

UPI 05-16 03:29 PPD

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AM-MICRONESIA 5-17
(PREVIOUS WASHINGTON)
BY KAY LYNCH

HONOLULU (UPI) -- THE CHAIRMAN OF MICRONESIA'S COMMISSION ON FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS AND TRANSITION SAID MONDAY THAT A MEANINGFUL STATEMENT ON THE APPARENT CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD MICRONESIAN INDEPENDENCE WILL HAVE TO AWAIT EXAMINATION OF THE POLICY DOCUMENT.

ANDON L. AMARAICH SAID THE MICRONESIAN REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT TOLD THAT INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE ON THE AGENDA WHEN PLANNING SESSIONS FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF STATUS NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN HERE WEDNESDAY.

THE WASHINGTON POST REPORTED MONDAY THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SEVERAL WEEKS AGO APPROVED A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL POLICY PAPER WHICH SAYS THE U.S. WILL SEEK EXPEDITIOUS NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD EARLY INDEPENDENCE.

"WE WILL HAVE TO LOOK AT WHAT THE PAPER SAYS TO SEE WHETHER THERE IS A GENUINE DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES TO DEVELOP THE OPTION OF INDEPENDENCE FOR MICRONESIA," AMARAICH SAID. "THIS IS A SUBJECT VERY IMPORTANT TO MICRONESIA AND WE WOULD LIKE TO LOOK AT WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING AT AND LOOK AT THEM WHEN THEY SAY WHAT THEY SAY."

OF 11 SPECIAL TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENTS APPROVED BY THE UNITED NATIONS AFTER WORLD WAR II, ONLY THE U.S. PROTECTORATE OVER MICRONESIA REMAINS IN FORCE. AS PART OF THAT AGREEMENT, THE U.S. PLEDGED IN 1947 TO PROMOTE "EVENTUAL SELF-GOVERNMENT OR INDEPENDENCE" FOR THE 2,141-ISLAND GROUP.

"IN THE PAST THE U.S. HAS TOLD US THAT INDEPENDENCE IS NOT FEASIBLE BECAUSE MICRONESIA COULD NOT SURVIVE ECONOMICALLY ON ITS OWN" AMARAICH SAID. WHEN TALKS WERE SUSPENDED LAST JUNE A FREE-ASSOCIATION COMPACT WAS THE OBJECTIVE OF U.S. NEGOTIATORS.

"AT TIMES THEIR APPROACH WAS LIKE A THREAT. THEY WOULD SAY, 'YOU CAN ASK INDEPENDENCE AND LESS MONEY, OR FREE ASSOCIATION AND MORE MONEY. BUT NOT BOTH.'"

(MORE)

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X X X BUT NOT BOTH."

AMARAICH SAID MICRONESIA CAN SURVIVE AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION WITH ADVANCE PLANNING.

"THE U.S. HAS AN OBLIGATION TO DEVELOP THE ISLANDS TOWARD SELF-GOVERNMENT OR INDEPENDENCE. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT CONCERNS ME ABOUT THIS POLICY IS THAT I JUST HOPE THE U.S. IS NOT GOING TO MAKE A DECISION AS TO THE DATE OF TERMINATION OF TRUSTEESHIP WITHOUT OUR DISCUSSING AND AGREEING ON IT.

"THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY UNILATERAL DECISION ON TERMINATION. MY FEELING IS THAT TERMINATION SHOULD HAVE RELATION TO SOME DEGREE OF DEVELOPMENT."

AMARAICH SAID THAT PROGRAMS THAT WERE TO READY MICRONESIA FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT BY 1981 ARE TWO YEARS BEHIND SCHEDULE AND THIS IS NO LONGER A "VIABLE" DEADLINE.

DURING PAST ROUNDS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-LONG STATUS NEGOTIATIONS, THE U.S. HAS SOUGHT WAYS TO PROTECT ITS MILITARY OPTIONS IN THE STRATEGICALLY LOCATED ISLAND GROUPS OF MICRONESIA. TALKS SOURED AFTER REPORTS THAT THE CIA HAD BEEN MONITORING THE PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS OF THE MICRONESIAN REPRESENTATIVES DURING THESE TALKS.

THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE IS SCHEDULED TO RELEASE NEXT MONTH A FULL REPORT ON THE CIA'S CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES IN MICRONESIA RELATING TO THE STATUS TALKS.

THE NATIONS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY ARE FLUNG OVER 3 MILLION SQUARE MILES OF THE PACIFIC. THEIR LAND AREA IS 717 SQUARE MILES. OF THE 2,141 ISLANDS, 98 ARE INHABITED, BY A TOTAL POPULATION OF 94,940.

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