

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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February 10, 1977

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MEMORANDUM

To: Assistant to the President for National Security
Affairs

From: Acting U.S. Representative for Micronesian Status
Negotiations

Subject: Proposed meeting with Micronesian leaders on
Micronesia's future

For over eight months now the Executive Branch has been unable to resolve policy questions on Micronesia's future status sufficiently to enable meaningful, realistic negotiations to proceed. In the meantime Micronesian uncertainties have grown as to U.S. attitudes and intentions, and leaders in Palau and the Marshalls have stepped up their respective campaigns for separation from Micronesia and separate talks with the U.S.--to the point where leaders of those two districts have now threatened to secede from the Congress of Micronesia as early as next week. Those leaders apparently intend to appear in Washington soon to pressure the Executive Branch directly and through the U.S. Congress to accept their separatist demands. It has been U.S. policy to try to preserve Micronesian (Carolines and Marshalls) unity, and both the U.S. Congress and the U.N. Trusteeship Council have consistently urged us to do so.

Meanwhile the new Micronesian Policy Review is presumably scheduled for completion by March 11, and it would seem highly undesirable to allow that review and the badly needed decisions stemming therefrom to be preempted or compromised by premature and conflicting Micronesian initiatives. Therefore to try to cope with what appears to be a rapidly deteriorating situation in Micronesia and yet allow the PRM mechanism to serve its function, the following steps are recommended:

1. A U.S. representative closely acquainted with the Micronesian leaders and the negotiating problems be sent as soon as possible to Saipan before the current Congress of Micronesia session possibly breaks up in disarray. His purpose would be to sound out the willingness of key leaders from each Micronesian district to come to Washington about the end of March or early

CLASSIFIED BY Ambassador
Philip W. Manhard
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April at the latest to discuss informally with key people in the new Administration the future course and direction of status negotiations as well as the nature of our relationships with all six Micronesian districts during the transition to a new status.

2. If the U.S. emissary receives a positive response to the foregoing proposal from key leaders from all the districts, he would then provide to them a written invitation from the President, Vice President or Secretary of State, a proposed draft of which is attached. An invitation from the President or Vice President would most effectively impress upon the Micronesians the seriousness with which the new Administration views Micronesia and would make clear to them that all elements of the Executive Branch properly concerned with Micronesia would be involved. It is the State Department's recommendation that, in order to protect the President's or Vice President's prestige should the Micronesians decline, the following options should be considered in this order with regard to issuance of the invitation: (1) Secretary of State; (2) Secretaries of State and Interior jointly; or (3) President or Vice President.

3. The policy review would proceed meanwhile and necessary policy decisions would presumably be made prior to the arrival of such Micronesian leaders, who might as a result of the invitation be deflected in the interim from further complicating our problems.

4. In the meeting in Washington we could forthrightly discuss the main issues, including fragmentation vs. unity, with all districts represented together at the same time, and could avail ourselves of the best opportunity in a long time to seek agreement on the modalities, venue and timing of the next formal negotiating round.



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