

*File Congressional
Relations*

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July 16, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION FILE

Subject: Meeting with David Voight

I met this morning with David Voight, Legislative Director for Senator Abourezk. Mr. Voight told me that the Senator had two concerns with respect to the Marianas negotiations. First, he is fearful that congressional approval of the status agreement will be tantamount to approval of a major military facility on Tinian. Apparently Senator Abourezk believes that there is no need for such a facility. In response to this point, I noted that the status agreement would actually give the United States just the option of using land on Tinian for a military base. The base would still have to be authorized, and then funds appropriated for it by Congress. Therefore, I urged Mr. Voight to view as separate issues the approval of the status agreement, and the construction of a base on Tinian.

Senator Abourezk's second concern is the fragmentation of Micronesia. He seems to be worried that the remaining districts of Micronesia will not be a viable economic or political unit, and that this will be particularly so if the U. S. and the Marshalls enter into separate negotiations. I pointed out to Mr. Voight that unlike the Marianas, the Marshalls' interest in separate negotiations was entirely financial, and that it seemed that if there was adequate revenue sharing provisions in the new constitution, the Marshalls could be persuaded to enter a loose confederation with the Carolines. Mr. Voight said that this second concern of the Senator's was less deeply felt than the first.


In view of the anticipated schedule of events, Mr. Voight thought it was premature at this time to arrange a meeting with Senator Abourezk. We agreed that after the status agreement is signed or, in any event, after the first of the year, it might be appropriate for Mr. Willens, Senator Abourezk and the two of us to meet together. When I mentioned that Senator Pangelinan might be coming to Washington in the fall, Mr. Voight indicated an interest in having Senator Abourezk meet him.

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Mr. Voight said he had been in contact with Ambassador Williams' staff for information, and that he and the Senator had met with Messrs. Bierne and Verkler and a California businessman (Genz?) about Micronesia.

I left with Mr. Voight a copy of the Revised Report of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as an additional copy of our Summary Report.


Michael S. Helfer

cc: Howard P. Willens