two sessionss of the Congress of Micronesia for
8 internal reasons have failed to pass bills creating a
9 constitutional convention," Ambassador Williams told the
10 subcommittee. "This we regret since we have advised the
11 Joint Committee on Future Status that regardless of the
12 precise nature of the future relationship with the U.S.,
13 there can be no termination of the Trusteeship Agreement
14 until a successor government to the present TTPI Administration
15 is in place based on a constitution approved by the people of
16 Micronesia.

17 "Finally and in summary," said Ambassador Williams, "the
18 objectives of the U.S. in these negotiations will continue to
19 be directed toward a reasonable and equitable solution, toward
20 a new political status for Micronesia and a new relationship

1 with the U.S. freely entered into by the peoples of the TTPI--
2 a solution which will best serve and protect their interests
3 as well as ours.

4 "Toward this end I am now in correspondence with the
5 Chairman of the Micronesian delegation about the next steps
6 and the continuation of our joint effort to complete a draft
7 compact of free association. Simultaneously we will continue
8 to pursue separate talks with the Marianas Future Status
9 Committee leading toward an agreement which will satisfy the
10 wishes of the people of these islands for a close and permanent
11 political association with the U.S..."

12 (HICOM ATTENDS MEETING)

13 SAIPAN, March 22, (MNS)---Trust Territory High
14 Commissioner Edward E. Johnston will leave for Honolulu,
15 Hawaii Thursday evening, (March 22) where he will attend
16 the Federal Regional Council meeting scheduled for Friday.

17 The meeting was called at the request of President
18 Richard Nixon to discuss several important subjects such as
19 labor, Housing and Urban Development, Law Enforcement, Health,
20 Education and Welfare programs, cutbacks in the Office of