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PROPOSED TALKING PAPER ON TRANSITION

Introduction

As you know we all have a large investment in the subject of transition. It has consumed many hours of our time since the first round because of its critical importance to the people of the Marianas and to those of us on the U.S. side who are dedicated to the proposition of the early achievement of self-government in the Northern Marianas.

When I speak of transition I have in mind the orderly transfer of governmental powers to local political institutions in accordance with the terms of the proposed status agreement on Commonwealth and a mutually agreed upon timetable. Based on previous consultations between the two delegations and the request to the U.S. Congress for additional funds for this purpose, we have divided this process into two major segments, Phase I, which will begin when the MDL approves the draft status agreement and Phase II which begins with the installation of a new Government of the Northern Marianas and terminates with the ending of the Trusteeship.

As I noted during the third round the essence of the U.S. approach to Phase I of transition is that it is a joint approach in order to assure that the policy guidelines and activities undertaken during this period conform with the draft status agreement.

Since the adoption of the Ad-Hoc Committee's Report on Transition last May, we have made some progress toward the realization

of the objectives and program recommended by this report.

I have in mind particularly the petition of the MDL calling for the separate administration of the Marianas Districts; the unanimity of this vote was especially reassuring to us and in informal discussions with your Chairman and Vice-Chairman in Hawaii, last October, we agreed to consult on what should be done in response to this request. We have some specific ideas and suggestions on this particular issue which I intend to table later.

As to the crucial matter of the financing of the Phase I of the Transition Program, I can only say that we have made a strong recommendation to the Congress for \$1.5 million as part of the FY 75 program for the TT but that no action since the formal hearings in October has been taken. It is my hope that the new Congress will get to this as a matter of priority if the current session fails to pass the necessary legislation. You may be sure that we will do all that we can to expedite this matter, the success of which you all realize is directly dependent on progress achieved during this session.

The report of the Ad-Hoc Preparatory Committee on Transition in the Marianas lists the following major prerequisites to the attainment of self-government in the Northern Marianas:

1. The completion of studies and plans for the convening of a Marianas Constitutional Convention;
2. The completion of research and planning regarding the organization of a new Government of the Northern Marianas;

3. Review of U.S. programs and services of potential value to the new Commonwealth Government;

4. Completion of extensive economic and social infrastructure planning to enable the new government to establish goals and set policies in this area; this would include related fiscal and revenue planning and physical planning;

5. The conduct of special impact studies relating to the impact of the relocation of the capital of the TTPI and requisite training of personnel for the new government;

6. The establishment of a Joint Commission on Transition and a Transition Secretariat;

7. The early implementation of a joint program of political education throughout the district;

8. The election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention;

9. The holding of a U.N. supervised status plebiscite--an act of self-determination by all eligible residents of the district;

10. A constitutional referendum--vote of all eligible persons on the acceptability of the proposed new constitution of the Marianas Commonwealth; and

11. Election of a new government, chief executive and legislature, of the new government and its investiture under the Trusteeship.

The precise timing of these events has yet to be determined. For planning purposes, however, the following schedule based on recent informal discussion in Hawaii, with your Chairman and Vice-Chairman is suggested:

1. January-February 1975 - Final negotiating session, Round Six, and signing of the draft status agreement.

2. February-March 1975 - MDL approval of the draft agreement; Phase I of Transition begins.

3. February-March 1975 - Organization of Transition Commission and Secretariat and initiation of an intensive program of political education.

4. May 1975 - Election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention.

5. June or early July 1975 - Status plebiscite and establishment of separate administration over the Northern Marianas.

6. Spring 1976 - Popular referendum on proposed constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

7. June 1976 - Election of the new Government of the Northern Marianas; and

8. July 1976 - Installation of the new government and initiation of Phase II of the transition period.

Special measures or problems and Actions which might be taken between now and the signing of the agreement

The U.S. believes that there are a number of things that can and should be done during the next few weeks to ensure the

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realization of the above schedule. In particular, we would be prepared to join with you in asking the HICOM to initiate actions preliminary to the establishment of a separate administration for the Mariana Islands District under the Trusteeship, such as (1) staff studies regarding the personnel requirements and logistical support of the new Marianas District Government and necessary training programs; (2) the initiation of discussions regarding the sharing of resources between the TT Headquarters and the District during Phase I, (3) a joint study of voter qualifications for the election of constitutional delegates and a status plebiscite in 1975; i.e., who should be permitted to participate in the final votes regarding the future political status, structure of government and political leadership of the new Commonwealth; (4) How should the new ESG program be structured and who should be responsible for what; (5) who should serve on the Joint Secretariat and what should be its priorities once it is established? With regard to the latter, I am handing out a short paper on what might be done to expedite matters.

To move forward in these areas I propose that a special Committee be created to work on these and related problems until the Joint Commission is organized and its Secretariat can begin to function.

This interim committee should include select members of both delegations and appropriate representatives of the TT Administration and the District Government. I would hope that we can agree on its members and main tasks before this session ends.

In short, I believe that a great deal can be done to facilitate

the work of the Transition Commission and its Secretariat before the U.S. Congress appropriates additional money for the purposes outlined in the Ad-Hoc Committee's report.

If you agree, I suggest that we meet.....to agree on a work program on these and related tasks, including a division of labor, to cover the period between the end of this formal round and the convening of the formal beginning of Phase I.

JOINT TRANSITION SECRETARIAT

Background

One of the prerequisites to the organization of a Government of the Northern Marianas, under the U.N. Trusteeship, is the establishment of the Joint Commission on Transition and its Secretariat.

It is assumed that the MPSC is as anxious as we are to move forward in this area and will therefore wish to discuss prospects and problems during next month's session.

Critical to this is the availability and selection of qualified personnel for the Secretariat, which in turn depends upon favorable action on our request from the U.S. Congress for \$1.5 million to support it and its agreed activities.

Timing

As noted above, the recruiting of professionals for the Secretariat cannot be consummated until additional monies for this purpose are made available in the FY 1975 appropriation. However, we can attempt to line up the requisite talent before the funds are voted, on the understanding that no final commitment can be made until the Congress acts. Also, we can move ahead with the organization of the Transition Commission as soon as the agreement is initialed; however, it cannot really begin to function seriously until the Secretariat is operational.

Between December 20 and the date additional funds are made available and the agreement is initialed the following steps are proposed:

1. That the MPSC conduct a survey of available talent for their slots on the Secretariat--the Director, Physical planner and Liaison Officer; and

2. That the U.S. (OMSN supported by Interior) ascertain the availability of qualified U.S. candidates for the three U.S. slots--Deputy, Political Scientist expert in the field of public administration and Development Economist--we could do this by advertising through the normal ec channels or more informally by placing notices in professional publications and contacting appropriate Washington personnel officers, e.g., the Placement Service of the Department of State and AID. The latter, coupled with a discreet search of CCC files, e.g., the Executive Inventory is recommended.

3. The next step would be to screen the written applications and conduct a series of interviews of leading prospects here and on the west coast--narrow the list to a score of those who appear to be best qualified and most likely to work harmoniously and effectively in the Marianas political environment.

4. Informal agreements regarding salary, timing, etc., could then be made with the three selected. Formal commitments can be made as soon as the U.S. Congress votes the necessary funds and the status agreement is approved by the MDL.

5. That the TT Headquarters (HICOM) and DOTA complete all necessary staff work for the establishment of a separate administration for the Northern Marianas and initiate preliminary analyses of the local impact of relocating the capital, the latter in cooperation with local officials designated by the MPSC. Note:

Headquarters staff has already recommended the establishment of a TT Headquarters Task Force headed by Pete Coleman to grapple with this problem.

5. If all goes well, the Secretariat should be staffed and in place by no later than April 1, 1975.

An organizational meeting of the Joint Commission could be scheduled for March 1975; hopefully this meeting would produce some general policy guidelines for the Secretariat. These could be worked out by the leaders of the two delegations in advance.

Detailed Budget

A more detailed budget for FY 75 & 76 needs to be worked out with DOTA, based on consultation with key staff from the Headquarters, e.g., Pete Coleman. One of the major factors here is the cost of housing and dependent education for the expatriate staff and refined cost estimates of the several special activities referred to in the Ad-hoc report, e.g., holding of a District CON CON, a plebiscite, ESG program, etc. However, a final budget for the first year of the Secretariat cannot be drafted until the Joint Commission approves the research or study program submitted by the Secretariat, e.g., the contract costs of preliminary studies for the long-range program of economic development and the socio-economic impact of moving the capital to another district, etc.

Logistics

We should initiate informal discussions with Headquarters, through DOTA, on the best way to meet the major anticipated logistics needs of the Secretariat and the contract employees.

Adequate office space, secretaries, a library, etc., should be reserved prior to the arrival of the last U.S. member of the Secretariat.

Funding

While we may be able to find funds for an initial meeting of the Commission, recruiting expenses and some preliminary ESG work, not much more can be done in this area until the Congress votes the \$1.5 million. This in turn depends upon action by the authorization committees.