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TO : The Under Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S  
FROM : IO - Joseph J. Sisco  
SUBJECT: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands:  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

For some time we have been working on a program providing for permanent association of the TTPI with the United States in a status of sufficient local political autonomy consistent with this relationship to remove it from further UN supervision. We have developed a plan looking toward an early plebiscite in the TTPI offering 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 people of the TTPI after a specified period -- probably 5 to 10 years.

Our primary purpose in expediting this program is to maintain the area for the United States because of its strategic importance, particularly in light of our long-range commitments in the Far East. We believe that the earlier the people of the TTPI are given the opportunity to express themselves on their political future the better the prospect of obtaining the right answer, namely permanent association with the United States.

I want to involve you now in order to complete the process of clearance for this program. What is required to put the finishing touches on our efforts is for you to get together with Secretary Udall, Defense, Ambassador Goldberg and me to agree on just how to proceed. Interior's primary concern is its anticipation of a very serious

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY <u>B.H. BAAS</u>	DATE <u>3/25/87</u>
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Congressional problem. Secretary Udall has told us the way to sell the proposal is for him, you, and Ambassador Goldberg to undertake consultations with key individuals on the Hill - covering the Interior, Armed Services and foreign affairs committees in both House and Senate. Representative Aspinall and Senator Jackson will be the key to the success of such efforts.

Attached is a paper describing the program in greater detail and giving additional background which might be a basis for discussion. I have asked to meet with you at 3:00 P. M., Monday, January 23, to discuss this problem with a view to arranging an early high-level meeting with Secretary Udall, Ambassadors Goldberg and Anderson, Defense and a member of Walt Rostow's staff. Representatives of EA, L and S/P will also attend, and I have provided them with the attached paper.

Attachment:

Background paper on  
TTPI

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Background Paper

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

We have a treaty commitment under an agreement with the UN Security Council to give the people of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) the right of self-determination; our problem is to find a way to do so in circumstances ensuring the continued association of the area with the United States, which the JCS consider essential for strategic reasons, and removing the area from further international supervision. Our failure to move with reasonable speed could jeopardize a favorable political climate in the Territory and could create serious problems for us in the UN. We must in any case anticipate particularly keen international scrutiny of U.S. administration in the United Nations Trusteeship Council which has a visiting mission (Australia, France, Liberia, United Kingdom) scheduled to inspect the Territory early in 1967.

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The problem is complicated by the poor job we have done in administering the Territory and the extent to which this has been publicized. Despite recognition throughout the Government that the resources being devoted to the development of the Trust Territory are insufficient, proposals for increased appropriations were not acted upon by the 89th Congress; they will be resubmitted in 1967. The only step forward is the introduction of a number of Peace Corps volunteers on whom we are relying for increased assistance in the fields of elementary education, public health and community development. The new High Commissioner, William Morwood, considers he has inadequate resources to do the job in the TTPI.

Present Situation

Although Interior, which has primary responsibility in these matters, has finally begun to develop some sense of urgency, it has not yet come to grips with the basic issue of the future of the TTPI, both from a reluctance to take the initiative in a matter of strong Congressional interest as well as from concern that any program for the Trust Territory must conform to the policies we have followed

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over the years in dealing with exclusively American territories--i.e. that they must not provide a status better than that now enjoyed by our three non-self-governing territories, Guam, Samoa and the Virgin Islands. State and Defense, on the other hand, believe that the most important objective is to insure the permanent association of the TTPI with the U.S. and to provide the degree of political autonomy consistent with this relationship necessary to remove it decisively from further UN supervision.

We favor early arrangements for a plebiscite in which the people of the Territory would be able to choose their future status from among different options, followed by action in the UN to demonstrate that the people of the TTPI had exercised their right of self-determination. Such a plebiscite, to conform with UN 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

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the United States with provision for self-governing status, the specific nature of which would be determined by the population itself after a set period. Any arrangement for the Territory's political future which involves a substantial delay in the achievement of self-government would reduce the appeal in both the UN as well as the TTPI.

It is clear that the people of the Trust Territory desire some form of association with the United States. Their acceptance of free association with the United States would mean that the Trusteeship Agreement would remain in effect until the referendum establishing a system of self-government.

We doubt that the Congress would approve or that the Micronesian people themselves would choose to become part of Hawaii. Nor could such a realignment be accomplished without serious strains in the area.

Commission Proposal

The Congress of Micronesia on August 3, 1966 adopted a resolution asking the High Commissioner and the Secretary of Interior "to use their good offices"

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to petition the President "to establish a Commission to consult the people of Micronesia to ascertain their wishes and views and to study and critically assess the political alternative open to Micronesia" and to report their finding not later than December 31, 1968. Interior has just proposed submission of a bill to Congress to establish a "commission on the status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands" including members of both the United States Congress and the Congress of Micronesia along with the Executive Branch and public members appointed by the President. The purpose of the commission would be to determine and publicize the various political alternatives for Micronesia and to make recommendations following an investigation of opinion in the United States and the Trust Territory.

We are examining this proposal carefully to see whether it conforms to our legal obligations to the UN and other objectives. Apart from these considerations, however, we believe it essential that we not pass on to a commission tasks which should be properly performed by the Executive Branch. In particular, the Departments of Interior, State

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and Defense must decide in advance which political alternative we wish to obtain for the Trust Territory and determine the political and economic features with enough detail so that our preferences will appeal to the people of the Territory. To do this, an extensive "educational campaign" will be necessary among members of the relevant committees of both the Senate and the House so that we can be assured in advance that we will have the necessary legislative support for proposals put before the people of the TITL.

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