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TO: Department of State
INFO: USUN, COMTWELVE, CINCPAC, COMDR KMR, M. E. ...
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

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FROM: Status LNO SAIPAN DATE: August 22, 1974

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TQ PGOV
SUBJECT: Marshalls Prepare for Separate Negotiation Request
REF: Status LNO No. 243C

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SUMMARY AND COMMENT: During a recent trip of the Deputy Status LNO to the Marshalls it became clear that the interested parties consider a formal request for separate negotiations a foregone conclusion. Well informed persons are aware of Ambassador Williams' May 15 statement but believe a formal request will be made regardless. Those who are less well informed are not aware of the U.S. position and assume a request has already been made. American businessman Jerry Kramer, who seems to reflect leadership thinking but is given to statements more forceful than precise, predicts a request will be made in March 1975 following the next Nitijela session. The leadership, particularly Amata Kubua, seems to be in no hurry and is taking the time to lay the groundwork for a request which they believe the U.S. will accept. There is some talk of boycotting the next session of the Congress of Micronesia, but stated opinions are divided and the Deputy Status LNO was left with the impression that participation in the next session is likely as the Marshallese follow a dual track toward separate status negotiations and minimal participation in centralized institutions.

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Dep. Status LNO: DLSc...
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Deputy Status LNO Schiele visited Kwajalein, Eniwetok, and Majuro, in the Marshall Islands, August 9-19. During his stay on Majuro, August 14-19, he met with Marshallese and Americans including Senators Amata Kabua and Willred Kendall, Constitutional Convention delegates Isaac and Mary Lanwi, Congressman Ataji Balos, Judge Kabua Kabua, Nitijela Legislative Counsel Scott Stege, expatriate businessman Jerry Kramer, executive branch officials, Micronesian school teachers, several Peace Corps Volunteers and miscellaneous private citizens.

Several individuals made the point that the United States should expect a formal request for separate negotiations on future status. Amata Kabua stated in a lengthy private discussion that he did not want to prejudge the outcome of field trips being made by the Political Status Commission to "find out the will of the people," but from preliminary results he "would not be surprised" if the Marshallese decided to request a "closer relationship with the United States than you probably expect." Whether or not the Marshalls request a "closer relationship," Sen. Kabua made it clear the Marshalls would seek a separate status and informed Schiele that an approach would first be made to the United Nations in order to head off possible objections from that quarter. The final decision is to be made following submission of the Political Status Commission report to the Nitijela and the District Administrator. American businessman Jerry Kramer, who is a business partner of Representative Domnick and claims to share Sen. Kabua's views on the future of the Marshalls, stated that the leadership would come to the United States with a formal request in March 1975. In response to a reminder that the U.S. hoped the Marshalls would find a common future with the Carolines in a united Micronesia, Kramer said he understood the U.S. position but hoped the U.S. would respond favorably to a formal request in view of the "obvious justice" of the Marshalls' case. A similar point was made by Nitijela Legislative Counsel Scott Stege, who observed that the statement of U.S. hope for unity is not the same as a rejection of separate negotiations. Stege claims the leadership recalls the early U.S. position on the Marianas and assumed that American reluctance for separate talks can be overcome. Even Dr. Isaac Lanwi, an outspoken advocate of unity, seems to assume a request for separate negotiations is certain and stated that District Public Affairs Officer Tony deBrum was in Washington for that purpose.

Asked for reaction to the recently completed special session of the Congress of Micronesia, Amata Kabua said the people are increasingly disillusioned with the nonresponsive Congress. Kabua dismissed the 20 percent revenue sharing bill passed in the special session as unsatisfactory. He went on to say the United States should not force an artificial unity on Micronesia but should deal with the districts separately. As for the Marshalls, Kabua expressed the opinion that the people would be pleased with separate administration, perhaps under the

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Department of Army, subject only to the provision that "you give us a three star general not a captain, so we will have some clout in Washington." Kabua then spoke of the desirability of additional bases and brought up the matter of three islands in Maloelap, Wotje, and Mili atolls, which he claims have "the best copra potential" in the Marshalls but are not now exploited due to the failure to clear unexploded ordnance from World War II. He said the U.S. should either clear the islands or build bases there. Either would meet with Marshallese approval, Kabua stated. The only expression of support for the Congress was heard from Constitutional Convention delegate Isaac Lanwi, who described the revenue sharing bill as a "sensible compromise" and expressed doubt whether the Nitijela could properly use more. Jerry Kramer's comment on revenue sharing was "Twenty percent or fifty percent, hell! Why shouldn't we have one hundred percent?" In an earlier conversation Kramer had made the point that the Marshalls received less than their fair share of U.S. annual grant funds, distribution of which is controlled from Saipan, "but we could have our cake and eat it too" by negotiating an agreement with the U.S. which would allow the Marshalls to keep all local revenues and receive support in excess of their present portion of U.S. annual grant to the Trust Territory. Kramer predicted that dissatisfaction with the Congress of Micronesia would prevent participation in the Sixth Congress (January 1975).

Congressman Balos, Judge Kabua Kabua and Deputy Distad Gilmar (a Yapese) were far less critical of action on revenue sharing. Balos asserted there is insufficient good will and no spirit of cooperation in the Congress but that 20 percent is better than nothing and that the Marshallese would return to Saipan in January asking for more. Gilmar commented that everyone would have preferred more, but a 20 percent return represents \$400,000 and this is a good start. Kabua Kabua said he thought "the people are happy" to have 20 percent. Other opinion sampled included an informal discussion with a group of women in home of Scott and Biram Stege, nee deBrum, in which questions posed by an articulate minority left the impression of deep dissatisfaction with the Congress and the belief that the Marshalls should seek a separate path.

There was little discussion of the draft compact which was circulated in the Congress by the Joint Committee on Future Status during closing days of the session. Congressman Balos, who also sits on the Marshallese Political Status Commission, said he had not yet read the draft, but thought the people of the Marshalls would not accept any document until agreement had been reached on just compensation for use of Roi Namur, at the northern end of Kwajalein atoll. Senator Kabua, who is Chairman of the Marshallese Status Commission, departed Saipan before the draft was circulated and denied any knowledge of it. Senator Kendall said he had mailed the text to Majuro from Saipan and would read it as soon as it arrived. Neither the school teachers nor the very articulate and well educated women with

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whom the Deputy Liaison Officer met seemed aware that the Micronesian News Service had released a summary of the compact on August 8. This is despite the fact that it was reportedly broadcast on radio and carried in Micronesian Independent on August 10.

Isaac and Mary Lanwi, both of whom are Constitutional Convention delegates, were the only persons who showed any signs of hope concerning the convention. Others who were well informed took the line that the elected delegates do not represent the Marshalls and saw no reason to expect them to fight for the interests of Marshallese, i.e., separation or loose federation. Among the less well informed there seemed to be confusion and lack of understanding that the elected delegates were already certified and would participate in the convention. Even if the delegates did represent the Marshalls, both Amata Kabua and one vocal young woman made the point that agreement among Micronesian delegates on any document was unlikely.

On the subject of the Congressional election scheduled for November 1974, Amata Kabua said

and Mary Lanwi say they have advised Heine not to run. Nitijela elections will be held at the same time as the Congressional elections and the Lanwis expressed hope of changing the complexion of the Nitijela by electing members who favor a unified Micronesia.

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