

69D550

Bot 2029

EA/ANZ

CONFIDENTIAL

2132
TIPI
03
68
R

CONFIDENTIAL

IO/UNP - Mr. William Gleysteen

February 3, 1967

EA/ANZ - Robert S. Lindquist

Political Future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

1. ANZ concurs in the IO proposal for management of the TIPI problem in that the objective is, in as short a time as possible, to change the status of the area from the present Strategic Trust to one of some form of free association with the U. S. with sufficient internal self-government to satisfy U. N. requirements.

2. However, in anticipation of strong Interior preference for their public commission formula, we believe that the Department's position on the following points should be spelled out in greater detail before the Under Secretary approaches Interior.

A. Although in theory an act of self-determination includes the freedom to opt for the status quo as a practical matter this option should be avoided in the TIPI. A U. S. object is to disengage this problem from the U. N. trustee system. It also appears to be the wish of the U. N. to terminate the Trust satisfactorily without delay. To include the option would confuse the issue for the TIPI populace as well as the U. S. Congress and public and run the risk of perpetuating into the future a situation which is most likely to be more rather than less difficult to solve as time passes. It would be better not to have a plebiscite than to risk reaffirming and reinvigorating the status quo. Therefore, the available options should include only complete independence or free association with the U. S. with adequate internal self-government.

B. The form and content of "free association" will be crucial to U. S. Congressional approval. The prospect of leap-frogging the TIPI ahead of Guam, American Samoa and the Virgin Islands in self-government may be very unpalatable—even unacceptable—to Congress, strategic arguments notwithstanding. These other territories have long been associated with the U. S., have absorbed U. S. political and social concepts at a measured pace under close Congressional scrutiny and slowly have been accorded increasing internal authority. In contrast, the TIPI is in its political infancy and has social problems with which Congress is much less knowledgeable. Thus, the various forms and degrees of "free association" — some of which the U. S. has experienced—should be examined in enough detail to enable the Department at least to be aware of possible pitfalls and, consequently, to deal most effectively with the other agencies.

Group 3 - Downgraded at 12-year intervals; not automatically declassified

CONFIDENTIAL

05 421948

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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

RDS or XDS EXP. DATE _____
TS AUTH. REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS
DECLASSIFIED RELEASABLE
RELEASE DENIED

PA OF FOI EXEMPTIONS

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

2

C. We see merit both in the controlled scenario suggested by IO and in the Interior proposal for a commission to examine the question and make recommendations. Given the history of U. S. management of non-contiguous territorial and statehood questions, we see a strong possibility that satisfactory resolution of the TTPI future status problem can include prolonged, intensive and controversial public and Congressional consideration. A commission—appointed by the President—could serve a useful and perhaps indispensable function of focussing and giving form to this procedure and producing a coherent result. Such a commission might serve as an adjunct to, rather than substitute for, Congressional hearings which may be necessary in any event. For this substantive reason and to ensure the greatest possible assurance of identity of purpose with Interior, the practicability of a commission as a useful instrument should be studied sympathetically.

cc: S/P
L/FE

EA/ABZ:RSL:indquist:rlw

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

OS 421949