

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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TO : IO - Mr. Sisco

DATE: June 1, 1966

FROM : UNP - Elizabeth A. Brown

2087

SUBJECT: Meeting with Interior Secretary Udall on Future of TTPI,  
4 PM Today -- BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

In the attached briefing book you will find the background documents pertinent to the problem of the future political status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. (Since Defense has specifically signed on to McHenry's original paper which dealt with the three U.S. Territories as well as the TTPI and since the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is requesting the Senior Interdepartmental Group to consider the McHenry approach, you will find in a separate brown binder both the September 7, 1965 draft approved by Defense and the later February 16, 1966 draft subsequently discussed with Interior but not with Defense.)

I suggest the following talking points:

1. There are indications that opinion leaders in the TTPI are restless, conscious of economic and social stagnation, and looking for some sort of political identity other than "wards" of the United Nations. Although currently favorably disposed toward casting their lot permanently with the United States there is some danger the TTPI inhabitants will in the future become more vocal in their discontent and look toward other possibilities including independence or some form of association with Japan if we do not move faster toward political self-determination. Development of this tendency could in the long run jeopardize our control over the area.

2. The United States strategic interest in continued control over the islands of the TTPI has been reaffirmed by the Department of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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3. The TTPI is becoming the prime target of unfriendly critics in the Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly. Its proximity to Guam and potential usefulness for military bases (still non-existent except for special facilities for communications and missile testing) to support our long-term commitments in the Far East presage increased problems for the future. Soviet carping on these themes sharpens the legitimate concerns of the Africans and Asians about the lack of political development in the TTPI.

4. State believes there is room in the United States political system for a political relationship with a self-governing TTPI similar to the Puerto Rican experience. The situation demands we devise a means to achieve such a relationship which will make the TTPI a permanent part of the United States and will remove it from United Nations supervision.

5. Some officials of Interior have indicated a view that the inhabitants are not yet capable of running their own affairs. If this is really true, although many other societies are making shift with a similar situation, then they can be supplied with the advice they need. The important thing is to give the people the chance to work out their own economic and social futures with our help.

6. Thus, the proposal in the draft memorandum to the Secretary approaches the goal in two stages. It provides for an apprenticeship period of three-five years, during which the development of the necessary political and economic infrastructure can be nurtured by U.S. officials. If it doesn't work, our proposal is flexible enough to make necessary additions. The important thing is to take action now while we have full control.

IO:UNP:DRM <sup>1/11</sup> :ls:cap