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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WASHINGTON, D. C. 20201

2 1 MAY 1976

MEMOPANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, NSC UNDER SECRETARIES COMMITTLE

SUBJECT: Future Political Status of Mi ronesia (U)

- (U) NSC-U/SM-86 Λ B of 30 April 1976 requested comments on a draft Memorandum for the President, instructions for Ambassador F. Haydn Williams, and an interagency study on the future political status of Micronesia.
- (S) In general, DDD concurs with the foregoing documents. However, I would like to emphasize two points of importance to this Department.
- From a national security perspective, the independence option is the least desirable of the three alternatives considered by the Interagency Group and reflected in the President's Negotiating Instructions. We concur very strongly that this option should be presented to the people of dicronesia only if there is clear and convincing evidence that they will not accept either commonwealth status or free association.
- Early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement is not listed as either a primary or secondary objective of the United States Government. We concur with this omission and further recommend that the United States Government remain deliberately vague on this issue until the future course of our negotiations with Micronesia becomes clear. In this regard, the Department of Defense could not support Micronesian independence, coupled with a firm commitment by the United States that it will terminate the Trusteeship Agreement by the end of 1981. The risks of an unstable Micronesia and an unsatisfactory treaty relationship would be too great.
- (U) Attached is the Department of Defense position on one issue which has not been resolved by the Interagency Group. I would like this position inserted in Chapter VIII of the Study, following the last paragraph on page 38.

Attachment

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SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
EXECUTIVE OFFICE TIGHT, AUTOMATICALLY DOWNSTATED
AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS, DECLASSIFIED ON 31 Dec 84

* Attachment to JCS 2326/101-49

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DOD Insert, Part VIII (Conclusions and Recommendations), Page 38

The Department of Defense holds the view that a public announcement, along the lines proposed by the Department of State, would not quarantee United Nations approval of any of the political status options considered in the Study. Moreover, such an announcement could be extremely adverse.

- 1. Independence coupled with early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement entails the greatest risk of an unstable Micronesia and an unsatisfactory treaty relationship. A statement along these lines strongly implies that the United States Government would be willing to accept these risks solely in the interest of ending the Trusteeship Agreement.
- 2. In the absence of a strong Micronesian consensus in favor of this option, a public offer of independence would connote a much weaker national security interest in Micronesia than the United States actually has. Among other things, it would not take into account the crucial importance of Kwajalein Missile Range to our national security and the difficulty of conducting an operation of this type from any foreign (independent) country.
- 3. The public announcement proposed by the Department of State would make approval of the Compact of Free Association more difficult when it is presented to the United States Congress. Specifically, the Senate and House would not understand why Free Association, with its higher level of financial assistance, was so important, given this public statement by the United States Government that it was willing to offer Micronesia independence.

The Department of Defense also notes that early termination of the Trustee-ship Agreement is not among the primary or secondary objectives of the United States Government--listed elsewhere in this Study--and would be reluctant to support achievement of that objective through public announcements.

