

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 20, 1977

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

The President has transmitted a report on post-secondary education in Micronesia prepared by the Interior Department to Sen. Henry Jackson, chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and Rep. Morris Udall, chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

As the President's transmittal letter states, the report recommends that a curriculum tailored to Micronesia's unique needs be developed before construction of physical facilities for the College of Micronesia is considered.

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(A copy of the President's letter of transmittal is attached.)

(OVER)

18-415854

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to P.L. 94-255, I am transmitting herewith a report concerning post-secondary education in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The Congress of Micronesia originally requested the appropriation of \$8 million in order to replace the facilities of the existing Community College of Micronesia located in Ponape. In authorizing the funds, Congress directed that no appropriations shall be made until a study is conducted to determine the educational need and most suitable educational concept for a Micronesian college and transmitted by the President to the appropriate committees of the Congress with his recommendation.

The Department of the Interior has conducted the study and has prepared the enclosed report. The report analyzes the educational system in Micronesia and recommends that several important steps be taken to revitalize and redirect Micronesian education before funds are appropriated to construct any new physical facilities for higher education in the Trust Territory.

The report does not deny the need for a quality institution of higher learning in Micronesia. It does recommend quite strongly, however, that a curriculum tailored to Micronesia's unique needs be developed before embarking on any new construction activities. I believe that this basic recommendation is sound, and I concur generally with the other recommendations contained in the report.

The Congress of Micronesia and the Micronesia Board of Education have written to me expressing their strong desire for immediate construction of physical facilities for the college. I appreciate their expression of interest and the symbolic value that a new college would have to the Micronesians.

Based on the findings of the enclosed report, however, I believe that constructing a new college before the Micronesian educational system is redesigned to be more responsive and more relevant to Micronesia's present and future needs would be of little benefit.

In response to the concerns of the Congress of Micronesia and the Micronesia Board of Education, as well as to the concerns expressed in the report, I have directed the Secretary of the Interior to work closely with the Micronesian people in the selection of a new president

of the college and in the initiation of planning, research, and development efforts to prepare a program for the college which is relevant to Micronesia's special needs.

Further, I hope that the Micronesians themselves can provide some financial support for the college.

When these steps are accomplished, I believe it would be appropriate for the United States to consider financial assistance for the construction of college facilities in Micronesia.

Sincerely,

JIMMY CARTER

The Honorable Henry M. Jackson  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and  
Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Morris K. Udall  
Chairman  
Committee on Interior  
and Insular Affairs  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Enclosure

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