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TO : The Secretary

THROUGH : The Under Secretary  
S/S

FROM : IO - Joseph J. Sisco

SUBJECT : Response to Secretary Udall's Letter Regarding Trust Territory: ACTION MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY B.H. BAAS DATE 7/27/87 *Fuller*

PPS  or XDS  EXT. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TS AUTH. \_\_\_\_\_ REASON(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS

DECLASSIFIED  RELEASABLE

RELEASE DENIED

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

In a recent letter to you (Tab B) Secretary Udall proposed that Under Secretary Katzenbach meet with Under Secretary of Interior Luce to discuss the political future of the Trust Territory, particularly a new Interior proposal for legislation to establish a Congressionally-oriented commission which would recommend means toward our objective of terminating the trusteeship status of Micronesia while simultaneously ensuring its continued free association with the U.S. The proposed response (Tab A) endorses the proposal for high-level discussions and mentions our most serious reservation about the Interior's plan.

With a JCS determination that the Territory is strategically essential to the U.S., we have been pressing to consolidate our position in the TTPI in a way consistent with our obligation under the trusteeship agreement to develop the area's independence or self-government. We have obtained

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general agreement within the Executive Branch on a dual approach whereby we would greatly accelerate the TTPI's economic development and permit an early exercise of self-determination, believing the inhabitants will freely choose continued association with the U.S. if we move fast enough. Despite this general agreement on goals, we have not yet managed to work out a specific program which would meet our various obligations and obtain Congressional support essential to implementation.

Interior's proposal for a Congressionally-established commission would have the virtue of involving the Congress deeply in the process of actually determining a program for the TTPI, but it would also come very close to dumping our Executive responsibilities on the commission without assurance of a satisfactory result. Given the attitude of the Interior committees in Congress, it is quite likely, for example, that such a commission would fail to recommend the prompt schedule for the TTPI's self-government (as distinct from self-determination) which we would need to end the trusteeship arrangement. Were the Commission's recommendations unsatisfactory in this sense we could become a legitimate target in the UN for failing to respect obligations we undertook in the trustee-

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ship agreement while we can envisage circumstances in which a commission could serve a useful function, we believe the nature of our international obligations in the Trust Territory are such that any commission should be Presidentially appointed and preceded by an extensive education campaign in the Congress.

Recommendation

That you sign the proposed reply to Secretary Udall and authorize Under Secretary Katzenbach to conduct talks with Interior, Defense, and the White House.

Concurrences:

EA/ANZ - Mr. Lindquist  
L/UNA - Mr. Reis

S/P - Capt. Behrens

Attachments:

Tab A - Letter to Secretary Udall

Tab B - Letter from Secretary Udall.

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Dear Mr. Secretary:

I fully share the sense of urgency expressed in your letter of February 2, 1967 about the need for a decision on the political future of the Trust Territory which meets our defense requirements, our international obligations, and the desires of the Micronesian people. I particularly welcome your opinion that we must take positive, constructive steps to resolve this issue because we are still convinced that if we move swiftly enough to give the Territory's people an early opportunity for self-determination and self-government, they will freely choose continuing association with the United States. This, we are agreed, is the primary objective of the exercise and should take care of our strategic interests as the JCS have defined them.

I also concur with your suggestion for prompt, high-level discussions of your proposed legislation which would establish a status commission to provide recommendations framed by representatives of the Executive, Congress, and the Micronesians themselves. One of the questions we need to examine carefully is whether a commission which would place a large measure of initiative and responsibility in the hands of the Congress would expedite or possibly delay plans for a plebiscite and the program of self-government

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necessary to terminate the trusteeship status.

Under Secretary Katzenbach, who is reviewing your new suggestion as well as a number of past proposals which have been under consideration between our respective staffs, will be ready in the very near future to meet with Under Secretary Luce. I suggest, however, that we speed up matters by inviting participation in their talks by representatives of Defense and Walt Rostow's staff.

Sincerely yours,

Dean Rusk

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