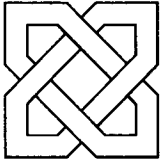


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Ad Hoc
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March 19, 1974



Mr. Howard P. Willens
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Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Howard:

Many thanks for sending the provocative material on the Marianas status issue. Unfortunately, its arrival coincided with a great amount of work in the office and preparations for travel which will have me on the road from March 15-April 7. Given limited time, then, I've focused on two major issues:

I. REBUTTAL OF ARGUMENTS IN THE CEIP DRAFT ON THE TTPI.

My monograph on Anguilla (which is relevant in several ways to the status issues confronting the Marianas) supported a very small (population 6,000) island's claims for separate status despite initial amalgamation with two other islands (St. Kitts and Nevis together comprising about 50,000) into a tri-island Associated State of Great Britain. I noted the effects amalgamation had already had on the Anguillians who were considerably different from their neighbors, the ways economic policies designed for the welfare of the State's majority were injuring Anguillians, and the danger that an unsympathetic majority on the other islands would likely take advantage of their superior numbers in determining future policies. I also noted that after a year of de facto independence, Anguillians showed themselves extremely resourceful in managing their own affairs and that certain indicia of sovereignty (especially coinage and philatelic sales) were open to Anguillians only because they were independent. You may recall that the British invaded Anguilla in 1969 ostensibly to force the island's re-entry into the three island State; within a year, however, the British concluded that Anguilla's secession deserved recognition and presently Anguilla maintains its separation from its overbearing neighbors under a modern version of Crown Colony status. The Anguilla case suggests to me that artificial amalgamation for post-colonial tidiness can be the worst solution to the problem of "national self-determination." Continued protection in defence and foreign affairs and a meaningful grant of independent local control over other matters can be just as feasible for an island of 6,000 people as it is for a group of islands comprising 60,000.

The CEIP draft relies on some interesting but by no means proven assertions that: (1) there is a principle to be maintained in granting independence and that requires a certain minimum size, (2) granting independent status to a part of a former colonial entity sets a bad precedence of secession for the remainder, and (3) severing the Marianas from the other four districts can make the rest less secure.

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I do not believe that there are rules which can be conveniently applied to such a situation. Rather, one must look at particular situations to gauge what is wise and feasible. The CEIP draft is greatly concerned with what would be administratively and politically convenient for the U.S. Given the apparent guarantees to U.S. security interests, administrative and political convenience for the U.S. does not seem more significant than establishing a viable status which will last. If the people of the Marianas genuinely harbor a desire for separate status, indeed, forcing amalgamation now is merely one way of assuring later problems.

I would think that careful study of the costs and benefits of amalgamation and separation still needs to be done. It may well be easier for two or more small entities to coexist than be amalgamated. This leads to the second question.

II. PROJECTS WHICH SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE OVERALL PLANNING EFFORT FOR DETERMINING THE MARIANAS' FUTURE STATUS.

Your list is quite comprehensive but does not indicate areas where the Marianas' ability at self-government can be tested. Obviously, a particular arrangement which reflects the political and administrative needs of such a small entity should be considered. I can think of two: (1) a semi-parliamentary system which would attach "ministerial" positions to elected representatives so that each leader would have a particular portfolio. (2) a very different scheme embodying "city manager" arrangements in the U.S. by which elected representatives would govern policies of a paid official. The latter might be particularly attractive as a means to provide professional management with accountability.

One of the most serious problems for such a small entity is attaining an adequate educational base for both citizenship and management. What are the educational resources presently available to people from the Marianas both on the island, in the TTPI, and elsewhere? How many of the people from the Marianas have college degrees?

Political transition to either amalgamation or separation will require some administrative experience. Are there presently ways that the islanders administer policies and what provisional arrangements might be made to add to their experience?

Intrigued by some of the issues, I may find some time in April to give you a more systematic approach to these questions. Regrettably, you've posed these issues at a time when I don't have much free time. But I would like to be kept in touch on your client's progress. I'll certainly let you know when next I'm due in Washington.

Cordially,



William J. Brisk
Director

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Dictated by William Brisk and signed in his absence.

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