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Biography

Gerald R. Ford was the 38th president of the United States, serving from August 9, 1974 when President Nixon resigned until January 20, 1977. He was elected as a Republican to the U.S House of Representatives in 1948 and was named House minority leader in 1964. In 1973, when Vice-President Spiro T. Agnew was forced to resign, President Nixon nominated Ford to replace him. After he assumed the presidency in August 1974, President Ford retained most of the Nixon cabinet and advisers and, a month later, pardoned Nixon for all the crimes he may have committed while president. He continued the Nixon policy of easing tensions with both the Soviet Union and China. With respect to domestic affairs, he opposed programs advanced by the Democrats in Congress to counter the current recession, maintaining that their costs would increase inflation to an unacceptable level, and vetoed a number of such bills. After declaring his intention to seek a full term in the 1976 elections, President Ford overcame opposition from Ronald Reagan, the former governor of California, for the Republican nomination, but was defeated by Democrat Jimmy Carter.

Nature of Document Search

We visited the Ford Library on May 13 and 14, 2004, and benefited from excellent advance work of the Library's archivists. The principal files in which we discovered documents relating to the Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands were the following: White House Central Files, Subject File; National Security Adviser, Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific; National Security Adviser, NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files; National Security Adviser, NSC Institutional Files; and White House Central Files, Name File. In addition, we examined the personal papers of several individuals who worked in the White House, including Henry A. Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft. Of particular interest were the extensive papers donated by James M. Wilson, Jr., who served as deputy to Ambassador Williams during the entire course of the Northern Marianas status negotiations and several years of the Micronesian status negotiations. Several hundred pages of documents from Wilson's papers covering the Nixon years (1969-August 1974) are included in this collection. Many of Wilson's documents about the two sets of status negotiations are unique to the Ford Library collection.

Highlights of Ford Library Documents

Although the documents at the Ford Library cover the usual broad range of activities, the three most important subjects pertaining to Micronesia related to the completion of the Northern Marianas status negotiations, the progress and developing problems regarding the Micronesian status negotiations, and the preparation and implementation of a secret study of Guam's political status approved by President Ford.

The Northern Marianas Status Negotiations

After four rounds of negotiations since December 1972, both the U.S. Delegation headed by Ambassador Williams and the 15-person Marianas Political Status Commission anticipated that the fifth session scheduled for December 1974 would be the last. The elections in November 1974 in the Northern Marianas for members of the Congress of Micronesia surprisingly resulted in the defeat of key members of the Marianas Political Status Commission and generated considerable doubt regarding the Commission's ability to continue the negotiations. Once these uncertainties were resolved and the discussions proceeded, both parties were optimistic that agreement could be reached on all outstanding issues. Just as the session began, however, Williams received notice that the Department of Defense was withdrawing from its commitment to build a base on Tinian in the near term. This news was a profound disappointment to the Northern Marianas negotiators, who were anticipating that the future commonwealth would benefit substantially from the construction and operation of the proposed base. Notwithstanding this unexpected development, the two parties completed negotiations on all major issues and decided to take a short recess for a final legal review and clearance in Washington before a formal signing ceremony in February 1975.

Memorandum, November 11, 1974, Wilson to Williams

Memorandum, November 21, 1974, Gallagher to Ross

Draft Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth, December 19, 1974

Joint Communique, December 19, 1974, United States and MPSC

Letter, December 31, 1974, Williams to President

Upon the recommendation of the Under Secretaries Committee, President Ford approved the proposals from Williams to increase the ceiling for financial support of the Northern Marianas and to obtain a special appropriation to enable the Northern Marianas to establish a trust fund for the proposed American memorial park on Saipan. The expectations of the parties for a short discussion in early February 1975 before the formal signing ceremony were upset by a request by the Rota and Tinian members of the Commission to amend the draft status agreement to require the future commonwealth government to have a bicameral legislature – with one of the two houses having equal representation for each of the three major islands. After several days of discussion within the Commission, its members all agreed to support this proposal for a bicameral legislature and so reported to the U.S. Delegation. Ambassador Williams was concerned about this proposal amendment to the draft covenant, but eventually agreed once he was convinced that the Commission unanimously supported the Rota and Tinian demand.

After a last minute effort by opponents to stop the signing of the proposed status agreement was rejected by the local court, the agreement was signed by Ambassador Williams and 13 of the 15 members of the Marianas Political Status Commission on February 15, 1975.

Memorandum, January 14, 1975, Cathright to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, February 6, 1975, Kissinger to President
Memorandum, February 7, 1975, Kissinger to Williams

Before the covenant could take effect, it had to be approved by the Marianas District Legislature, approved by the Northern Marianas people in a plebiscite, and approved by the U.S. Congress. After three days of hearings, the District Legislature approved the covenant on February 20, 1975. To show his support for the new relationship, President Ford met with two Northern Marianas leaders, Edward DLG Pangelinan and Pedro A. Tenorio, on March 19, 1975. Ambassador Williams and his staff worried about the appointment of a plebiscite commissioner to supervise the plebiscite, well aware of the risk of United Nations criticism if it appeared that U.S. officials were attempting to influence its outcome. Ambassador Williams proposed that Erwin D. Canham, the editor of the Christian Science Monitor, serve as plebiscite commissioner and this appointment by the president won widespread approval. After an appropriate secretarial order was approved, Canham and a small staff were responsible for registering the qualified voters, conducting a reasonable political education program, ensuring that pro-covenant and anti-covenant forces had equal access to the media, drafting the ballot to be presented to the people, and preparing for United Nations inspection of the plebiscite vote. With the assistance of many local officials, all these tasks were accomplished in a timely and acceptable manner. On June 17, 1975, 78.8% of Northern Marianas voters approved the covenant in the plebiscite.

Memorandum, March 19, 1979, Davis to Springsteen
Memorandum of Conversation, March 19, 1975
Letter, March 27, 1975, Williams to President
Memorandum, March 27, 1975, Davis to Walker
Memorandum, March 28, 1975, Froebe to Kissinger
Memorandum, April 2, 1975, Walker to President
Letter, April 11, 1975, Ford to Canham
Letter, June 17, 1975, Williams to President
Letter, June 19, 1975, Canham to President

The U.S. House of Representatives moved promptly to approve the Covenant under the leadership of Phillip Burton. After hearings on July 14, 1975, at which no opponent to the covenant appeared to testify, Congressman Burton arranged on July 17, 1975, for the House of Representatives to suspend its rule and pass the joint resolution approving the covenant by unanimous consent of all those present. He placed into the record a letter from President Ford indicating that the covenant had his personal endorsement.

Memorandum, March 27, 1975, Janka to Scowcroft
Memorandum, June 26, 1975, Kissinger to President
Letter, July 1, 1975, President to Speaker of the House of Representatives
Letter, July 1, 1975, President to President of the Senate
Memorandum, July 8, 1975, Bennett to Friedersdorf
Memorandum, July 11, 1975, Friedersdorf to President
Letter, July 11, 1975, Hughes to Haley

Even before the House of Representatives acted, the Ford Administration knew that the path to approval in the U. S. Senate was not going to be as easy. The opposition to the covenant in the Senate came from several different directions – from the senators opposed to the fragmentation of the Trust Territory, from senators opposed to any expansion of U.S. jurisdiction over remote insular areas, and from senators opposed to potential military use of the islands at a time when the Vietnam War had provoked such widespread hostility to the military forces. As a result, the covenant was considered separately by three Senate committees – Interior, Foreign Relations, and Armed Services. Williams and his staff, working in close collaboration with members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, organized and implemented an impressive lobbying effort. In the final stages of Senate consideration of the legislation, Williams repeatedly sought the assistance of the White House staff and President Ford himself.

Memorandum, July 14, 1975, Froebe to Kissinger
Memorandum, July 17, 1975, Kissinger to President
Letter, November 7, 1975, Williams to Friedersdorf
Memorandum, November 13, 1975, OMSN to Percy
Letter, December 5, 1975, Williams to Friedersdorf
Letter, December 10, 1975, Williams to President
Memorandum, December 12, 1975, Barnes to Scowcroft
Letter, January 14, 1976, Williams to Ingersoll
Memorandum, January 15, 1976, Barnes to Hyland
Memorandum, January 16, 1976, Barnes to Hyland
Memorandum, January 16, 1976, Scowcroft to President
Memorandum, January 20, 1976, Bennett to Scowcroft
Memorandum, January 26, 1976, Scowcroft to President
Letter, January 28, 1976, Williams to President

This persistent effort was eventually successful. On February 24, 1976, the U.S. Senate approved the covenant by a vote of 66 to 23, with 11 not voting. On March 24, 1976, the legislation approving the covenant was signed by President Ford at a festive ceremony attended by many Northern Marianas leaders, U.S. officials, and legislators who had worked so hard to achieve this goal over the years.

Memorandum, March 19, 1976, Frey to President
Memorandum, March 24, 1976, Cannon to President
Memorandum, March 24, 1976, Scowcroft to President

The Micronesian Status Negotiations

Based on extensive negotiations during the Nixon Administration, Ambassador Williams achieved a tentative agreement in July 1974 with the two co-chairmen of the Micronesian negotiating committee regarding a draft compact of free association. As reported to the U.S. Congress a few months later, however, many issues remained unresolved. These included such matters as land options for U.S. military use in Palau, the failure of the Congress of Micronesia to enact acceptable legislation for the return of public land to the districts, changes being proposed to the draft compact that appeared to limit U.S. defense or foreign affairs responsibilities, and a newly expressed opposition to the separate Northern Marianas negotiations. When the draft compact was presented to the Congress of Micronesia, it responded by stating that the compact's financial provisions were "unacceptably inadequate," by trying unsuccessfully to replace its current negotiating team, and by calling for a popular referendum to determine the people's choice among independence, status quo, free association, commonwealth or some other alternative. With a constitutional convention scheduled for the summer of 1975, it appeared the convention would now probably precede rather than follow determination of the future international status of the five Micronesian districts other than the Northern Marianas.

Statement, September 12, 1974, Williams to the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee

Letter, December 2, 1974, Salii to Williams

Memorandum, March 12, 1975, Wilson to Acting Secretary of State

Although the Micronesian Constitutional Convention did not expressly deal with questions of political status, its deliberations and approval on November 8, 1975, of a proposed constitution for the "Federated States of Micronesia" did produce some early speculation regarding its impact on future status negotiations. First, there appeared to be some growing consensus among the participants as to the enlarged powers over defense and foreign affairs needed by any new freely associated state. Second, it became evident that some districts of the Trust Territory, Palau and perhaps the Marshall Islands, would probably not approve the draft constitution, but elect to pursue their own relationship with the United States. In view of these and other developments during 1975, Williams recommended to the president in December 1975 that a full policy review be undertaken for the purpose of updating the NSC Under Secretaries Committee Micronesian policy paper of November 14, 1973. In anticipation of informal discussions between Williams and the leaders of the Micronesian negotiating committee in January 1976 (the first such discussions since October 1974), the federal agencies undertook to evaluate the present state of the negotiations in light of the work of the Micronesian Constitutional Convention and other recent developments

Airgram, November 11, 1975, Bergesen to State Department

Letter, December 10, 1975, Williams to President

Memorandum, December 15, 1975, Trent to Interagency Working Group

In January 1976 the Under Secretaries Committee was directed to undertake a review of American policy regarding the future status of Micronesia, excluding the Northern Mariana Islands. Under direction from Brent Scowcroft, the assistant to the president for national security affairs, the study was to review the negotiating instructions previously approved and develop options for U.S. policy. In particular, the Under Secretaries Committee was to examine indications, including the new draft Micronesian constitution, that the Micronesians were not amenable to a free association relationship consistent with the present U.S. negotiating instructions. A deadline of March 1, 1976, was set for completion of the study. Contemporary reports from Micronesia about current sentiment, and the many complications that precluded prompt agreement on a draft compact of free association, confirmed the need for the reassessment of American policy now underway.

Memorandum, January 20, 1976, Scowcroft to Chairman, Under Secretaries Committee

Memorandum, January 28, 1976, Gathright to Under Secretaries Committee
Airgram, February 6, 1976, Bergesen to State Department

The interagency deliberated on a wide range of issues – including present defense interests in view of the approval of the Northern Marianas agreement, a realistic appraisal of status options, and issues regarding fragmentation, financial assistance, and transition. The deadline for submitting the study was extended to April 10, 1976. When a draft study was circulated for comment, it elicited some substantial criticism. The Department of Defense strongly objected to the study's endorsement of an independence option, coupled with a statement that the United States would negotiate only with a unified Micronesia, and a firm commitment to terminate the trusteeship no later than 1981. According to Defense, "we have not attempted to prepare Micronesia for unity combined with independence" and this option consequently presents "a great many uncertainties" and substantial risks to the national security of the United States. The Department of the Interior also took issue with the study's recommendations, in particular its failure to recognize that unity does not exist in Micronesia, indeed even within single districts. Accordingly, Interior maintained that "we must eventually negotiate separately with those desiring it and in unison with those wishing unity." Interior concluded that the negotiating scenario set out in the draft study "will simply serve only to force the friendly districts of the Marshalls and Palau away from us by imposing upon them a political status that they do not want and a unity with other districts that they intensely resent."

Memorandum of Conversation, February 19, 1976, prepared by OMSN

Memorandum, March 25, 1976, Barnes to Scowcroft

Memorandum, April 13, 1976, Rice to Interagency Group

Memorandum, April 14, 1976, Crowe to Trent

On April 30, 1976, the members of the Under Secretaries Committee received the results of the interagency group's labors: a draft memorandum for the president, instructions for Ambassador Williams, and an interagency study on the future political status of Micronesia. Comments from the NSC staff suggested that the draft

memorandum for the president and the draft instructions required substantial additional work. The NSC staff pointed out that the draft memorandum and instructions did not reflect the interagency differences set forth in the study, that the draft memorandum and study were inconsistent with respect to the handling of the independence option, that similar inconsistencies existed regarding the possibility of revisions to the draft compact of free association, and that the draft memorandum and study offered the president very different assessments of political conditions in Micronesia.

**Memorandum, April 30, 1976, Gathright to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, May 12, 1976, Davis to Gathright**

Further deliberation about these documents was interrupted by an unexpected request from Williams for immediate direction regarding an early meeting with the Micronesian negotiators. Williams advised Scowcroft that the Micronesian negotiators wanted to meet during the last week of May 1976 and conclude negotiations on a proposed compact of free association. He reported their conviction that such an early resumption of negotiations was necessary to prevent the break off of Palau and the Marshalls and that the compact was “perhaps the best and last chance for Micronesian unity.” Williams contended that helping the Micronesians stay together also served important U.S. interests, although acknowledging the risk that attainment of unity may not be possible or, if negotiated, might come unraveled. He observed that the compact as presently drafted satisfies all basic U.S. negotiating objectives and that the most important issue likely to be raised related to the extent of Micronesian authority over the marine resources of Micronesia. Language had been proposed on this subject by the Micronesians by way of a compromise. Williams recommended that he be granted the authority to grant Micronesia, “with certain safeguards, an exception to full U.S. authority over foreign affairs as it applies to Micronesian marine resources.”

Memorandum, May 17, 1976, Williams to Scowcroft

Williams was not given the authority he requested in advance of his discussions with the Micronesian negotiators. It conflicted with the current interagency consensus on this point as reflected in the draft memorandum to the president and the draft instructions that had been circulated to members of the Under Secretaries Committee. The proposed instructions limited him to discussions with the Micronesians about various aspects of developing marine resources while making “it clear that you cannot offer the prospect of US agreement to exclusive Micronesian authority for the negotiation of inter-governmental agreements or the right of unilateral imposition by Micronesia of conditions regulating exploitation of marine resources.” Scowcroft was advised by his staff that the State Department strongly opposed “any further concessions to the Micronesians in the field of foreign affairs, and no other agency takes exception.” Under the time schedule proposed by Williams, there was not sufficient time for the questions raised to be fully explored by the various agencies and a specific proposal to be presented to the president for decision. Without such a process and decision, the current instructions under which Williams was operating did not permit him to support the compromise that

had been advanced by the Micronesians. Williams was officially so notified on May 27, 1976.

Memorandum, May 24, 1976, Robinson to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, May 26, 1976, Barnes to Scowcroft
Cable, May 27, 1976, Hyland to Williams

On June 2, 1976, Williams and the Micronesian negotiators initialed a proposed compact of free association with only two open issues. One issue related to the authority and control over Micronesia's waters and ocean resources after the trusteeship was terminated. The parties hoped that negotiations on this issue could be resumed in time to achieve a final agreement before the Congress of Micronesia opened its session on July 19, 1976. But any such negotiations required the development of new instructions for Williams. After a full exposition of the issues and the various options, the Under Secretaries Committee in a draft memorandum to the president recommended that the United States make a major concession on this issue in order to win acceptance of the compact of free association and to avoid adverse international consequences if the United States insisted that it should exercise full authority over Micronesia's waters and marine resources. The recommended option would recognize that Micronesia's marine resource rights and all beneficial rights in an exclusive economic zone were vested in the people of Micronesia as well as jurisdiction within Micronesia's territorial sea. "As a last resort in order to get a final and full agreement which satisfies and protects basic United States interest," the Committee recommended that Micronesia's rights in these resources be fully recognized so long as any treaties affecting these waters were agreed to by the United States before signature, and the United States was able to stop "any Micronesian action which conflicts or might conflict with basic United States security interests or international obligations." Comments on the draft memorandum were requested within the week

Compact of Free Association, June 2, 1976, Williams
Memorandum, June 30, 1976, Poats to Under Secretaries Committee

In an effort to get an early and favorable presidential decision on the question, Williams met with Scowcroft on July 5, 1976. He advised Scowcroft of his intention to resign his position as of the end of the month. In the course of a wide ranging discussion he emphasized the continued factionalism among the Micronesian islands and the difficulty in dealing with the marine resources issue. He reported that it now seemed unlikely that any compact could be finalized for presentation to the Congress of Micronesia at its next session with a possible plebiscite in the fall or early in 1977. He told Scowcroft that "new Micronesian leaders have taken charge of the negotiations, and they are less friendly and seem to be in no hurry." He explained some of the challenges now facing the Asia Foundation and the need for him to return full time to those duties. He later submitted a formal letter of resignation to President Ford. At a meeting with Williams on July 28, 1976, the president personally thanked for his more than five years of constructive and successful service.

Memorandum, July 2, 1976, Taylor to Scowcroft
Letter, July 8, 1976, Williams to President
Memorandum, July 21, 1976, Barnes to Scowcroft
Memorandum, July 27, 1976, Scowcroft to President

The day after Williams submitted his letter of resignation, Secretary of State Kissinger recommended that the president nominate Graham A. Martin, a career foreign service officer, to serve as his personal representative for the Micronesian status negotiations. The timing of Kissinger's recommendation was clearly designed to end several months of "bureaucratic maneuvering over a replacement" for Williams after he had advised Scowcroft earlier in the year that he would like to be relieved of his responsibilities in July. While this nomination was under consideration, Ambassador Philip Manhard functioned as the U.S. Deputy Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, a position he had held since June 1976. No replacement for Williams was designated and Manhard served as the president's acting personal representative for the remainder of the Ford Administration.

Letter, March 26, 1976, Zeder to Scowcroft
Memorandum, April 6, 1976, Barnes to Scowcroft
Memorandum, July 9, 1976, Kissinger to President
Memorandum, August 20, 1976, Bennett to President
Memorandum, September 3, 1976, Scowcroft to Nessen
White House Press Release, September 7, 1976
Memorandum, November 16, 1976, Poats to Under Secretaries Committee

The federal agencies continued to deliberate regarding the proposed memorandum to the president regarding Micronesian control of marine resources, although at a more leisurely pace than originally contemplated. Interior expressed serious reservations about the impact of granting any such control to the Micronesians, suggesting that "it will be difficult to resist similar demands from others in the same political system regardless of differences in nature of the relationship." Interior reluctantly supported the fourth of the proposed options, but only if the Micronesians agreed to a series of conditions, including their readiness to forego any other substantive modifications to the initialed compact of June 2, 1976. The Office of Management and Budget suggested that the United States "should re-think its entire position on future status relationships, if in fact the negotiations are going "to proceed with a new Micronesian negotiating team with its own new set of rules." But if the negotiations do go forward based on the initialed compact, the Office recommended that the first option, ie. preserving full authority to the United States, should be adhered to if at all possible and that the fourth option should not be considered at all. Based on the input from these and other agencies, Manhard drafted a letter to the Micronesian negotiators on the subject. As finally approved and sent, the letter asserted that the United States was "prepared to negotiate on the basis that the benefits from exploitation of the living and non-living resources off the coasts of Micronesia accrue to the people of Micronesia."

Memorandum, August 3, 1976, Frizzell to Chairman, Under Secretaries

Committee
Memorandum, August 6, 1976, Ogilvie to Robinson
Draft letter, October 6, 1976, Manhard to Amaraich
Memorandum, October 19, 1976, Poats to Under Secretaries Committee

During the last several months of the Ford Administration it became clear that further progress with the Micronesians based on the initialed compact of June 2, 1976, was unlikely. In late September the Marshall Islands Political Status Commission submitted a draft paper setting forth the positions that it anticipated presenting to the United States on behalf of the Marshall Islands in separate status negotiations. Key Marshallese leaders declared their preference for complete independence from the United States and many Micronesian leaders expressed doubt about continued U.S. support for a unified Micronesia. With the possibility of negotiations with the Micronesians in December 1976, the Department of State submitted its views on the marine resources issue. It claimed that the earlier staff memorandum was “inaccurate and biased in critical respects” and contended that the second and third options should be considered with the retention of full U.S. responsibility for Micronesian foreign affairs.

Letter, September 21, 1976, Allen to Manhard
Memorandum, October 15, 1976, Robnson to Scowcroft
Memorandum, November 5, 1976, Edmond to Poats

In the midst of these deliberations, the NSC staff reminded the Under Secretaries Committee that it had never completed the overall review of U.S. policy regarding the future status of Micronesia requested in January 1976. Under Manhard’s direction, the Interagency Group for Miconesian Status Negotiations produced a lengthy and thoughtful review of the situation in late November for consideration by the Under Secretaries Committee. Among other proposed U.S. positions, it recommended a substantial modification of the American position on Micronesian marine resources, a last-ditch effort to pursue free association with a unified Micronesia, and that the United States continue to refuse to undertake separate status negotiations with any single district while outlining a fallback position if Palau and the Marshalls continued to boycott the Micronesian negotiating group and to refuse to be bound by its negotiations. The State Department continued its opposition to the proposed U.S. position on marine resources. The other members of the Interagency Group did not accept State’s proposed revisions to the study’s recommendations and the entire study went forward to the Under Secretaries Committee on January 10, 1977. Two days before President Ford left office, the Chairman of the Under Secretaries Committee advised Scowcroft that the Committee had not completed its policy review requested by the NSC staff. He advised Scowcroft that there was agreement at the task force level that the United States should make a further effort to achieve a compact of free association with a unified Micronesia and that achievement of this objective would depend on dealing with the separatist tendencies in the Marshall Islands and Palau and resolving Micronesian demand for control over their marine resources.

Letter, September 21, 1976, Allen to Manhard

Memorandum, October 15, 1976, Robnson to Scowcroft
Memorandum, November 5, 1976, Edmond to Poats
Memorandum, November 16, 1976, Poats to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, November 29, 1976, Interagency Group to Special Assistant to President
Memorandum, November 29, 1976, OMSN to Special Assistant to President
Memorandum, November 30, 1976, Manhard to Interagency Group
Memorandum, December 21, 1976, Edmond to Manhard
Memorandum, January 7, 1977, Manhard to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, January 10, 1977, Manhard to Under Secretaries Committee
Memorandum, January 18, 1977, Robinson to Scowcroft

The Secret Guam Study

In December 1974 the National Security Council staff presented to Secretary of State Kissinger the results of an interagency study of Guam's political study that had been initiated in 1973 and completed in August 1974. The study reflected a concern within the executive branch that Guam's dissatisfaction with its territorial political status needed to be addressed by the federal government for two basic reasons – to defuse any possible opposition by Guamanians to the newly proposed commonwealth status for the Northern Mariana Islands and to reaffirm Guam's positive contribution to the national security and defense interests of the United States in the Western Pacific. The NSC staff recommended that Kissinger endorse the principal conclusions of the study and advise President Ford to approve them and direct their implementation by the federal agencies, in particular the Department of the Interior. With respect to political status, the study recommended that Guam be offered some form of commonwealth status that would be at least equal to the terms being negotiated with the Northern Marianas. On Kissinger's recommendation, the president approved the study's principal conclusions on February 1, 1975, and an interagency group met on March 11, 1975 to consider implementation of the president's directive. The presidential directive was never implemented. The only documents publicly available in this Library collection relating to the study were the following:

Memorandum, December 23, 1974, Froebe to Kissinger
Memorandum, March 11, 1975, re Committee meeting on Guam
Memorandum, February 23, 1976, Scowcroft to Cannon

The history of this study and its failed implementation are discussed in Willens & Ballendorf, *The Secret Guam Study: How President Ford's 1975 Approval of Commonwealth Was Blocked by Federal Officials* (Saipan, MP: Micronesian Area Research Center and NMI Historic Preservation Office, 2005). Most of the relevant documents regarding the study and discussed in the book were found in the files of the Interior, State, and Defense departments and were made available only after litigation was initiated by Professor Ballendorf.

