



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

1051

Memorandum

To : R. L. Ridgway, Chairman
Micronesia Interagency Group

From : Deputy Under Secretary
Territorial & International Affairs

Subj : Marshallese Proposal on Permanent Denial

In response to your memorandum of July 28 on the above subject, the Department of the Interior concurs in Ambassador Rosenblatt's recommendations as to points 1, 3, and 4.

As to point 2, concerning the guarantee of territorial integrity, we concur in the recommendation so far as it goes, but we urge that the U.S. interpretation of the extent of its commitment be made more explicit than the Ambassador's recommendation appears to contemplate. We read the pertinent portions of the report of the legal committee and the OMSN comments to say that (a) the language of the proposed Section 412 is deliberately ambiguous, (b) in light of the ambiguity, the U.S. would have the option, but not be committed, to intervene in the event of internal disturbances, civil war, civil strife, or separatist movements, (c) this flexibility is viewed as desirable by key member of the Senate, but (d) certain Marshallese are, instead, "privately interpreting the phrase to mean that we would be committed to intervene to help put down any future separatist movements". To counter this interpretation, the recommendation is that the U.S. negotiators should "insure that the Micronesian governments clearly understand the U.S. interpretation of the extent of its commitment in the event of civil conflict".

The preferred interpretation ((b) above) seems to us desirable from the standpoint of the U.S., but we think more is required to counter the "private interpretation" referred to. We suggest that in a suitable part of the record -- not necessarily the Covenant itself, but in a public document the contents of which are both official and highly visible -- the fact that the U.S. has the option to intervene but is not required to do so should be made explicit.

Wallace E. Green