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DEPT PASS INTERIOR, DOTA AND OMSN

ZINCPREP FOR STATUS LNO

S.O. 110321 GDS

TAGS: PFX, TC, UN

SUBJ: UN OBSERVED PLEBISCITE IN MARINAS

REF: STATE 7237

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY B.A. BAAS DATE 4/23/87

RDS or XDS EXT. DATE _____
 TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
 ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS
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1. LANGUAGE OF PLEBISCITE: AS DEPT IS AWARE, TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL (TC) AT ITS LAST SESSION RECOMMENDED THAT PEOPLE OF "MARINAS" HAVE POSSIBILITY OF CONSIDERING WHETHER THEY WISH TO PARTICIPATE WITH REST OF MICRONESIA IN FREE ASSOCIATION." THIS RECOMMENDATION HELPFUL TO US BECAUSE IT CLEAR INDICATION THAT TC NOT NECESSARILY OPPOSED TO SEPARATE STATUS FOR "MARINAS," FROM STANDPOINT OF WINNING TC ENDORSEMENT OF PLEBISCITE AS "MARINAS" "ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION", THEREFORE, IT DEFINITELY PREFERABLE FOR BALLOT TO PROVIDE VOTERS WITH CLEAR ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN A) COMMONWEALTH AND B) REMAINING WITH REST OF MICRONESIA.

2. A SIMPLE YES/NO FORMULATION ON THE BALLOT, AS DESIRED BY MARINAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION, WOULD MAKE TC ACCEPTANCE MORE QUESTIONABLE, IF, HOWEVER, THIS OPTION IS CHOSEN, IT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT THAT UN VISITING MISSION BE ABLE TO OBSERVE OBJECTIVE AND EXTENSIVE POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM WHICH A) OUTLINES ALL ALTERNATIVES CLEARLY; B) GIVES BOTH SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS OF COMMONWEALTH COMPACT EQUAL ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT RADIOS AND TO GOVERNMENT-OWNED TRANSPORTATION TO ISLANDS OTHER THAN SAIPAN; C) EXPLAINS CLEARLY THAT IF COMPACT APPROVED, MARINAS WOULD BE GIVEN SEPARATE ADMINISTRATIVE STATUS, WHILE IF COMPACT IS REJECTED, THEY WOULD REMAIN ADMINISTRATIVELY WITH OTHER DISTRICTS IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR FREE ASSOCIATION. THE LATTER SHOULD BE STATED BY TT OFFICIALS BEFORE VOTE, OBVIOUSLY SIZE OF TURNOUT AND PERCENTAGE OF VOTE FAVORING COMPACT WOULD ALSO HAVE MAJOR IMPACT ON VIEWS OF VISITING MISSION.

3. TIMING OF PLEBISCITE: WHILE TC NOW SCHEDULED TO BEGIN

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NEXT SESSION MAY 27, LENGTH OF SESSION STILL IN DOUBT, (IF PAPUA NEW GUINEA GAINS INDEPENDENCE BY MAY, SESSION WILL DELAY ONLY WITH TTPI AND COULD BE CONCLUDED IN TWO WEEKS,) IN ANY CASE, VISITING MISSION UNLIKELY TO REACH TTPI BEFORE EARLY JULY BECAUSE OF CUSTOMARY MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON AND HONOLULU EN ROUTE. FROM UN STANDPOINT THE LATER THE DATE THE BETTER,

4. TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL APPROVAL OF VISITING MISSION AS SOON AS MARIANAS COMPACT SIGNED. WE WOULD CONSULT WITH THE UK, FRANCE AND AUSTRALIA ON FORTHCOMING PLEBISCITE AND SEEK THEIR COOPERATION IN HAVING THE NEXT PERIODIC VISITING MISSION OBSERVE PLEBISCITE AS ONE OF ITS FUNCTIONS. EXACT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF VISITING MISSION MUST BE APPROVED BY TC IN FORM OF RESOLUTION. THEREFORE, BEFORE TC MEETS IN LATE MAY, WE WOULD NEGOTIATE INFORMALLY WITH IT WESTERN MEMBERS NECESSARY LANGUAGE AUTHORIZING MISSION OBSERVATION OF "ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION", AS WELL AS COMPOSITION AND TIMING OF MISSION.

5. TC AT ITS LAST SESSION WENT ON RECORD AS CALLING FOR SIMULTANEOUS HOLDING OF SEPARATE PLEBISCITES IN MARIANAS AND OTHER DISTRICTS OF MICRONESIA. TC ALSO ON RECORD AS RECOMMENDING THAT COM BE INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF MARIANAS FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS. THEREFORE, IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT COM AT LEAST ACCEPT TACITLY SCHEDULING OF PLEBISCITE IN MARIANAS AND THAT COM REPS ATTENDING NEXT TC SESSION NOT LOBBY STRONGLY AGAINST PLEBISCITE AND UN OBSERVATION OF IT. DETERMINED COM OPPOSITION MIGHT FORCE TC AT NEXT SESSION TO GO ON RECORD URGING THAT PLEBISCITE NOT BE HELD UNTIL CONCLUSION OF NEGOTIATIONS OVER FUTURE STATUS OF REST OF MICRONESIA AND TO BACK UP THIS RECOMMENDATION WITH REFUSAL TO AUTHORIZE OBSERVATION OF PLEBISCITE. IF MICRONESIAN POLITICIANS VOCIFEROUSLY TAKE ISSUE WITH MARIANAS PLEBISCITE BEFORE OR DURING NEXT TC SESSION, WE ARE IN FOR CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY AT THE UN.

6. FROM UN STANDPOINT, COMMONWEALTH STATUS FOR MARIANAS WILL REPRESENT TWO HISTORIC "FIRSTS". IT WILL BE FIRST TIME THAT TRUST TERRITORY OR PORTION THEREOF HAS OPTED TO JOIN WITH ADMINISTERING POWER AS WELL AS FIRST ADDITION TO U.S. TERRITORY SINCE ESTABLISHMENT OF UN. FURTHERMORE, IN APPROVING COMMONWEALTH, TC IN EFFECT WILL BE APPROVING "FRAGMENTATION" OF 5475 TERRITORY, WHICH GOES COUNTER TO UN PRINCIPLE OF PRESERVING UNITY OF DEPENDENT TERRITORIES. FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS, IN ORDER TO SECURE EVENTUAL TC AND SECURITY COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT OF MARIANAS NEW STATUS, IT MUST BE CLEAR BEYOND ANY DOUBT THAT PEOPLE OF MARIANAS, WHEN THEY VOTED, CHOSE AMONG ALL OPTIONS IN EXERCISING THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

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