

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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March 14, 1974

To: Ambassador F. Haydn Williams, The President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations

Thru: Captain Richard Y. Scott, Director, Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations

From: Barry Ballow, Public Affairs Advisor

Subj: Press Contacts in Honolulu

Your upcoming visit to Honolulu will no doubt be of interest to the Hawaiian press, most particularly to John Griffin, of the Honolulu Advertiser. Griffin has been following the progress of the status talks for some time and has produced about the only editorial commentary on the subject. His articles have generally been objective and have often given sympathetic treatment to our side of the story.

Griffin has asked to see you anytime you are in Honolulu - your time and schedule permitting - and will most likely be anxious to talk to you during next week's visit. Assuming this interest, I would like to recommend that you agree to meet with Griffin and give him a rundown on the current status of our negotiations with the JCFS and MPSC at the end of your sessions with Pangelinan. Such a meeting could go a long way toward reinforcing the positive relationship that we have had with Griffin and the Advertiser.

If you accept this recommendation, I would like to contact Griffin before you leave and advise him of your availability for an interview and confirm his interest. I think it would also be a good idea to let Bud Smyser, Editor of the Star-Bulletin know of your plans, although his interest in Micronesia doesn't appear as strong as Griffin's, his paper has also run some good editorial pieces (see attached).

Looking ahead a little, if the anticipated interview produces a good editorial, we could try getting a friendly member of Congress to insert it in the Congressional Record.

ATTACHMENT: Star-Bulletin Editorial

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Micronesia's Future

Negotiations over the future status of Micronesia, the United Nations trust islands in the Pacific, have taken a new turn.

It used to be that Micronesian leaders were pressing for an early settlement while the U.S. was holding back. Now it is the other way around.

The U.S. in the past year has shown itself ready to strike a deal, but the Micronesians now are maneuvering for more time.

SENATOR Lazarus Saliil, chief negotiator, seemed to have made a deal more than a year ago, but was asked by the Congress of Micronesia to go seek another. He was close to another agreement late last year when the Micronesians broke off the talks, claiming the U.S. was offering an inadequate future subsidy.

This month, Saliil suggested to the Congress of Micronesia what the real trouble may be. He said a general lack of political awareness still hampers the people of Micronesia from making a meaningful choice of a future political status.

America has indicated it is willing to help in that area, too.

Interior Secretary Rogers Morton in his Jan. 22 Message to Micronesia promised the U.S. will support both a Constitutional Convention and a greatly expanded program of education for self-government.

He spoke of the next three years as a decisive turning point in Micronesia's history, and implied a U.S. desire to see matters settled no later than that — meaning by the end of the Nixon administration.

Morton also offered to return public lands to control of the six local districts — the Marianas, Yap, Palau, Truk, Ponape and the Marshalls. And he said Micronesia can be opened to foreign business investment starting April 1, though the U.S. will still retain a case-by-case veto over the issuance of business permits.

"The right to self-determination is yours," Morton said in his message. At the moment America seems more active than Micronesia in pressing for the decision.

Sen. Saliil has responded by suggesting 1981 should be the target date for complete self-government in Micronesia in a phased movement from a constitution to be effective in 1977.