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2-17-76
RSE

Congress of Micronesia

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PRESIDENT

January 27, 1976

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The President
THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

After almost 30 years of a trusteeship government between Micronesia (Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands) and the United States, we are optimistic that the ongoing negotiations and discussions between our delegations have brought us to the threshold of a new and better relationship. A relationship among friends, one with mutual understanding and trust. In short, a lasting, more democratic association. Clearly, the political solutions are at hand. At the same time, we are starkly aware that the Trust Territory is in no position to support itself even to just maintain the same standard of living achieved since World War II, and we will have to depend almost completely on U.S. aid for the foreseeable future.

To say there has been a lack of development in our economy is an understatement. The woeful lack of economic development has become quantified in the preliminary reports by the United Nations team which is formulating a comprehensive development plan for the Trust Territory with full United States Government approval.

It is not conceivable that Micronesia will ever be fully independent of U.S. assistance in the foreseeable future. But in order that we Micronesians, as a people, can expect to run our government with pride and self-respect, there must be a far greater effort away from the dependency on full United States grant funding. We see no conflict in wanting to maintain and improve our standard of living and reducing our financial dependence on the United States.

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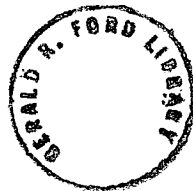
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The United States Government has the opportunity to quickly reverse this whole situation and turn it into a success story. The constant criticism levied by individuals and organizations throughout the world and its attendant cries of colonialism, we believe, can be silenced with a very few basic innovations. In these waning years of the Trusteeship, firm steps must be taken to implement sound planning and management. Secondly, steps must be taken to develop the economy. These two steps can only be accomplished by providing expert management to the territory. It is apparent to even the most casual observer that this expertise does not now exist in Micronesia.

Recent reports from the Senate Interior Committee and from the new Director of Territorial Affairs Department of the Interior indicate that management problems in the Trust Territory are severe. The Department of Interior report was correct in its observation that the top administration here "was not motivated." This management problem, coupled with a virtual lack of development in the local economy over the years is of grave concern to us.

It is because of this concern that we are encouraged by the appointment of Mr. Fred M. Zeder to the directorship of the Office of Territorial Affairs in the Department of Interior. In the several months he has occupied that position, it has become clear that he possesses unique qualifications and attributes to help solve the economic and managerial woes of Micronesia. He is decisive and has an outstanding record of success in the business world, both domestic and international, coupled with many related civic accomplishments. And his interest is genuine. His ideas and initial innovations have provided a new spark to the Territory and it is for this reason that we request your very serious consideration to our request to install him as a Territorial Manager in Micronesia with the full authority to develop and carry out management and economic development policy in consultation with the Congress of Micronesia. In this capacity, we would expect him to perform on a full-time

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crash basis to help remove many of the old barriers to our development and to use his knowledge and expertise to bring our economy out of its prolonged infancy. This is by no means to suggest that Mr. Zeder be relieved as Director of Territorial Affairs. Rather, with this new management authority, we would hope that he could serve in a dual role until self-government in Micronesia becomes a reality.

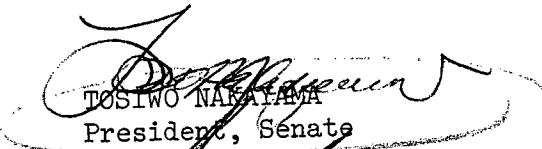
An alternative to this approach would be to create an Economic Task Force for Micronesia to be headed by Mr. Zeder and include one or two Micronesians. In his capacity as chairman of the task force, Mr. Zeder should continue to be Director of Territorial Affairs. This arrangement will give him all the necessary policy and administrative authority to coordinate all efforts in the Trust Territory toward the accomplishment of economic viability for Micronesia.

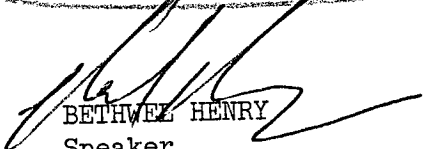
Mr. President, if your Administration reacts favorably to either of the above requests, it will mean that policy development and policy implementation will go hand-in-hand, something that has not heretofore existed. In this way, we can achieve self-government with self-respect, and in the long run it will be far less costly in terms of dollars to the United States Government.


The opportunity exists to turn a lethargic government and almost completely dependent territory into a nation, small though it be, of people who can point with pride at what America has done for them. We ask your Administration to do this.

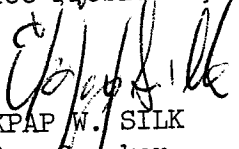
Thank you for your forbearance, Mr. President. We look forward with great anticipation to your favorable disposition of this request.

Sincerely yours,


TOSIWO NAKAYAMA
President, Senate


BETHWELL HENRY
Speaker
House of Representatives


LAZARUS E. SALII
Vice-President, Senate


EKPAP W. SILK
Vice-Speaker
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