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March 12, 1975

Memorandum

To: Acting Secretary

From: J.M. Wilson, Jr.

Subject: Wind up of Micronesian Status Negotiations



You have asked for my views regarding the work load remaining in the Micronesian status negotiations and the resultant requirement for a replacement from the Department to serve as deputy to Ambassador Haydn Williams. There is no precise response possible, inasmuch as it depends on the answer to two variables: the fate of the recently signed Marianas Commonwealth Covenant, and the future of our negotiations with the remaining districts of Micronesia. A replacement in any event seems to be definitely necessary.

Regarding the Marianas, many steps remain in the approval process, the principal ones being: (1) a U.N. observed plebiscite in the Marianas, (2) approval of the Covenant by both houses of the U.S. Congress, and (3) installation of a new government under a new, locally drafted constitution, which can occur well in advance of the termination of the trusteeship. All of these actions, in my view, would normally be the primary responsibility of Interior, supported by the other executive departments as necessary.

Interior, however, in its present disorganized state is incapable of handling the earlier phases of this essential process, leaving it to Ambassador Williams and his staff to organize the plebiscite, prepare instructions for Interior to send to the High Commissioner, and obtain necessary Washington agency approvals going as high as the President. This could take two to three weeks, or more.

After that if Interior gets organized it should take over support of the entire operation. If not, as seems more likely, Ambassador Williams will need special help in organizing and directing the Executive Branch effort to sell the Commonwealth Covenant to the U.S. Congress against what may well become organized opposition. Present White House instructions continue to place responsibility for coordination of Congressional contacts on him alone.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5

State Dept. Guidelines

By *HJC*, NARA, Date *9/22/99*

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Regarding the rest of Micronesia, agreement was reached on a provisional basis three times during the past year on the complete text of a Compact of Free Association. The Micronesian Joint Committee on Future Status has now submitted it (with or without its endorsement is unclear) to the Micronesian Congress, which said only that it found the financial provisions unacceptably inadequate. That Congress also attempted to abolish the Joint Committee on Future Status and replace it with a more representative commission; but the action failed of final passage on technical grounds, leaving the Committee's future somewhat in limbo.

The Congress also called for a popular referendum throughout the Trust Territory to determine the people's choice between independence, status quo, free association, commonwealth or some other alternative. Their Constitutional Convention will now probably precede rather than follow final determination of their future international status. Despite these negative indications, Senator Salii has just agreed to our invitation to resume discussions on the subject of transition, including financial arrangements, suggesting next month in Micronesia.

It is thus clear that the Department will have to supply Ambassador Williams with a first class senior officer who has a legal background and is adept at and can contribute positively to the essential job of putting the Marianas agreement through Congress, a process which may well last through next Fall or longer. (He will also require experienced legal support during the Congressional phase and for continuity should have Tom Johnson from L, who has worked on the Covenant extensively, detailed to him at that time). Where the other Micronesian negotiations are going remains very much to be seen, but a deputy is also clearly required for the next negotiating sessions. An overlap with me in the Deputy job is needed for at least two weeks, in order to pick up essential details.

I would be happy to work with DG/PER to find the right officer. As indicated earlier, Ambassador Williams is most anxious to discuss the entire matter with you and would appreciate an appointment as soon as possible. He is leaving for San Francisco this Saturday.

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