



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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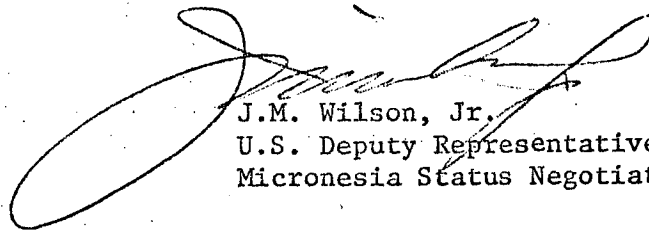
Memorandum

To: Mr. Michael B. Smith, Staff Assistant, The White House

Subject: Micronesia - letter from former High Commissioner,
Mr. Midkiff

Attached is a proposed reply from you to Mr. Midkiff's letter of December 26 to the President commenting on his recent trip to Micronesia and giving his views on future U.S.-Micronesian relations.

I believe that a short, non-committal reply is in order in view of the unexceptionable nature of Mr. Midkiff's comments and the fact that Ambassador Williams, who encouraged Midkiff's trip, will not return from his extended trip to the Western Pacific until mid-February.



J.M. Wilson, Jr.
U.S. Deputy Representative for
Micronesia Status Negotiations

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CABLE ADDRESS—FEMTRUST

December 26, 1972

NM
The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Via Ambassador Haydn Williams

Dear Mister President:

Aloha nui.

Sincerest best wishes to you and your family for a very
Happy New Year.

The past years of your administration have been remarkably
successful. Really beneficial things you have achieved for our
Nation. It is most gratifying to observe the favorable election
response the great majority of our countrymen made to your accom-
plishments.

May your coming years building upon your past efforts be
even more effective.

Especially, I endorse fully your present action in Vietnam.
The North Vietnamese did what Communists will always do: They
deceitfully took advantage of proffered peace movements and agree-
ments. They stepped up action in order to load South Vietnam
with Communist troops prior to any date of truce or peace. They
will pay attention only to strength and force.

You will recall that President Eisenhower appointed me as
High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
in 1953. It was a great honor and joy to serve under him. At
that time and ever since, I came to have a very high regard for
your good self and the service you continually and increasingly
render our Nation and this needy world.

Ambassador Haydn Williams recently authorized me to make a
trip to confer with the people of the Trust Territory concerning
the matter of future status of Micronesia when we relinquish the
Trusteeship. My whole experience on this trip has been quite
gratifying.



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The concept I placed before the Micronesians in 1953 was for Micronesia ultimately to become a self-governing nation of beautiful islands above the Equator, with friendly, lovable people cooperating with a neighbor nation - The United States, just as we cooperate with Canada on our other flank--to achieve a viable economy and society for themselves. Thus, they would cooperate with the United States in maintaining peace in the Pacific. The United States would retain the responsibility for Defense.

I warned them strongly against ever selling their land to immigrants, but rather they would lease it under fair rentals, based on correct appraisals of value for uses that would insure peace, good government, productive economy and a well ordered society.

During the past nineteen years continuous though slow but steady progress has been made along those lines. Until recently funds to work with have been minimum.

At long last, under your administration, the importance of developing potable water, sewage treatment plants, and utilities that will attract tourists and justify friendly air routes, with millions invested in airplanes, airports, runways, hotels and recreational facilities - this importance to the Pacific Islands, to the Pacific Basin and to America/Asia and international relationships has been recognized.

Adequate financing wisely has now been provided to accomplish the objectives of good trusteeship.

Micronesia can become a friendly little nation of great importance. It presently is much closer to this possibility than even the Micronesians themselves realize. In my opinion a continuing union of the six districts would be by far the best solution and result in a unique and happy nation.

It is true there are now and long will be differences amongst the people. Like our own nation's "North" and "South". But I would hope that a single national entity may be possible as the best future status.

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I was delighted to sense the confidence that the real leaders of Micronesia have in the United States and in your present Ambassador Haydn Williams. Unfortunately to my way of thinking, there are several ultra left special service lawyers and other leftists who in my opinion regard it as their prerogative to stir up unrest and discord within the existing "System". But the great majority of the people are sensible and understanding. They realize that they will be much better off with America as a cooperating neighbor than with any other nation - Russia, Peoples Republic of China, or Japan - occupying space adjacent to them. I assured all hands that, judging by what is happening in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean, there would be a Russian base for atomic submarines in Truk, within a year's time if the United States were to yield its responsibility for the defense of the Pacific including our neighbor Micronesia.

I talked with the leaders about personnel. That was my responsibility directly for two years; it is exceedingly important. I found that while ultimately the Micronesians expect one of their people to serve as Head of State, they do not think it wise to make a change to that extent now. They realize that the Congress will require supervision by an American High Commissioner of budget and of funds appropriated for some years yet. Also, it seemed they hope quite generally that the present High Commissioner, Mr. Ed Johnston, might best continue on for a while until this debate as to status is settled a bit. He knows the situation from all angles. There is no popular feeling against him. They favor continuing "as is" for a while, with the expectation in a reasonable season of an agreement as to one of the following:

1. Self-governing nation, but with the United States present where required throughout Micronesia in order to maintain peace and their own Micronesian national safety. I believe this will meet with general approval although the North Marianas hope specially to benefit by a direct "Territory" status as part of the United States, thus profiting by U. S. Defense presence and appropriations.
2. Independence, providing for the right to admission to the United Nations as a full member with right to abrogate or terminate any agreement as to Foreign Affairs and Defense



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unilaterally and as a free and "independent" nation. I believe most of the wise and thoughtful persons would not elect this after carefully considering the consequences.

Although I have made personal reference to Ambassador Williams herein, I think it proper to ask him if he will forward to you this report of my trip, together with some personally suggested action.

With deepest regards for your continued health and happiness, I have the honor to remain

Yours faithfully,

Frank E. Midkiff

Frank E. Midkiff
Former HICOMTERPACIS

