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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 covenant is signed, 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.

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- I wish to take particular note of the petition of the MDL calling for the separate administration of the Marianas District. 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 the \$1.5 million is included in the FY 75 authorization bill now before Congress. I personally have made strong representations to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs as late as the end of November in an attempt to have the funds authorized.
 - It is my hope that the Congress will get to this as a matter of priority in the current session, but if this is not possible due to various reasons beyond my control I will continue my efforts with increased vigor and determination to expedite this matter early on in the session of the new Congress next January, 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 establishment of a Joint Commission on Transition and a Transition Secretariat;

2. The early implementation throughout the district of a joint program of public education on political status.
 3. The holding of a U.N.-observed status plebiscite--an act of self-determination by all eligible residents of the district;
 4. The election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention;
 5. The completion of studies and plans for the convening of a Marianas Constitutional Convention;
 6. A constitutional referendum--vote of all eligible persons on the acceptability of the proposed new constitution of the Marianas Commonwealth;
 7. The completion of research and planning regarding the organization of a new Government of the Northern Marianas;
 8. Review of U. S. programs and services of potential value to the new Commonwealth Government;
 9. 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;
 10. 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; and
 11. Election of a new government, chief executive and legislature, 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 the progress of negotiations to date is suggested:

1. March 1975 - Final negotiating session and signing of Covenant
2. March 1975 - Phase I of Transition begins
3. January-March 1975 - Organization of Transition Commission and Secretariat; establishment of qualifications and identification of individuals for the Joint Secretariat.
4. March-June 1975 - Initiation of intensive public education program on political status.
5. April 1975 - Establishment of Joint Secretariat
6. Late June or early July 1975 - Status plebiscite with UN presence.
7. Establishment of separate administration over the Northern Marianas.
8. September 1975 - Constitutional Convention.
9. Spring 1976 - Popular referendum on proposed constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.
10. June 1976 - Election of the new Government of the Northern Marianas;
- and 11. 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 covenant.

-- 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 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 staff studies regarding the personnel requirements and logistical support of the new Marianas District Government and necessary training programs.

- The initiation of discussions regarding the sharing of resources between the TT Headquarters and the District during Phase I.
- A joint study of voter qualifications for the election of constitutional delegates and a status plebiscite in 1975; ie., who will be eligible to participate in the final votes regarding the future political status, structure of government and political leadership of the new Commonwealth.
- We would also welcome your views on:
 - How the new ESG program should be structured and who should be responsible for what.
 - 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.