



THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

June 15, 1979

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date & Place: Wednesday, June 13, 1979;
Representative Philip Burton's Office

Participants: Representative Phillip Burton, Chairman,
Subcommittee on National Parks and
Insular Affairs
Representative Robert Lagomarsino
Representative Don Clausen
Mr. James Beirne, Senate Energy Committee
Staff
Mr. Thomas Dunmire, Subcommittee Minority
Staff
Ms. Pat Krause, Subcommittee Majority Staff
Ambassador Peter R. Rosenblatt
Mr. James Berg

The meeting, which took place at Congressman Burton's request and in his office, lasted from 5 p.m. until approximately 10:15 p.m.

At the initial stage of this long session Burton asked for a briefing on the outcome of the heads of delegation meeting. I described to him the levels of assistance which we proposed to each of the Micronesian commissions and undertook to meet his request for a written description of each offer. Burton raised the following major points:

1. Federal programs. Burton claims that Eliot Cutler of OMB advised him that OMB could approve Section 104 of House Bill 3756 (which provides that "Federal programs shall not cease to apply to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands either before or after the termination of the trusteeship, without the express approval of Congress.") He understood Eliot to have agreed that it will be Congress, not the Executive Branch, that will decide what programs will continue and at

what levels. I said that I didn't know what might have transpired between them, but that the Interior phasedown of federal programs was designed to bring them into some sort of rational relationship with my negotiating instructions which do not permit the extension of federal programs in the post-Trusteeship era. He attempted to establish that I had coerced Interior to adopt this policy, to which I replied that it and I both must execute Administration policy.

This conversation developed into Burton's establishment of a July 4, 1979 deadline by which time the Administration must confirm to him in writing that his understanding of Eliot Cutler's comment is correct. If the Administration does not do so Burton will denounce the conduct of the status negotiations, publicly take issue with the Administration's 1981 Trusteeship termination goal and "legislatively mandate" federal programs to Micronesia.

Burton went on to reiterate his view that the Micronesians needed to be protected against the incompetence and rapacity of their own governments and leaders and that this should be done by extending services to them rather than cash grants. He also alluded to his previous calls for a compact which minimized programs with visible cash price tags and maximized unpriced services.

2. Submission of the Compact to the Congress.

Burton repeated his admonition that there can be no Compact of Free Association submitted to Congress prior to the next Presidential election (see memcon of April 26, 1979, copy attached). He expanded on it by enjoining me from taking any final action (specifically including initialling) on a Compact until after the election. He advised that we work only on subsidiary agreements such as Status of Forces Agreements, and drop work on the Compact. He looked to his Republican colleagues for support and they again stated that they have significant and substantive problems with the Hilo Agreements. They once again objected to Micronesian control of their own foreign affairs on the ground that this would interfere with our defense interests, a point which I have previously attempted to reassure them on. They also argued that the Micronesians would not be able to adequately defend their commercial interests in 200 mile fisheries zones against Japanese exploitation and that they should not be permitted to handle this alone. They alluded

to a general malaise regarding the security of our defense arrangements under free association and whether or not we will be in a position to defend the Micronesians. They advised that we start the negotiations over from the beginning. It was clear that they preferred a commonwealth arrangement such as the Northern Mariana Islands Covenant. Burton said that while he does not share these substantive concerns, he is unwilling to carry on without Republican support and we therefore must not advance the process of negotiation until after the election. If a Republican captures the White House, we will have to start over anyway; if the Democrats win, Burton will get the Compact through the 97th Congress. He also wants an Administration response to this position.


3. The Administration generally. Much of Burton's rambling presentation consisted of a general indictment of the Administration's dealings with Congress. Through a series of horror stories, Burton made the point that if the Administration attempts to present Congress with an initialled or signed Compact (a "fait accompli"), he will cause it to be rejected. Burton intends to see to it that the Compact reflects his views in those areas he cares about. He does not wish to add things he wants to a Compact after its submission, but will either do so or kill it if he thinks he has to.

4. Miscellaneous. Burton exhibited unrestrained fury over Administration attempts to delay publication of the GAO report on Enewetak and held me personally responsible for it. The source of his anger seemed to be that he was not consulted even though it was his area, he was working on a bill that dealt with Enewetak and his brother serves on Representative Brooks' House committee that supervises the GAO.

He expressed contempt for the Administration and its works, including its administration of the TTPI.

5. Mood. After the first hour or so of sparring Burton and his Republican colleagues seemed to be reaching out to find some way to find a modus vivendi with the Administration. The price of Burton's fellowship seemed to be my agreement to join him in denunciation of the Administration, identification of devils in

its ranks and agreement to work with Burton against them. When I failed to acquiesce in this approach I was told that I was the devil and personally denounced in vicious and demeaning terms. However, the Administration's compliance with Burton's demands was still said to hold the possibility of some sort of cooperative relationship.



Peter R. Rosenblatt

Attachment

cc w/a:

Matthew Nimetz
William Bodde
Under Secretary James Joseph
Ruth Van Cleve
Philip Barringer
COL W. M. Craig
Nicholas Platt
Eliot Cutler
Ron Cogswell
Walter Slocombe