



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

December 27, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR MICRONESIA  
INTERAGENCY GROUP

FROM: Peter R. Rosenblatt

SUBJECT: Honolulu Trip, December 19-21, 1979

During my two days in Honolulu I conducted three sets of meetings which you may find of interest:

1. CINCPAC. I met with Admiral Long for 1-1/2 hours on Thursday, December 20. I briefed him and members of his staff on the negotiations. He had already received extensive staff briefings and displayed a keen interest. The Admiral was particularly alert to the problems which the negotiations face at this stage because of the fortuitous circumstance that he was meeting with Congressman Phillip Burton the next day. I believe that our meeting was very useful and that Admiral Long will prove every bit as supportive of our effort as was his predecessor, Admiral Weisner.

2. Marshalls President, Amata Kabua. MIG counsel, Dick Copaken, was returning from meetings with the GOJ in Tokyo at which the GOJ agreed to enter into a government-to-government fisheries agreement with the MIG. We had a tentative arrangement to link up in Honolulu together with MIG FonSec Tony deBrum. However, Tony remained in Majuro and we were joined, instead, by President Kabua.

President Kabua said that he had come to Honolulu for the purpose of personally delivering the following message to me:

A. President Kabua saw no significant obstacles to the initialling of a compact between the USG and the MIG at Kona in early January. The remaining unresolved issues were subject to resolution on a mutually acceptable basis before or at Kona.

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B. Therefore if the USG has been negotiating in good faith, as he believes, there will be no reason for us not to initial at Kona. If an initialing nonetheless fails to take place it will be solely because the U. S. chooses not to initial.

C. If there is no initialing the MIG will take whatever steps it thinks necessary to secure its interests. These might include an appeal to the United Nations and pressure on Kwajalein.

3. The Palauans. A five-man delegation representing the newly elected Seventh Legislature met with John Armstrong, Keith Guthrie and me for the better part of the two-day period. The Palauan delegation consisted of the High Chief Ibedul, a member of the House of Chiefs, and five members of the House of Elected Members, John Ngiraked, Carlos Salii, P. C. Chairman Alfonso Oiterong and Kuniwo Nakamura. They described themselves as the core of a reconstituted Palau Political Status Commission (PPSC) and rumor has it that Nakamura is likely to be the next PPSC Chairman.

The Palau delegation's attitude was extremely conciliatory. They came to be briefed on the compact and on the negotiations. Most of their comments were non-committal, consisting largely of good questions about the meaning of the document and U. S. interpretations thereof. It was obvious that they had received virtually no briefing from the incumbent PPSC. Ngiraked and Salii did most of the talking on the Palauan side, with occasional interjections by Nakamura. I got the impression that Nakamura was first among equals.

The few substantive comments of the Palauan delegation were interesting. They said that they were anxious to participate in the negotiations, that they sought a rapid conclusion of the negotiations, that they did not wish to delay conclusion of the negotiations, that they would reorganize the PPSC immediately after the new Legislature was sworn in and that the PPSC would be represented in Kona even if all of its new members and staff had not yet been appointed. They wanted me to understand that they were not likely to be in a position to initial the compact at Kona because of a shortage of time, but that their failure to initial should not be taken as obstructiveness.

At the opening of the session the Palauans expressed distress and wonderment at the funds which the incumbent PPSC had expended on consultants and lawyers. When the session ended, the Palauans had evidently been impressed by the complexity of the document and volunteered that they would have to go out and hire some consultants.

I played the constitution issue in low key, consistent with the conciliatory tone of the session. However, the message remained firm and unmistakable. I discussed the nature of the U. S. reservations with regard to the constitution in the context of the compact provisions which clashed with the sections of the constitution to which we have objected. I believe that the Palauan group understood the problems those constitutional sections presented. At the very end of the session I reconfirmed that the U. S. position remained as I had announced it on April 30, 1979 and on a number of subsequent occasions. I also said that I understood that the Palauans might have a problem in dealing with this issue and that I did not intend to complicate matters for them by putting public pressure on them before they were able to get themselves organized. I undertook to make no public statement about our meeting in Honolulu unless specifically asked. If I were asked I would say no more on the constitutional subject than that our position remained unchanged. The Palauans expressed in rather unspecific terms the conviction that some way could be found to work out the problem.

Copaken had expressed anxiety lest Palauan foot-dragging prevent an initialling at Kona. I therefore arranged for the Palauans to get together with President Kabua and his lawyers. Copaken later reported that he and President Kabua told the Palauans, whom he has known for many years, that the MIG wanted to initial at Kona. Copaken reported these specific results of the meeting:

A. The Palauans responded by assuring President Kabua that they did not wish to impede a USG-MIG initialling and, indeed, warmly applauded such an outcome of the Kona meeting. Copaken said that he would ask his delegation to solicit an on-the-record statement from the Palauans at Kona supporting Marshallese initialling and that he thought they would agree.

B. The Palauans warmly applauded the efforts of the Marshallese in the negotiations, stating that the Marshallese had ably represented the interests of all Micronesians. They seemed generally satisfied with the compact but asked a number of questions about its meaning. Copaken says he was able to answer these to their satisfaction.

C. The Palauans reaffirmed that they intended to be present at and participate in the Kona meeting.

Finally, the Palauans referred to the communication forwarded by the High Commissioner inquiring as to whether they might agree to consider the establishment of a temporary facility for Indo-Chinese refugees in Palau. They said that they were interested enough to want to hear some specifics and cautioned me to ignore contrary indications from the incumbent Legislature (these were reported in TTPI's No. 745 of 190458Z Dec 79).



Peter R. Rosenblatt  
Ambassador

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