



EXCISE E B6
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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August 5, 1976

Dear Senator Mansfield:

Thank you for your communication of July 20, requesting information responding to questions raised by [redacted] in a letter to you of August 25, 1975. Our files do not indicate receiving your request of September 10, 1975 on the same subject.

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At about the time [redacted] wrote, we responded to a number of similar letters from women who had attended the National Seminar of United Methodist Women to which she refers.

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Micronesia, more formally called the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, is administered by the United States under the terms of a trusteeship agreement concluded with the United Nations in 1947. Article 6 of the agreement obliges the United States to "promote the development of the inhabitants of the trust territory toward self-government or independence, as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the trust territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." The United States is a member of the United Nations Trusteeship Council, and annually reports to that body on progress and developments in the Trust Territory.

We are not aware of any official proposal for a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific that would include the Northern Mariana Islands or Micronesia as a whole. Our general position is that the establishment of effective nuclear weapon free zones in appropriate regions of the world could be a

The Honorable
 Mike Mansfield,
 United States Senator

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Hale DATE MAR. 5 1976

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useful complement to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other measures in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. In assessing any specific regional arrangement we would take into account the extent to which that arrangement meets the following criteria:

-- The nuclear free zone should be sponsored by states in the area concerned;

-- It should include all states whose participation is deemed important;

-- It should not disturb necessary security arrangements;

-- It should provide adequately for verification of compliance.

In addition to these criteria, the US believes that a nuclear weapon free zone should not permit its parties to develop an indigenous nuclear explosive capability for any purpose, peaceful or military, since in our view the development of such a capability would not be compatible with the objective of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. As for the inclusion of the waters of the Pacific within such a zone, the US could not accept the imposition of a special legal regime over any portion of the high seas or restrictions on transit and overflight.

The United States is a party to the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which prohibits nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water and which precludes any nuclear explosions which would cause nuclear debris to be present outside the boundaries of the state conducting the explosion. The United States has adhered scrupulously to this treaty, and there are no plans to conduct US nuclear tests in the Pacific.

Sincerely yours,

RM
Robert J. McCloskey
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Correspondence returned.

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Concurrences: EA - Mr. *SM*
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