

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

May 12, 1975

Memorandum

To: Acting Director, Office of Territorial Affairs

From: U.S. Deputy Representative for Micronesian Status

Subject: Our need to clarify some technical issues for the electorate in the June 17, 1975 plebiscite

I am informed that two rather technical matters were discussed during the last round of the status negotiations which could benefit from more complete information. If we can muster the necessary information, Ambassador Williams feels that it may be a good idea to publish the information in the form of a brochure prior to the plebiscite. The two issues are the federal programs to be made available to the Commonwealth by virtue of its association with the United States and the licensing of local professional people.

Regarding the issue of federal programs, we feel that it would be beneficial to explain what they are in a form comprehensible to most voters. There may be a beneficial impact in indicating the contrast between the extent of such programs in the Commonwealth and that in the remaining districts under the proposed Compact. One way is by organizing such information to describe it under the categories of (1) benefits to individuals, (2) benefits to the villages and municipalities and (3) benefits to the Marianas community at large.

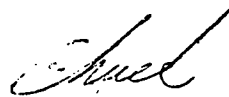
Respecting the second issue, local professional people have asked whether they will be able to continue their professions under the Commonwealth. As you know, there are many medical officers and nurses and local trial assistants and engineers that do not meet U.S. licensing standards but who do provide essential services needed and desired by local residents in the Mariana Islands. They are aware that under the Guam Organic Act of 1950, Guamanian medical officers and nurses not licensed in the U.S. were prohibited from practicing in local hospitals and they are therefore somewhat concerned a similar prohibition may be imposed against them under any new Commonwealth arrangement. A simple but precise explanation from the various interested agencies is needed to reassure these local professions that they will have the right to continue their professional careers. As I understand the problem, however, it is that, while the Commonwealth will

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be solely responsible for establishing local licensing criteria, it may well be that federal funds could not be granted to local programs employing local personnel not meeting U.S. licensing standards. If this is a correct statement of the problem, Ambassador Williams has suggested that it should be examined closely to assess its impact on the Commonwealth; and we should seek to put the best possible face on it in apprising the plebiscite voters.

Ambassador Williams has asked Adrian de Graffenried to be available to work with your office on these two issues. In light of the shortness of time remaining to us prior to the plebiscite, I would hope that we could give high priority to these matters.



Charles A. Schmitz