

MEMORANDUM

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTIONSECRET

December 27, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MR. KISSINGER

FROM:

JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE

SUBJECT:

Secretary Laird's Views on Micronesian
Status Negotiations

At Tab I is a draft memorandum from you to the President attaching a memorandum to him from Secretary Laird recommending that the Micronesian Status Negotiations be immediately adjourned sine die, and that we strive to complete our separate negotiations on the Mariana Islands as quickly as possible. The memorandum argues that the Micronesian Congress' recent repudiation of the partially completed draft Compact on Free Association and the subsequent action of its negotiators at the last negotiating round, together with several other recent adverse developments in Micronesia, require such a move on our part.

Secretary Laird's recommendation has essentially been overtaken by the Micronesian decision to delay the next negotiating round until at least next March. As regards the Marianas negotiations, the first session was held earlier this month, and every effort will be made to move the Marianas negotiations forward in a positive way.

Concerning the specifics of Secretary Laird's rationale, we have commented that they would seem to over-interpret recent Micronesian actions, and that, in any event, Ambassador Williams is undertaking, in cooperation with State, Defense, and Interior, a basic reassessment of where we stand in the negotiations with Micronesia (except for the Marianas) and recommendations thereon. The study will be ready for the President's consideration within the next few months, and will give us a basis for proceeding in the next negotiating round with the Micronesians.

Attached to the memorandum to the President is a proposed reply from you to Secretary Laird informing him that the President has reviewed his memorandum and appreciates his concerns. It also notes that the President will review our negotiating position when he receives the results of the interdepartmental study.

Recommendation:

That you sign the memorandum to the President at Tab I.

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GDS 1980 BYAUTH Secretary of Defense