



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

January 5, 1973

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Dear Mr. President,

Since my letter to you of October 27, 1972 on the course of Micronesian future political status discussions there have been several developments warranting your attention. A brief status report follows.

The middle of last month in Saipan I opened formal negotiations with representatives of the Mariana Islands aimed at achieving their desire for close permanent association with the United States. While largely ceremonial, these talks succeeded in making clear to the rest of Micronesia the seriousness of our intention to move ahead with separate status for the Marianas. As the next step we will be forwarding to you soon for your decision through the Under Secretaries Committee recommended substantive positions to be taken with the Marianas when these negotiations resume in April.

We are also giving priority attention to the problem of how best to proceed with negotiations with the remaining five districts of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It is clear there can be no resumption of talks until well after the close of the next session of the Congress of Micronesia the end of next month - probably not before May at the earliest. Meanwhile there are a number of critical questions to be reviewed, particularly the request of the Micronesian Congress that consideration be given to an independence option. An interagency study is being undertaken the results of which will be sent to you for approval again through the Under Secretaries Committee.

Finally, Interior, State, Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have agreed on the need for a special study of the long term aspects of U. S. - Micronesian relations which will examine our basic objectives in the area and review current U. S. programs to determine the degree to which they support U. S. national interests, taking into account the needs of our political status negotiations. This should result in a series of options and policy recommendations to be sent you for decision in the spring.

Very respectfully yours,

*Franklin Haydn Williams*

Franklin Haydn Williams  
The President's Personal Representative  
For Micronesian Status Negotiations

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