



OFFICE OF MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

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for Micronesian Status Negotiations

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MICRONESIA AND FRAGMENTATION

Issues

1. Has the fragmentation momentum in Micronesia reached such magnitude as to require a U.S. policy decision?
2. Is the fragmentation process in Micronesia inevitable?
3. Is it in the interests of the United States to permit or encourage fragmentation of Micronesia's five remaining districts?
4. If not, should the United States actively block further fragmentation?

Background

Historically, Micronesia has been divided and divisive. This has been due partly to the natural ethnic and linguistic diversity (over 9 separate languages) and partly to the vast expanse of ocean surrounding the islands which isolates the diverse cultures. In no small measure this diversity has been retained by lingering cultural perspectives that emphasize island identification and the closed extended family system. Despite improved outer-island contact through transportation and communication, there is today little political (i.e. district legislature), economic, or social inter-action between districts. Today, one finds that local perspectives are almost as rigidly held by the separate ethnic groups as they were a hundred years ago. Within a district cultural grouping and even on any given island, these perspectives are reflected in a:

1. reluctance to marry "off-islanders";
2. closed ethnic system which discourages, and in cases prohibits, "off-islanders" from engaging in local business ventures;

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3. local discrimination in social and political affairs against "non-local natives"; and
4. prejudicial and chauvinistic attitude towards non-local customary practices and values.

It is these local perspectives and attitudes which still predominate at all strata of Micronesian society. Among the more popular items of gossip and local beliefs are the following:

1. the Palauans are pushy and competitive, their cuisine includes sea slugs and they are looked down upon because they are too dark skinned;
2. the Yapese are usually ignored because they are too primitive and unsophisticated, they chew betel nuts and are half-dressed;
3. the Chamorros are resented for having sold out their Micronesian culture, they are held at arms length because of their passionate outbursts and ill temper;
4. the Trukese are viewed with suspicion because of their vicious attitudes, their diet supposedly includes termite slugs;
5. the Ponapeans are thought to be lazy and interested only in furthering their personal pleasures; and lastly
6. the Marshallese are thought to be jovial but far too economically powerful and too self-centered to be trusted.

Outer islanders of each district are regarded as inferior by the major atoll natives; they are considered children, naive and simple. Because they were subjugated by prior conquests they are considered to still owe traditional obligations to the major atoll natives amounting to what we consider servitude.

The older generation is separated from the younger, American educated generation and they still retain the strength of these cultural prejudices. The younger generation while still owing extended family and cultural obligations of respect and obedience has had the opportunity to form new perspectives as a consequence of greater interaction with Micronesians from other districts at school and training centers. Yet, there is still friction and rivalry between youths of the districts now in attendance at schools like the Micronesian Occupation Center, the Community College of Micronesia, and similar central training centers that reflect the strength and durability of cultural prejudices. Open confrontation between locals and off-islanders is not uncommon and in some instances this has resulted in homicide and other hostile acts, with the ultimate consequence of heightening local tension between competing ethnic groups within a district.

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The districts having the most disturbances are Saipan and Palau, and to a lesser extent; Truk and Ponape.

Growing insecurity about individual and extended family economic fortune, loss of cultural values and behavioral guideposts, and local roles in a new government of Micronesia reinforce a growing tendency for Micronesian cultures to look "inward", to promote and protect local cultural values, perspectives, and political power on the local scene and vis-a-vis the other districts, and to heighten discriminatory practices against "non-island" peoples and interests present within the district.

The Japanese made one contribution to these cultural distortions and resentments during their mandate era by having Chamorros enforce their administrative policies. The Chamorros were consequently resented in their roles as policemen and administration personnel in each of the districts. The Palauans and Trukese, while apparently not as fully in the confidence of the Japanese, were given increasing opportunities to better themselves through schooling in Japan, by integrating themselves in the Japanese administration and by ingratiating themselves to Japanese businessmen where local island natives refused to cooperate, traditional rivals and lower caste individuals were used to further Japanese interests. A good example of this was on Yap, where outer-islanders, traditional slaves of the Yapese, were protected against demands for performance of traditional obligations by the Yapese and were brought to the Yap islands to undertake tasks refused by the Yapese. The practices of utilizing traditional rivals and antagonists to undermine local interests are still remembered by the Micronesians and resentment still remains, not necessarily against the Japanese, however, but against those Micronesians who participated in furthering Japanese interests that often conflicted with local attitudes and values. It is too early to tell whether U.S. Administrative practices lend themselves to a similar reaction among the natives in the districts, but the U.S. has at least attempted to recognize local interests, to consult with local leaders, and to refrain from direct interference in local values and customary practices.

Yet, in recognizing growing Micronesian political maturity through policies of decentralization and Micronization of the administration of the TTPI, the U.S. Government has made its own contribution to fragmentation. These policies have permitted local views to openly surface and challenge policy of the central government, especially where these policies do not take into account local conditions or attitudes. Currently, local administrations are being forced to share more power with, or at a minimum to consider, local power groups which have their own perspectives of local economic and social objectives that do not parallel Micronesian unity. As new opportunities arise for increasing local economic or political strength, local power groups will push for a larger, more influential role, albeit that individual opportunities often are in the forefront of such moves.

Thus, fragmentation is as much a consequence of historical cultural attitudes as it is a result of growing insecurity about the future political and economic roles of the peoples of Micronesia. These two forces combine to generate a new "national", or perhaps more descriptive - a new "district", attitude that continues to push local issues to the forefront of local concern while at the same time undermining Micronesian unity. The greater the insecurity about the future, the larger the momentum for fragmentation becomes.

I. Discussion

1. Has the fragmentation momentum in Micronesia reached such magnitude as to require a U.S. policy decision?

The factors outlined in the Background section underlie recent political and social movements by individual ethnic groups towards further fragmentation. The factors contributing to fragmentation have reached a level that warrants a new, refined U.S. policy decision on future courses of U.S. action both in future status negotiations and in the administration of the TTPI until the Trusteeship is terminated.

The separate political status talks between the Mariana Islands district and the United States has focused new attention on the desirability of promoting strictly local interests. These talks were no doubt anticipated by the political elite of Micronesia. However, these leaders have worked hard in private and public forums to block the Marianas separatism. It can be expected that overtures by the Congress of Micronesia (COM) will be made to the Marianas leadership to persuade them to terminate their separate status talks and remain with the larger Micronesian political family. Failing this, the COM may initiate legislative or legal action to test the legal basis for separate Marianas negotiations. Nevertheless, the separate talks have generated sufficient interest for other local districts to examine their own future in the Micronesian political family. The failure of the COM to prevent or frustrate separate negotiations may convince other interested districts that they may be successful should they pursue their own status objectives separately.

On this regard, the Marshall Islands District Legislature has already created its own political status commission. It has not yet pursued separate talks, but has informally sounded out the U.S. on whether it would be receptive to this move; the U.S. declined. The Marshall Islands decision arose primarily over a dispute with the COM on the distribution of revenues owed the COM but collected locally. The Marshalls have threatened the COM that it will formally initiate their own status talks if the COM fails to allocate at least 50% of all locally collected revenues to the district from which they were derived. A bill to effect this desired revenue sharing has been introduced in the 1974 COM session. While the Marshallese leadership, particularly Amata Kabua, has in the past expressed their desire to affiliate with Nauru

and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, it was only recently confirmed that these desires were more than speculation. It is noteworthy that the Prime Minister of Nauru is a close relative of Kabua and their business relationship over the past two years has grown. However, personal relationships between the two are not cordial. Nauru has now established or is seeking to establish air and sea commerce ties with the Marshalls as well as local business ventures in trade and wholesaling. Senator Olympia Borja recently reported that the Marshalls were serious in seeking separate status negotiations should they fail in their revenue sharing proposal, and the Marshalls may, but not necessarily, want negotiations with the United States. Such a request may be forwarded to the U.S. during or at the close of this January COM session, depending on COM receptivity to revenue sharing proposals of the Marshall Islands leadership. The seriousness of such a request is still questionable, however, as it may remain as an attempt to bluff the COM into adopting their revenue sharing position.

On the other extreme of Micronesia, Palau has continued to maintain and strength informal social and economic ties with their former administering authority, Japan. Most recently, the Palau district legislature requested Japanese assistance in road construction and also received assurances of financing for construction of the Babelthau-Koror Bridge from private Japanese businessmen. Japanese economic penetration into the district is extensive at all levels - marine resources, wholesaling and retailing and construction, and the local and Congressional leadership frequently serves to make these investments possible. This penetration may expand as a result of the new U.S. foreign investment policy. Frequent visits are also made by the Reklai and Ibedul, as well as COM and district leaders, to Japan for undisclosed reasons. More recently, liberal Diet members in Japan have made direct overtures to the traditional Palauan leadership; they have also voiced their desire for the Government of Japan to take a more active interest in Palau and Micronesia, especially as relates to war claims. Following the Marshall example, the Palau District Legislature created a separate status commission in 1972, and empowered it to examine Palau's role in a future Government of Micronesia and to examine other governmental systems in the South Pacific and East Asian areas. The group was led by Senator Tmetchul, a leader for Micronesian (and more recently Palauan) independence. The report of that group has not been publicly released, but reliable information indicates that local political groups may attempt to use the commission as a vehicle to (1) insure a prominent position in the future political power structure of Micronesia, or failing to assure such a role, to (2) press for a loose confederation of semi-autonomous entities with a weak central government of structure so as to enable each district, to exert maximum local self-government. It is not inconceivable that the new Palauan leadership could use the Palau commission as a vehicle for encouraging independence, or at least the promotion of purely local interests, after termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. The local political and economic power groups in Palau are particularly interested in strengthening ties with the Japanese and in protecting new roles in Palauan business and political circles.

At the geographic center of Micronesia, Truk

is the center of the Micronesian independence movement. Truk has consistently maintained powerful, sophisticated Micronesian leadership in the COM, which decisively influences all major COM legislation. The high population of this district insures a predominance of power in the future Government of Micronesia. Truk, however, has yet to openly address its role in the future Government of Micronesia, although it does favor Micronesian unity and a strong central government presumably because it believes it could dominate its activities. Internal political rivalries appear to have the attention of the local people, and factions of the independence movement are making a strong bid to retain their power in light of new challenges from commonwealth and free association advocates. Much of this conflict derives from traditional power conflicts and is yet to be resolved. Privately, local Trukese leadership seems assured of favorable treatment for Truk through continued economic development and through local ties with prominent Japanese business leaders. If fragmentation gains momentum Truk may shift dramatically towards whatever status best protects local power groups. This in turn would make unity difficult for Micronesia.

Yap and Ponape appear to be undergoing their own local internal reassessment of their political futures. Both districts still retain strong vestiges of cultural power and influence and both recognize their potential loss of influence in a future Government of Micronesia that does not retain a strong central government with a balanced opportunity for participation in Micronesian affairs. Currently, the traditional leaders appear to be making moves to strengthen their control over local politics. This in turn strengthens advocates of strong district governments at the expense of a strong, unifying central government. At present these districts have only token political influence in the COM. These districts have made only a small contribution to the internal revenue collection system and their small population base insures only minimal representation in the COM. Thus, these two districts have serious disadvantages to overcome if they are to effectively promote their interests in a future Government of Micronesia. They do not hold the same potential for economic growth as the other districts and for diverse reasons are not amenable to exploitation of their natural resources. Yap cultural perspectives preclude tourist development which is Yap's only major potential area for growth owing to the lack of abundant arable land and marine resources. Aside from internal separatist moves (Kusaie), the Ponapean leadership is currently locked into extended debate between traditional leaders and the district leadership. Economically, Ponape has agricultural and tourist potential but is too remote from market sources for realization of full economic development. Yap and Ponape may determine that fragmentation is desirable if they become convinced that the more populous centers (Truk, Marshalls, and Palau) will not accord them ample protections against political abuse and will not permit equal access to the policy making process or to GOM revenues. The greater their uncertainty about their roles, the greater potential for local interests to dominate political issues at the expense of their unity with the other districts. If the COM or the future Constitutional Convention does not allay these fears, these two districts may opt for their own status talks with the United States for assurances of continued growth and development, although they would prefer to remain associated to some degree with the Micronesian political family.

Thus, it appears that there is a growing nationalistic process in each of the districts. These are self-generating and while each is perpetuated to various degrees by historical perspectives of one another, recent trends in promoting local political, social, and economic objectives add momentum to fragmentation. Given the current political atmosphere and developments arising from separate status negotiations with the Mariana Islands and from increasing rivalry between the districts as a consequence of TTPI decentralization and Micronization policies, it would appear that the fragmentation process warrants a U.S. policy determination on how best to approach the issues involved and how best to protect U.S. interests in Micronesia.

2. Is the fragmentation process in Micronesia inevitable?

Before fragmentation can be properly assessed, it is necessary to identify those factors that underlie Micronesian unity and test them against the historical movements towards fragmentation. Among the most prominent unification factors are:

- (1) Treatment as a unified entity under prior and current administrations;
- (2) A common language and new value system;
- (3) Unified objectives toward terminating the third power dominance and control over local matters;
- (4) Common infrastructure facilities and requirements;
- (5) Rising expectations and standards of living that are becoming more common and similar to all the districts;
- (6) A decided lack of natural resources; and
- (7) Relative "national" weakness vis-a-vis other Pacific island and national states (i.e. Japan, the Philippines).

For the past three generations, Micronesians have lived under an omnipresent central authority -- first the Spanish, then the Germans who were followed by the Japanese and today the Americans. This central, foreign authority has been able to channel and control most major Micronesian activities, especially as they relate to implementing objectives in administration, development, communications and transportation that are undertaken by the central authority. However, none of these central powers has been able to effectively penetrate the traditional family and caste systems in Micronesia so as to redirect local loyalties and obedience structures to full support of policies of the central authority. This is especially true as they may effect life styles and values at the village and family level. Indirect penetration through economic development and public school

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education has been made but this has only disrupted the local village systems and has disoriented perspectives. This, in turn, has alienated local villagers against the policies of the central government. In the final analysis, foreign authorities have had few lasting effects on local village perspectives that relate to island or Micronesian-wide objectives and goals. This same failure is reflected in the retention of the nine (or 14, if dialects are included) diverse Micronesian languages although each central authority has seen fit to provide formal training in its own language and to utilize its own language for effecting its administration over the islands. It is true that these "foreign" languages serve as the one common "lingua franca" and facilitates direct communication between the people of the several districts.

What has happened as a consequence of the foreign administration, is a unification of the Micronesian cultures against foreign domination primarily because of the failure of each cultural group to control its own destiny. The COM has attempted to utilize the concept of the "foreign devil" to forge support for COM policies at variance with those of the TTPI administration. In many areas it has been fairly successful, especially as relates to the CIP programs and administrative personnel policies. While each district has a common need for economic infrastructure, each district has its own identifiable priorities within the CIP framework that result in direct competition for funds from the U.S., i.e. a hospital for Ponape versus roads for Palau, a dock for Yap versus an airfield for Kusaie. Within each district there is also a rising level of expectations that makes more demands of the foreign administration; when the administration fails to meet these expectation, the Micronesian grow in dissatisfaction against administration objectives and policies. More and more, the COM and district leadership turn to examining development policies in other Pacific island states, and while they recognize that similar programs could be implemented by the TTPI, they do recognize their own relative weaknesses in comparison to these island nations. Micronesia, unlike other island areas, has no readily exploitable resources from which they could become economically self-sufficient to sustain current living standards and to meet current expectations. By realizing their own inherent weaknesses and their need for continued reliance on outside powers, the Micronesians have added to their own frustration of not being in full control of their futures and destiny.

While a natural fragmentation process in Micronesia appears well established, the COM continues to play a determinative role in whether the momentum behind fragmentation will become uncontrollable. The COM has become the central forum for the new Micronesian political and economic elite and they have become increasingly more identified with local interests while professing Micronesian "unity". Any decisive move towards fragmentation by the key COM leadership in the 1974 session of the Congress (as a consequence of local pressures, or otherwise) would lead to quick moves by several districts to further their separate status objectives and could lead to rapid disintegration of what little political and economic cohesiveness that remains. At this juncture of Micronesian development, most Micronesian unity is a consequence of the U.S. presence and enforced control over the central government.

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To illustrate the pressures for fragmentation in the COM, it should be noted the COM will be confronted by highly sensitive issues this January session. Among those issues are: (1) transfer of public lands; (2) distribution of COM revenues; (3) Marianas separatism; (4) the GOM constitutional convention; (5) chartering district governments and establishing more self-government (for the central vs the district governments); (6) review of the Seventh Round of status talks and policy decisions regarding future talks; and (7) foreign investment. These topics may result in such pressures on the COM from the district levels to protect local interests that the broader more unifying objectives may be lost. Similarly, failure by the COM to protect local interests may convince the district leaderships of the bias and impotence of the COM and may result in actions by the district leadership to continue to strengthen local initiatives and interests despite COM objectives.

The transfer of public lands to Micronesian control will undoubtedly serve to exemplify the diverse Micronesian approaches and objectives to each district leadership. This new awareness could add to the fragmentation process if the COM does not enact the appropriate legislation to satisfactorily meet local demands. The distribution of revenues will serve to illustrate the inequitable use of revenues and the comparative contribution each district makes towards the central government. These issues should demonstrate the relative district strengths and weaknesses especially in light of COM statements for a self-sufficient GOM and may reinforce local insecurities about their future roles in the GOM. Each district may move to preserve the status quo to protect a continuance of influence in policy determination and flow of COM revenues for local projects, which in turn would force the Marshall Islands to take steps to protect its revenue sources and to seek separate status talks.

The COM constitutional convention will be the first instance where all local traditional leaderships will gather to express their plans for a future GOM. This exposure to diverse and divergent objectives could reawaken historical cultural suspicions and antagonisms. This could further fragmentation by insistence upon a "federation" of semi-autonomous Micronesian political entities. Because Micronesia works on a consensus system for resolving outstanding issues, each district will be asking others to make concessions in its interests. Yet, each will be asked to make concession for the preservation of Micronesian unity. The failure to identify a sufficient number of common interests among the districts and the failure to fashion a sufficiently flexible but cohesive central structure may make Micronesian unity impossible at this time. At the same time, the COM is attempting to require that the Micronesian constitution be formulated to meet Micronesian requirements and that the status agreement then conform to the Micronesian constitution.

Marianas separatism is uniformly opposed in the COM, but impotent action by the COM to prevent or blunt this move may reassure other similar minded districts of their own ability to engage in separate status talks.

The opening of Micronesia to foreign investment may result in increasing competition between districts for this new source of capital. It may also contribute to increasing local competition, to widening the gap between rich and poor, and to local disenchantment and disorientation as foreign investment reduces local competition and increases local dependency on foreign capital for employment. This could result in moves by non-elitist local groups to preserve local interests. Foreign investors will inevitably strive to ensure local stability for their capital investments by exerting increased influence over local power groups. This could in turn increase local nationalistic pressures and attention to matters of purely local concern.

Added to this factor is the increasing tendency of the COM to politicize issues and to force the TTPI administration to either acquiesce to the COM and lose further influence and initiative over Micronesian issues and actions, or to confront the COM on these issues, but on grounds established by the COM. This confrontation approach has been utilized by the COM in the past to gain time and leverage vis-a-vis the TTPI administration and to redirect local pressures from the COM to the administering authority. It has also served to "unify" Micronesia against a common enemy. If local pressures on the COM on key topics listed above prove unbearable, the COM may again choose to politicize the issues. This could result in forcing the TTPI to adopt actions that add to the fragmentation momentum by alienating local districts. Considering the diversity of local interests involved in each issue, it would appear that the TTPI would find it difficult to find a solution to accommodate all interests. It could result in local leaderships moving to protect strictly local interests outside the COM framework.

The intensity of the fragmentation momentum is also related to the disenchantment with local conditions - economic, social and political. From the Micronesian view, these conditions have been purposely fostered by the TTPI through its administrative policies and personnel so as to keep Micronesia dependent on the U.S. The growing Micronesian insecurity complex continues to contribute to a suspicion that U.S. policy is designed to promote Micronesian disunity and undermine self-sufficiency. Conversely, each advancement in the political, economic or social life of Micronesia is viewed with suspicion as an attempt by the U.S. to implant American values and standards on the Micronesian people. The more complex these issues become the greater the disorientation and frustration at local levels. This can but only add to local moves to strengthen local culture and traditional values and objectives at the expense of the larger issue of Micronesian unity.

Additionally, local status commissions will continue to serve multi-functional purposes apart from status issues. These commissions serve as a focal point for nationalistic-minded groups and as a source for diverting attention away from other controversial issues in the district legislatures.

They permit local leaders to enhance their prestige and visibility among the local population. The commissions could serve as levers with the district administration of the TTPI by serving as a reminder of potential separatism from the Micronesian political family. It does not appear likely these commissions will be dissolved in the near foreseeable future as their existence serves several purposes and evidences local concerns about the districts' role in the future GOM.

The momentum towards Micronesia fragmentation appears to be at a crucial stage. Should the COM fail to play a decisive role to assuage local fears, should the Constitutional Convention in establishing the future GOM structure fail to provide sufficient cohesiveness, and should local concerns and ethnic pride continue to grow, then fragmentation may grow with its own uncontrolled momentum. There appears to be little the U.S. or TTPI could do to blunt this movement.

3. Is it in the interests of the United States to permit or encourage fragmentation of Micronesia's five remaining districts?

In addressing this issue, it is essential to determine whether U.S. objectives can be met under fragmentation.

- A. Continued ability to deny access to Micronesia by foreign powers for military purposes..

Fragmentation of Micronesia into separate political entities could result in some districts opting for an independent status (Palau and/or Truk) or some districts seeking political relationships with other foreign powers (Palau and/or Truk with Japan; the Marshall Islands with Nauru and/or the Gilbert Islands). This strategic objective would not therefore be met unless the United States obtained the assurances of those districts that the areas would not be open to military forces of foreign powers. This might be accomplished after the end of the Trusteeship: (1) by a separate defense treaty or agreement with each district; (2) by unilateral declaration and enforcement of the U.S. objective; (3) by joint agreement with the districts or the U.N. establishing those areas as "neutral"; or (4) by agreement with the foreign powers with which the districts will be associated that the areas will be utilized only for non-military purposes. Those districts most likely to opt for independence or association with other foreign powers have informally endorsed a neutrality status for Micronesia, and have also recognized that the introduction of foreign military forces could lead to a confrontation in which the local district will exert little or no control, a poignant reminder of the consequences of World War II which they wish to avoid.

- B. Continued access to the military facilities on Kwajalein Atoll.

The Marshall Islands District derives over 95% of all local revenues from U.S. activities on Kwajalein Atoll. It is unlikely that the district will precipitate action to interrupt this flow of revenue. It is a more likely consequence that the Marshall Islands might seek methods to

insure the continued presence (perhaps enlarged) of the military in the district and to seek methods to increase local revenues from the activity by lease renegotiation and through increased local taxation. It is unlikely the local leadership would attempt to replace the U.S. presence with another foreign military power because of the ever present reminders of the effects of World War II on the islands and U.S. power.

C. An ability to project and support U.S. military power throughout the Western Pacific.

If the U.S. is assured of denial rights as postulated in (a) above, then this objective should seem no less attainable. The vast air-lift and fleet capacity of the U.S. should enable a continued protection of U.S. activities through and in this area if events so require. The requirements for a continued U.S. military presence would, of course, have to be met; these are set forth in the U.S. land requirements. U.S. land agreements would be met as a precondition to U.S. agreement to the status sought by the various districts. Since only the Marshall Islands and Palau are involved in these requirements, it should be assumed that the U.S. will meet no greater obstacles in negotiating land requirements under a separate status than is anticipated under a free association status. In essence, hostile activity against the U.S. in situations requiring U.S. presence in the area should be expected under any future political status if a foreign power determines it is essential to their objectives.

D. A stable, friendly, and peaceful Micronesia.

The future stability of Micronesia may be fostered by formation of a loose confederation of independent or semi-autonomous political entities. The highly complex demands of self-government may prove too difficult for a new GOM under a strong central government. Indeed, recent public positions by the leadership of the districts and of the COM indicate a desire to form a weak central government structure and strong local governments and a desire to form a Federated State of Micronesia. A federation of semi-independent entities would be a more clear and concise definition of what appears to be a growing consensus of Micronesian objectives.

The early intervening years after termination of the Trusteeship will no doubt witness a growing degree of local insecurity and ensuing nationalism by the individual districts to protect their interests. This would work against a closely unified Micronesian political family. On the other hand, fragmentation and separate status relationships would enable each group to establish the type of relationship with the U.S. which it perceives in its best interests. This would also remove the need to compromise local objectives for a unified GOM approach. This would provide a larger degree of security and stability for each district so as to enable it to approach a future GOM on more equal footings with other districts. This in turn should promote more internal harmony among the diverse districts and enable them to identify and promote common interests more readily.

- E. A continuing close and amicable relationship with Micronesia to protect U.S. interests elsewhere in the Pacific.

Consensus politics as practiced in Micronesia requires the compromise and sacrifice of some district interests to promote the continued harmony of all districts. Growing island identification and a desire to protect purely local interests as Micronesia moves toward more self-government will serve to make consensus government all the more difficult to maintain. Micronesia is less likely to maintain a continuing close and amicable relationship with the U.S. where the GOM is forced to take adverse positions vis-a-vis U.S. interests to promote and protect all the diverse interests of the separate district governments. The most recent example of this is found in the demand for the transfer of public lands as promoted first by the Palauan traditional leadership and subsequently endorsed by the JCFS which resulted in similar and often expanded demands by the remaining districts. Insofar as marine resources is concerned, the COM is promoting a 12-mile territorial limit based on an expanded archipelago theory, yet each district has its own concepts of what constitutes "district waters" and what local resources belong to the district. Since the U.S. LOS position will not accommodate the COM territorial views, the COM may attempt to impose its own territorial and resource zones. If this attempt proves futile, individual districts may establish their own territorial and resources zones. It is certain that each district will continue to control the exploitation of "district" resources. Local objectives in this area are not unified.

It is possible strong local interest-minded groups could exploit U.S. desires for continued Micronesian unity and harmony in much the same approach taken with regard to public lands, i.e., one district forcing the central GOM to confront the U.S. Government. The continued linking of purely local interests to status negotiations places the U.S. in a difficult position in trying to find one solution acceptable to all the diverse interest groups. If the U.S. or TIPI cannot continue to find acceptable solutions that accommodate all interests, those groups who believe their interests can best be met by unilateral action may pursue more independent approaches. This may undermine Micronesian unity.

Continued harmony and amicable relations between a future GOM and the U.S. would appear to be better insured by establishing stable, individual relationships with each district and by enabling these districts to then establish their own inter-relationships. This approach would nevertheless require patience and flexibility by the U.S. Government and an ability to maintain and identify sufficient common interests with all the districts to facilitate a uniform approach to satisfy U.S. interests.

- F. Satisfaction of U.S. objectives relating to termination of the Trusteeship Agreement.

The primary thrust of the Trusteeship obligations is to promote Micronesia toward self-government and self-sufficiency. Satisfaction of these obligations should be made by successful conclusion of political

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status negotiations or in the alternative promotion of self-government for Micronesia by the United States. The first, of course, is dependent in no small measure upon the willingness of the COM or the individual districts, with which we are or will be negotiating, to concur in the terms of their new political status and to be assured that their status objectives have been met. The second entails a re-organization of current administrative structures to facilitate final control over whatever Micronesian political, social, and economic initiatives may arise from a purely Micronesian internal government because current administrative structures (the TTPI and DOTA) often operate independently on one another and sometimes at cross-purposes. This approach would reduce COM incentives for a final settlement of their future political status because it would assure the COM of continued U.S. support and full control over policies affecting the internal government of Micronesia. Without some central office maintaining full responsibility and authority over all U.S.-GOM and GOM-foreign contacts, there can be no assurances that U.S. objectives in Micronesia can be protected. Furthermore, internal divisiveness within a future GOM that would not hold strong control authorities may so erode Micronesian unity that self-government could prove unworkable.

On the other hand, by permitting fragmentation, the U.S. would permit each district to more readily visualize and accommodate its own goals for self-government. The separate status relationships each district would negotiate could, in the final analysis, be a more true reflection of local desires and would receive the endorsement of the people in each district. This endorsement should satisfy the Trusteeship obligation to promote "self-government or independence as is appropriate to the circumstances" if there was some assurance the separate districts would reunite under some common political relationship, i.e., federation, as already espoused as the principal central government structure for Micronesia. It is nonetheless true that U.N. approval of separate status relationships would be difficult, especially in light of the U.N. desire for Micronesian unity. However, that position runs contra to some past Trusteeship experiences (British Cameroon and British Togoland) and to the U.N. Charter which propounds self-government and self-determination for dependent people. However, the U.S. Congress may have serious objections to such an approach unless it is clearly shown that future unity is impossible and that a U.S. attempt to force unity weakens U.S. interests in the area.

Among other factors to consider in determining whether it is in the interests of the U.S. to permit or encourage fragmentation of the five remaining districts is the complexity involved in conducting separate status talks simultaneously and the time factors required. Undoubtedly, simultaneous separate talks would delay termination of the Trusteeship agreement. However, fragmentation would permit the U.S. to encourage closer ties between the U.S. and some districts than that which is now contemplated under free association. It could also permit the more radical districts to promote their objectives but could enable the U.S. to confine those objectives within a relationship with the U.S. that assures complete satisfaction of the U.S. objectives. It would also permit the U.S. to take advantage of the delay to implement more productive development and political education programs.

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The overall objective in pursuing separate talks should be to defuse independence moves by districts and to fashion future political relationships that strengthen U.S. objectives in the Western Pacific. Hopefully, the separate talks would enable the districts to re-unite under more acceptable terms after individual objectives have been met and after individual fears have been allayed.

Fragmentation and separate political status talks with individual districts would be final acceptance by the U.S. that each district has its own separate political, economic and social goals and that each has, to no less degree than the Marianas, a right to pursue those objectives through separate political relationships. It would therefore appear that U.S. objectives and interests in Micronesia could be adequately met if fragmentation results in a multi-status situation; provided, however, that the U.S. could obtain adequate protection for its national interests by a defense treaty or agreement with the individual entities.

4. If fragmentation is not in the interests of the U.S., should the United States actively block further fragmentation momentum?

Fragmentation would not be in the best interests of the United States if U.S. objectives in Micronesia were not satisfied. However, it appears that these objectives could be satisfied, albeit through extended negotiation with the separate district entities. A more important issue is; if the fragmentation process is against the interest of the U.S., what could the United States do to successfully inhibit or block the movement?

The U.S. could, of course, refuse to undertake separate negotiations with any district. The U.S. could also dictate the precise future political status of Micronesia - one that would require the unity of the five remaining districts. While the Trusteeship Agreement could be used as the basis to block separatist movements, for all practical purposes, the U.S. could block a separatist move towards independence only by forceful U.S. intervention (and possibly occupation by military forces). However, any such U.S. reaction would be met by increased local animosity and would effectively abort any peaceful attempt to safeguard U.S. interests in that district.

Should a district undertake separate talks with other foreign nations, the U.S. could intervene politically by utilizing the Trusteeship mandates to persuade those nations to refuse separate talks. This approach, like direct intervention would certainly not work to establishing more cordial and stable relations between that district and the U.S. over the long-run as it may be viewed as an attempt by the U.S. to impose its own national objectives at the expense of the district aspirations. —

On the other hand, political repercussions would seem to prohibit active U.S. encouragement for fragmentation absent a request by a district for separate political negotiations with the United States. These repercussions would prohibit active U.S. action to block a natural course of fragmentation beyond a refusal to negotiate separately with other districts. It therefore appears appropriate for the U.S. to permit a natural course of fragmentation, but only after assuring that U.S. objectives can be met.

Conclusions

It would appear that the fragmentation process has become self-generating and an inevitable consequence of historical diversity between the various ethnic groups. Fragmentation appears to have little relationship to whether or not the individual districts are within a common political relationship with the United States. Indeed, the free association status relationship envisions that the internal affairs of Micronesia are strictly a Micronesian affairs, but was fashioned in contemplation that a unified Micronesia was in the best interests of both parties. This fact is no less true today; however, the fragmentation process negates that premise and therefore threatens the basis for free association. Moreover, it appears the U.S. could not successfully block fragmentation prior to termination of the Trusteeship other than by a U.S. refusal to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement if fragmentation occurs. A refusal by the U.S. to engage in other separate negotiations would only temporarily postpone full implementation of fragmentation. Furthermore, implementation of a political status agreement applicable to all the remaining districts would not in itself be successful to abort fragmentation. If fragmentation occurs after implementing the free association status, U.S. objectives and interests may be jeopardized unless the U.S. acts forcefully to safeguard those free association provisions relative to U.S. interests (Titles II and III). It is highly unlikely that such action could protect U.S. interests over the long term in the absence of other political ties to the district. The major issue appears to be - how to utilize fragmentation to the best interests of the United States.

Recommendations

1. The United States should not actively promote fragmentation. Such a move may be interpreted as a U.S. attempt to divide and weaken Micronesia to permit the United States to obtain its objectives and may be met with more radical moves by the COM and Micronesian leadership.

2. The United States should continue to emphasize the importance to Micronesia to remain united and should continue to promote those development projects and programs which while increasing the potentials for social, political, and economic development, contribute to greater inter-relationships between the districts (i.e. education, commerce, communications, fuel, etc.).
3. The United States should not rule out separate negotiations with other districts. However, a request from another district for separate negotiations should not be accepted at this time. Attempts should be made to persuade the district to attempt to resolve its disputes with the COM and other districts at the forthcoming Constitutional Convention.
4. If the Constitutional Convention does not then satisfy the district objectives and aspirations, then the U.S. should note it would sympathetically consider another request for separate negotiations. In undertaking separate status negotiations with individual districts, the U.S. should attempt to identify common Micronesian interests to permit a later federation of these entities into a single political relationship and to protect U.S. national interests in the area.
5. The United States should move decisively to block a district from declaring full independence and complete separation from the other districts prior to the termination of the Trusteeship. If hostility erupts, it should undertake direct intervention to protect American personnel and to establish order.
6. If Micronesia does not fragment after the Constitutional Convention, the U.S. should continue Free Association negotiations with the districts and should emphasize the common interests of Micronesia and the United States. Some attempt should be made to openly discuss fragmentation possibilities with the JCFS at the next round to indicate our concern for the survivability and viability of the U.S. relationship to the future COM.