

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
S E C R E T

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August 9, 1965

TO : The Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S *JW*  
FROM : IO - Joseph J. Sisco *JJS*  
SUBJECT: Future of United States-administered Territories  
ACTION MEMORANDUM

During debate on reapportionment, Senator Hiram L. Fong (R-Hawaii) announced his intention to introduce a resolution calling for a study of the possibility of Hawaii's annexing the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and perhaps American Samoa and Guam. Senators Ernest Gruening (D-Alaska) and Ralph W. Yarborough (D-Texas) immediately supported Senator Fong's idea. Though only one in a series of Congressional paper initiatives concerning our territories, Senator Fong's proposal has received some publicity, including public criticism by Guam's representative in Washington (attached).

I believe we should take advantage of the interest thus generated to secure a much-needed tangible step forward in resolving the question of the future status of the TTPI and our own territories, American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

As you know, this problem has been recognized and talked about for a long time, without much real movement or, indeed, any precise determination of final goals and how to achieve them, except for general agreement on the desirability of the territories' continued association with the United States in one way or another.

In the case of the TTPI, NSAM 145 calls for giving the inhabitants "a real option at the appropriate time to move into a new and lasting relationship to the United States within our political framework." In the case of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, no objectives have been defined.

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This state of affairs cannot be permitted to endure. Extended discussion of the U.S. territories and the TTPI in various United Nations bodies and the prospect of even closer scrutiny as other colonial problems are eliminated require early action on the issue to meet our strategic and military need of the territories and to preserve a favorable international image. We must begin now to draw up a coordinated plan which will remove the non-self-governing and trusteeship labels from these territories and culminate in a clear definition of the relationship of the territories to the United States which will effectively terminate the international obligations of the United States relative to their administration.

We are in the process of clearing a full memorandum from you to the President, which poses the problem in terms of the growing desire of the inhabitants for more self-government and clarification of their relationship with the United States; the increased importance of the territories for military use and the consequent need to insure their availability; and the heightened attention in the United Nations directed to the U.S. territories and the TTPI; and discusses the various alternatives for terminal status. The package should be ready for you in the near future.

I should like to recommend now, however, that action responsibility to formulate and execute a coordinated plan to remove the territories from legitimate international scrutiny be placed in the White House, which would draw as necessary upon the resources of the various Government agencies, and that, using the Fong proposal as a peg, action on this recommendation begin immediately.

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RECOMMENDATION

1. That you discuss informally with McGeorge Bundy the desirability of an immediate appointment by the White House of a senior official with action responsibility to plan and execute a coordinated program to associate the TTPI and the U.S. territories with the United States as soon as possible in a manner fulfilling our international obligations.

Approve \_\_\_\_\_

[Redacted signature box]

OR 2. Alternatively, if you approve of the idea, you could authorize me to call McGeorge Bundy and pursue the matter.

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Approve \_\_\_\_\_

[Redacted signature box]

*10 - Mr. Keller informed 8/20 6:45 PM*

Concurrences:

- SPA - Mr. Cuthell *DWS*
- S/P - Mr. Lindley *DWS*
- G/PM - Col. Evans *DWS*
- L/UNA - Mr. Schwebel *DWS*

OR 3. OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment:

\_\_\_\_\_ - Newspaper Clippings

cc: AMBASSADOR MACARTHUR

*DWS - Web*

IO:UNP:PMByrne/DFMcHenry:cap

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