

JUN 4 1985

COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND  
CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII 96861

24 May 1985

Dear Congressman Udall,

As the Commander of U.S. Forces in the Pacific, I am writing to offer my views on the national security implications of the Compact of Free Association, which I understand your committee will consider during the week of May 28. I hope my views are shared with other members of your committee. I am a strong supporter of the Compact, since it will contribute directly to the defense needs of both the Micronesian states and the United States.

As you know, the missions of the Pacific Command are to deter aggression, to ensure access to critical resources and, should deterrence fail, to defend the interests of the United States, and our allies and friends. To do this I must have the capability to project military power as far forward as possible and, at the same time, prevent a potential enemy from seizing areas from which attacks against the United States, its territories, and allied and friendly nations could be launched. This command also has a responsibility to plan alternate courses of action should events force the withdrawal of existing forward deployed forces from current operating locations.

The security aspects of the Compact of Free Association support and facilitate the accomplishment of these missions. The defense responsibility and authority given to the U.S. Government by the Compact, coupled with the provision that the freely associated states will refrain from any action which the U.S. determines to be inconsistent with defense and security requirements, provide the latitude needed to support our security interests. Additionally, the provision for strategic denial ensures that Micronesia will be closed to the military forces of third nations, unless access is specifically agreed to by the United States. This would greatly impede the Soviet Union or any other nation in any attempt to expand its sphere of influence. At the same time, the Compact guarantees our military forces unrestricted movement within Micronesia. This aspect of the Compact takes on increasing importance now that it appears likely that Kiribati, which abuts Micronesia, will sign a fisheries agreement with the Soviet Union.

You are aware of the great importance we place on access to the facilities used by our forward deployed forces in the Western Pacific. Despite our hopes for stability, the possibility always exists that a host government could ask us to cease using bases in its territory. For example, while our facilities in

the Philippines have not yet been affected by the instability in that country. We have no guarantee that this good fortune will continue indefinitely. A positive defense relationship with the Freely Associated States will assist the U.S. in maintaining a strong presence in the Western Pacific should our current facilities arrangements change. I believe that the Compact is the essential prerequisite for maintaining this relationship with the Micronesians.

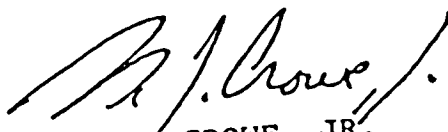
I have been involved personally with Micronesia for a number of years and have felt for some time that termination of our trusteeship over the Micronesian territories is overdue. From the vantage point of my present position, I am even more convinced of the desirability, even necessity, of ending the trusteeship. The ability to deal with the Micronesian states on a bilateral basis, rather than from a position in which the United Nations continues in an oversight role, will be greatly preferable from our national security perspective. We currently enjoy a relationship of goodwill and trust with the elected leaders of Micronesia -- a relationship which we risk undermining if we further delay termination. There are, as you know, a range of other political, economic, and moral factors arguing for prompt termination.

I understand that some members of your committee are concerned about potential impacts of the Compact on the U.S. territories. I share the concern for the welfare of the territories, which play a vital role in the Pacific Command area. Nevertheless, I hope that these concerns can be addressed in the implementing legislation in ways which will not delay implementation of the Compact as negotiated.

In summary, I believe the Compact's defense arrangements are fully supportive of our national security interests in the Pacific. I strongly recommend its endorsement by your committee and hope that it will be expeditiously approved by the Congress. I would appreciate your support.

Please let me know if we at USCINCPAC Headquarters can be of any assistance to your committee in this important matter.

Warmest regards,

  
W. J. CROWE, JR.  
Admiral, U. S. Navy

The Honorable Morris Udall, Chairman  
Interior Committee  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515