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SECRET ATTACHMENT

IO - Mr. Sisco
Ambassador Anderson

September 14, 1966

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UNP - Elizabeth Ann Brown

Your Appointment with Under Secretary Luce, Interior --
Trust Territories Question

Your call on Mr. Luce would be a favorable time to
get across some general points on the TTPI.

1. Relations with Interior. There has in the past
been some misunderstanding of our position on the TTPI
and a suspicion that we are planning to supplant Interior
in the administration of the territory or to try to
substitute some other government agency. On the contrary,
we consider the Interior Department the logical agency to
administer the TTPI and wish to support and cooperate with
it fully. We have high confidence in High Commissioner
Norwood, who impressed us all with his presentation at
this year's session of the Trusteeship Council and with
what we have heard of his work in the Islands.

2. Nature of Department's Interest. The State
Department's interest and role in the TTPI springs from
the legal status of the area (FYI - on which there has
been a real lack of understanding in the Interior
Department - END FYI.) The TTPI is not like Guam or the
Virgin Islands, which are territorial possessions of the
United States at our full disposal. The Trust Territory
is a former League of Nations mandate seized from the
Japanese by force of arms during the Second World War.
We could have simply added to our territorial possessions
but instead chose to place it under the UN Trusteeship
System. The ensuing Trusteeship Agreement with the
United Nations has the status of an international treaty
obligation of the United States vis-a-vis the United
Nations: the U.S. has full administrative control over

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12 year inter-
vals; not automatically
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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REVIEWED BY B. H. BAAS DATE 3/25/87

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the area but we are subject to examination and advice from the Trusteeship Council. The State Department's interest in the matter is to represent the U.S. on the Trusteeship Council, to defend to the UN the progress we have made toward implementation of the treaty and to ensure that its provisions are ultimately executed; we have to ensure that our administration of the area appears in its true light and is not exploited by hostile and Soviet propaganda as "modern colonialism".

3. Obligations under the Trusteeship Agreement.

We have a treaty obligation under the Trusteeship Agreement to move the Trust Territory toward "self-government or independence". This phrase has come to be understood in the United Nations practice as a free choice by the population under international supervision between independence and self-governing status in some relationship with another state. This is a legal commitment which we are ultimately obliged to fulfill. At the same time and in some conflict with the foregoing, the TTPI is a Strategic Trust, the only one under the Charter, and an area of considerable military importance to us.

Sentiment in the Territory at the present is favorable to us, although there is dissatisfaction over the failure to make economic progress. While this favorable sentiment is at its height, we would like to carry out our Trusteeship Agreement obligation to give the population of the area a free choice on self-determination in a way which will make more durable our hold over the area and lead to removal of the Territory from UN supervision. We believe that to delay this choice risks the development of nationalistic and possibly pro-Japanese sentiment in the area which could in the long run prove extremely troublesome. The Defense Department, which is interested in the area as a fall back for Okinawa and because of its importance for missileery, also supports a move to fulfill our Trusteeship Agreement commitment in this sense.

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4. Formula. Both Interior and State share these views but we have thus far been unable to reach agreement on a formula covering the choices to be placed before the population. Some assert that the population is not sufficiently politically developed to make a choice. We do not propose an immediate plebiscite. Rather, we suggest that the Executive Branch, in cooperation with the Congress, formulate the possible alternatives and then place them before the population in an educational campaign of a year or more aiming toward a plebiscite under UN auspices in 1968. We suggest the following formula: The plebiscite should offer a choice between (a) independence, (b) continuation of the present status, and (c) permanent association with the United States with provision for self-governing status, the specific nature of which will be determined by the population itself after a period of 10 years. (The latest draft of our proposal is attached for your information.)

5. Need for Decision Now. We have been discussing this decision for several years and time is slipping away. There is a need to come to grips with it for a final decision. In the more immediate sense, we are faced with the visit of a Visiting Mission of the Trusteeship Council at the beginning of next year. This group will be directly interested in progress we have made in moving the people toward self-determination. We also face our annual report to the session of the Trusteeship Council in May, to which the Visiting Mission will also make its report. The main focus of that Council session will be the question when we are going to permit the inhabitants of the Trust Territory to make their decision. It is conceivable during the Trusteeship Council session that the Australians may announce independence dates for New Guinea and Nauru, leaving the Trust Territory the only remaining area under the Trusteeship System. In response to the insistent questioning of the members of the Council during its last session in July, our representatives indicated that the time of setting a date for the decision of the people was coming closer. They will have to be more specific on this point at the next Council meeting.

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6. Economic Backwardness, U.S. Public Image, and Personnel Problems. During the U.S. Navy administration of the TTPI and the Interior administration until recently, the prevailing atmosphere has been one of military occupation or keeping things as they were, on a maintenance basis only. Economic conditions in the area are still sub-standard, even deplorable. This fact is known internationally - officially, because of the scrutiny of the Trusteeship Council - and damages our reputation. While the natural resources of the area are limited, what is needed is a development mentality. We think Mr. Norwood has such an approach, but he needs support from a staff with the same viewpoint. This is not presently the case and there should be changes notably among the District Administrators. It might be a good idea for his deputy (none designated as yet) to be an energetic and experienced economic development man; it might well be possible to obtain such a person on a loan from AID. Also worth considering in view of the special circumstances is the possibility of setting up a separate unit within Interior to administer and develop the Territory.

Attachment:

Draft memorandum on Future
Political Status of the TTPI.

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DRAFT MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

**SUBJECT: Future Political Status of the Trust Territory
of the Pacific Islands**

I recommend that you take early action to bring about definitive political association of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands with the United States; the Territory is now administered by the United States on behalf of the local population under terms of the Trusteeship Agreement of 1947 with the United Nations.

The Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have reaffirmed categorically the need for continued reliance on the availability of the Caroline, Mariana and Marshall island groupings for support of long-range United States commitments in the Far East. Steadily mounting pressures in the United Nations for more rapid advance toward the self-determination we pledged when signing the Trusteeship Agreement 20 years ago are making our present form of administration in the TTPI an increasing liability. The people of Micronesia have been awakened to the modern world and are beginning to look for an alternative to political stagnation as wards of the United Nations.

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Secretary McNamara, Secretary Udall, Ambassador Goldberg and I agree that we must now take steps to permit termination of the Trusteeship Agreement through the exercise of a plebiscite by the people of the Trust Territory. Such a plebiscite, to conform with U.N. practice of supervision and the obligations which we undertook in the Trusteeship Agreement, should offer the following choices: independence, continuation of trusteeship status, free association with the United States with provision for self-governing status, the specific nature of which will be determined by the population itself after a period of 10 years.

It is clear that the people of the Trust Territory presently desire some form of association with the United States. Their acceptance of free association with the United States under these conditions would mean that the Trusteeship Agreement would remain in effect until the referendum establishing a system of self-government had taken place. At that time, the Territory would be fully incorporated in the American political system.

This formula is purposely unspecific about the future legal status of the Territory within the American system

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because it would be difficult in a plebiscite to be held soon to request the population to decide on a specific final status. I have doubts that at the present juncture the Micronesian people would choose to become part of Hawaii, as has been suggested, or that such a realignment could be accomplished without serious strains in the area. For instance, there is strong sentiment in the Marianas Islands for integration with the ethnically similar Territory of Guam which lies in their midst. Moreover, there are bound to be reservations among the inhabitants of the Trust Territory as a whole based on a desire to avoid loss of their own cultural and ethnic identity, fear of possible exploitation as a backwater of Hawaii, and reluctance to exchange reliance on more direct Federal Government support for an unpredictable future with a state government involved with its own more proximate concerns.

I recommend that you authorize initiation of consultations with the appropriate Congressional committees on

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such a program, possibly culminating in adoption of a joint resolution of Congress expressing its readiness to accept association of the territory with the United States if this should be the choice of the population in a forthcoming plebiscite supervised by the United Nations.

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