

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON

hold for staff meeting
James meaning that you agree has been discussed to AF. He has the situation in hand.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

February 20, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BUNDY

SUBJECT: Pacific Trust Territory Task Force

It has been just a year since the Pacific Trust Territory Task Force was set up under the chairmanship of the Department of the Interior to carry out the President's instructions contained in NSAM 145, dated April 18, 1962, (copy of which is attached). It is the painful truth that very little has been accomplished by the Task Force. Indeed, about the only action that has been taken has come from the President himself in issuing an executive order relaxing the controls over the movement of U.S. citizens to and from Guam and the Trust Territories. Interior failed to get its supplemental appropriation for the Territories through the Congress at the last session and -- worse still -- has failed to come up with anything faintly resembling a coherent program in the fields of education and economic development for which, if I were a Congressman, I would vote any money.

In the face of these failures, the Department of Interior has not been able to take specific action to develop a detailed, sensible program.

As you know, the "anti-Colonial" Committee of the United Nations has been increased from 17 to 24 and now includes some African and Asian nations who are definitely unfriendly to us. I don't like to think of the impact of the story of our efforts in the Territory when it is put on the record.

Finally, we are already in the midst of this session of Congress and without the generation of a full head of steam I feel we will fall flat on our faces again.

I must accept a good deal of personal responsibility for this sad state of affairs. It has not been possible, sitting as a member of this task force, to produce an effective sense of urgency in the Department concerned. The time has come, I think, for the White House to take more vigorous action.

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By SF NARA Date 6/29/95

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A quick visit to Saipan last month has convinced me that the situation is truly appalling in the Trust Territories of the Pacific. Indeed, they seem to be receiving the worst of both possible worlds, since they get benefits of being neither an integral part of the United States nor an under developed foreign country for which development assistance, PL 480, and Peace Corps are available. The result has been that local opinion such as it is not being won for the United States. In short, Cambodia is receiving ten times the expert attention from this Government that our wards in the Western Pacific are getting.

I would suggest that we ask for a report from the Task Force in the next couple of weeks, setting an absolutely firm deadline for a meeting with the President. I would hope that Harlan Cleveland would participate, since his Bureau has seen the issues clearly. At the meeting I would hope that the President would express himself with his characteristic forcefulness and perhaps even with some sarcasm, direct that the Task Force be placed under White House chairmanship, and give another directive, this time going into some detail on what specific responsibilities each of the agencies concerned should take. I would also hope that the President would put the Congressional aspects of the Trust Territories fairly high on his legislative program, perhaps with a special message. Would you let me know if you agree with this procedure?


Michael V. Forrestal

cc: Mr. Kaysen
Mr. Dungan
Mr. Johnson

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