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February 16, 1967

MEMORANDUM

To: S/P - Mr. Owen

From: S/P - W. W. Behrens, Jr.

Subject: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI)

Earlier this week in your absence I cleared the IO draft memorandum to the Acting Secretary on the subject of the TTPI. This memo forwarded a proposed letter from Secretary Katzenbach to Secretary Udall in reply to an Interior letter to Secretary Rusk outlining a suggested program for progress in the TTPI. Copies of each of these papers is attached for your information.

In case you do not wish to take time for all the attached correspondence, let me summarize the present TTPI status by listing the significant recent events as follows:

- January 18. My ad hoc working group met in Interior to consider courses of action. This seemed to start new activity.
- January 23. Interior provided an advance draft copy of their proposed Commission on the Status of the TTPI, forwarded to you under cover of my memo on that date. IO undertook new, more aggressive examination of the TTPI future.
- January 24- February 1. Discussions in this Department determined that we had some problems with Interior's proposed Commission, especially IO's concern that the Commission would be Congressionally-oriented (thus usurping the Executive's responsibilities) and that the Commission proposal was a stalling tactic on the part of Interior.
- February 2. Letter from Secretary Udall to Secretary Rusk forwarding the Commission proposal for consideration, and pointing out that within a few days Interior would be submitting the Commission proposal to the Bureau of the Budget.

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-February 7. Interior submitted Commission bill to BOB.

-February 13. IO memo to Acting Secretary covering letter of response to Secretary Udall.

I am pleased that this subject continues to move. Under Secretary Katzenbach's impending African trip announced today, combined with the Secretary's current absence, may cause some delay in this Department. Defense and Interior continue active in developing their positions. Defense has set February 17 as a deadline on forming their views.

I will continue to keep you advised.

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