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SUBJECT: U.S.-MICRONESIAN RELATIONS: A LOOK AT THE FUTURE
REF: STATUS LNO 113C

1. (C) THIS MESSAGE CONTINUES CONSIDERATION OF U.S.-MICRONESIAN RELATIONS AND SUGGESTS FURTHER MOVES TOWARD INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AS SPUR TO ACCEPTABLE STATUS DETERMINATION. IT IS DRAFTED IN CONTEXT OF FIVE DISTRICTS, EXCLUDING MARIANAS.
2. (C) RECENT CONGRESSIONAL SESSION WHICH POINTED UP CONTRADICTORY FORCES IN OPERATION AND AREAS OF POTENTIAL OR ACTUAL CLASH, PRODUCED LITTLE SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION APART FROM CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION BILL, BUT PROVIDED FORUM FOR AIRING OF DISTRICT GRIEVANCES AND PROMOTING DISTRICT INTERESTS ALONG A BASICALLY DIVISIVE COURSE. PARTICIPATION OF MARIANAS IN CONGRESS WAS IN ITSELF A SOMEWHAT EQUIVOCAL SITUATION GIVEN THIS DISTRICT'S SEPARATE NEGOTIATIONS FOR COMMONWEALTH STATUS. NOTABLY HOWEVER CONGRESS SESSION DID NOT EVOKE ATTACKS ON MARIANAS' DECISION ALTHOUGH WITHOUT DOUBT BITTER OPPOSITION REMAINS, PARTICULARLY ON PART OF TRUKESE AND PONAPEANS, AS

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SHOWN IN HEARINGS ON CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION BILL (SB 38, NOW PL 5-60). BUT FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS AS SUCH WAS NOT A CENTRAL OR EVEN CONSPICUOUS SUBJECT. CONGRESS WAS PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED WITH MATTERS OF INTERNAL GOVERNMENT, E.G. PUBLIC LAND, A CONSTITUTION, AND THE USUAL LOG-ROLLING PROVISIONS FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND IMPROVEMENTS.

3. LEAVING THE MARIANAS ASIDE, ONE OF THE MOST POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT SCHISMS WAS THAT NOMINALLY INVOLVING REVENUE SHARING, BUT ACTUALLY CONCERNED WITH NATIONAL UNITY, WITH MARSHALLS, (MARIANAS) AND PALAU ARRAYED AGAINST TRUK, PONAPE AND YAP. SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSONAGES INVOLVED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL SCENE WERE THE GUESTS IN THE GALLERIES--THE LEADERS, TRADITIONAL AND ELECTIVE, WHO CAME AND WENT AS THEIR PET ISSUES WERE ON THE DOCKET OR THEY FELT THEMSELVES OR THEIR DISTRICTS THREATENED BY IMPENDING CONGRESSIONAL ACTION.

4. (C) YET TO THE OBSERVER THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE CONGRESS AND THE CAPABILITY, THOUGH OFTEN IRRITATING AND EVEN ON OCCASION HOSTILE, OF ITS MEMBERS OFFERED IMPRESSIVE EVIDENCE OF THE NATURAL INTELLIGENCE AND SHREWDNESS OF MICRONESIANS AND, ON THE WHOLE, OF THE EDUCATED SKILLS OF THESE PARTICULAR MEN AND THE MICRONESIAN MEMBERS OF THEIR STAFF. THERE ALSO WAS AMPLE ILLUSTRATION OF THE ENERGY AND PURPOSEFULNESS OF MICRONESIANS WHEN DEALING WITH MATTERS IN WHICH THEY ARE PERSONALLY INTERESTED. THERE WAS LITTLE OF THE DESULTORY AND APATHETIC TYPE OF CLOCK-WATCHING ACTIVITY OFTEN EVIDENT ON THE PART OF THOSE INVOLVED IN WORK WHICH BASICALLY THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND OR ACCEPT AND CONSIDER AMERICAN-MANAGED.

5. (C) THE CONGRESS, THEN, WAS SIGNIFICANT AS A STRICTLY MICRONESIAN FORUM IN WHICH MICRONESIANS, WRESTLING WITH SOME PROBLEMS AND AVOIDING OTHERS, GAVE A SORT OF PRE-VIEW OR VIGNETTE OF WHAT EVENTUAL MICRONESIAN INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE LIKE. WHILE THEIR ACTIONS SHOWED SPLITS AMONG AND BETWEEN DISTRICTS ON A NUMBER OF DECISIVE MATTERS AS INDICATED ABOVE AND REPORTED MORE FULLY ELSEWHERE, THEY WERE GENERALLY UNITED, BY ACTION MORE THAN BY WORDS, IN THE CONVICTION THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR AMERICANS TO PHASE OUT RAPIDLY AND LEAVE MICRONESIANS TO RUN THINGS FOR THEMSELVES, INSOFAR AS THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS ARE CONCERNED. IT MUST BE ADDED QUICKLY THAT THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS GENERALIZATION EVEN IN THE CONGRESS SOME SEE THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED AND ARE HESITANT. RANKING MICRONESIANS WITH WELL-PAID POSITIONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION ARE NOT AT ALL SURE OF THEIR PROSPECTS UNDER A COMPLETELY MICRONESIAN GOVERNMENT AND

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SOME SEEM NERVOUS AT THE THOUGHT, THEY ARE APT TO SHARE THE VIEWS OF THOSE WHO, FEELING UNCERTAIN AND ILL-INFORMED ABOUT FUTURE STATUS, SOMEWHAT VAGUELY PREFER CONTINUATION OF STATUS QUO.

6. (C) HOWEVER, LOOKING AT THE DEVELOPMENTS ENUMERATED, IT APPEARS THAT MICRONESIANS HAVE COME TO A STAGE WHERE THEY CAN AND MUST BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN DECISIONS AND MOVE EFFECTIVELY TOWARD THEIR OWN INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT. THIS IS AN EVENTUAL GOAL UNDER EITHER OF THE TWO PRESENTLY ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF POST-TRUSTEESHIP POLITICAL STATUS AND UNDER THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT ITSELF. INDICATIONS ARE, I BELIEVE, THAT THE POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE WE HAVE AFFORDED MICRONESIANS OVER THE YEARS OF OUR TRUSTEESHIP, TOGETHER WITH THEIR OWN INTELLIGENCE, HAVE PREPARED THEM FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT. SUCH EVOLUTION WHILE NOT REMOVING ALL THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN U.S.-MICRONESIAN RELATIONS WOULD MOVE OUR RELATIONS ONTO A SOUNDER, MORE PRACTICAL AND MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE BASIS BY GIVING MICRONESIANS THE RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH THEY MUST EVENTUALLY HANDLE, AND WHICH WOULD CHALLENGE THEIR OWN ABILITY, INTEREST AND INITIATIVE.

7. (C) THE CLASSIC QUESTION "WHAT IS MICRONESIA?" WILL HAVE TO BE ANSWERED BY MICRONESIANS THEMSELVES IN PRACTICAL TERMS OF A POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP ACCEPTABLE TO THEIR DIVERSE INTERESTS. THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION WILL PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY. WHILE IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SAID THAT THE PRESENCE AND AUTHORITY OF THE U.S. IS THE CEMENT THAT HOLDS THESE ISLANDS IN SOME SEMBLANCE OF A POLITICAL ENTITY, THE U.S. IS ALSO THE COMMON TARGET FOR DARTS FROM MANY DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. WHETHER THESE DARTS WOULD BE TURNED ON EACH OTHER WITH THE PROGRESSIVE ASSUMPTION OF GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OR WHETHER THE THREATENED FRAGMENTATION OF THE ENTITY WILL BE ARRESTED REMAINS TO BE SEEN. BUT TURNING THESE DECISIONS OVER TO MICRONESIANS WOULD FACILITATE A SHAKEDOWN INTO AN ARRANGEMENT WITH WHICH THEY CAN LIVE AND WOULD FREE US FROM THE THANKLESS TASK OF INVOLVEMENT IN COMPLEX INTERNAL MATTERS.

8. (C) POLITICALLY AWARE MICRONESIANS ARE FEELING THEIR WAY TOWARD A GREATER MEASURE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT. THE CHALLENGE FOR US IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE IS TO CONDUCT A RESPONSIBLE WITHDRAWAL FROM INTERNAL MANAGEMENT WHILE DEMONSTRATING OUR INTENTION TO PROTECT SECURITY INTERESTS AND TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY IN HANDLING MICRONESIA'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. SUCH MOVEMENT BY NO MEANS IMPLIES ANY ABDICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY ON OUR PART BUT RATHER CALLS FOR INCREASED AND SOMEWHAT MORE SOPHISTICATED EFFORTS CAREFULLY REDIRECTED TO MEET THE EVOLVING

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SITUATION. NEEDS WILL INCLUDE AMONG OTHERS THE ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF A REASONABLY COMPETENT CORPS OF MICRONESIANS TO RUN THE APPARATUS OF INTERNAL GOVERNMENT, AND, INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE, SOME WORKABLE DEFINITION OF WHAT IS AND IS NOT A MATTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THEREFORE WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE U.S. THE LINE OF DISTINCTION MAY NOT ALWAYS BE EASY TO DRAW OR SUSTAIN, BUT CLEARING THE WAY FOR DOING SO WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY SERVE OUR PRINCIPAL INTEREST OF DENIAL. TRENT.

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