

DRAFT:JMW:mm1: 1/17/75

Dear Senator Fong,

Your interview of January 11, 1975 with Carl Zimmerman of the Honolulu Star Bulletin has just come to my attention. I note in particular that section in which you say, "The American side of the picture is a doubtful one... because the administration has failed to keep the Congress fully informed of the progress of negotiations, so there hasn't been much of a chance to assess prospects for approval of the agreement".

If this is an accurate quotation, it comes as a distinct surprise. As you know, these negotiations have fallen within the purview of the committees on Interior and Insular Affairs in both houses of the Congress. We have made a consistent and conscientious effort to keep the membership in those committees, both majority and minority, fully informed of our progress together with the committees' staffs.

Indeed we have met both before and after each round of negotiations (there have been five with the Marianas Status Commission and five with the Joint Committee of the Congress of Micronesia during my incumbency) with the leadership and staff in both committees to explain our plans and describe what has taken place. There have also been several formal hearings conducted by both committees in open and closed sessions.

I enclose for your information excerpts from the transcripts of our most recent formal hearings in which



there was favorable comment from the leadership on the extent to which we had kept those committees informed.

next - Your busy schedule has no doubt necessitated your cutting short our two most recent meetings on the subject and made it impossible for you to accept my offer of a further briefing prior to your trip of last Fall and our last round of negotiations with the Marianas.

If I or my Deputy, Mr. Wilson, can assist in any way in bringing you more fully up to date, on any of the aspects of these two sets of negotiations please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely yours,

FHW

Enclosure



Exerpts from Transcript of Proceedings
United States Senate
Interior and Insular Affairs Committee
September 12, 1974

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"Ambassador Williams: Mr. Chairman, with your permission, before responding to your question, I would like to say that over the past three years, we have recognized full well the importance of advance consultation with key members of the Congress. We have made an effort prior to and after each of the major rounds to consult with the leadership of the Congress.

"Senator Johnston: Let me say for the record you certainly have done that with the Committee Chairman and the Subcommittee and with the Chairman of the Full Committee and perhaps some other members. We appreciate that. The situation I described is not the fault of the Ambassador. You have done a marvelous job of keeping us informed but it is inherent in the negotiating process."

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Exerpts from Transcript of Proceedings
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
Sub-Committee on Territorial and Insular Affairs
October 1, 1974

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" Mr. Wilson.....

" We have been trying from the beginning of these negotiations to keep the interested committees of the U.S. Congress as much informed as to what we were doing as possible. And we have tried on as many occasions as possible to solicit the advice of the Members of Congress, both individually and as members of the committee might be speaking through the staff Representatives.....

"After all, we recognized from the beginning that these are agreements which are going to have to pass the test of congressional approval. It would be a waste of time on our part if we proceeded down a road which was obviously going to run contrary to the wishes of the Members of Congress."

" Mr. Clausen (Acting Chairman). "... I do want to state for the record that what Mr. Wilson said is totally accurate.

"We have had any number of informal meetings, primarily at the request of our Chairman, Mr. Burton, and we (the members) have had informal meetings between the House and Senate in an effort to bring about the most orderly negotiating process that could be acceptable to both the Executive and the Congress.

"And they know full well that whatever is going to be proposed has to be satisfactory to us; it also has to be satisfactory to the people in Micronesia. And that is what the negotiating process is all about.

"And I just wanted to state for the record that what you (Mr. Wilson) did convey to us is more than a truism, because we have had at least a half a dozen sessions that I have been part of."

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