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basic issue of the Territory's internal self-government. Interior has not wished to take an initiative in a matter of strong Congressional interest and has argued that any program for the TTPI must conform to the slow schedules toward self-government used over the years in dealing with exclusively American territories in the Pacific, especially Guam and American Somoa.

We fully appreciate the critical role of Congress but are convinced that an Executive initiative is not only proper but essential, especially in a matter of defense, and while we recognize the political difficulties of pushing the TTPI too fast to self-government, we think the necessary adjustments could be made within the period contemplated. Although it has wobbled recently, Defense has generally supported our view because they are concerned primarily with the objectives of insuring the Territory's permanent association with us and providing the necessary degree of political autonomy to end UN supervision.

#### NEW INTERIOR PROPOSAL

Interior has now proposed legislation under which the U.S. Congress would establish a status commission to make recommendations about the TTPI's future to the President and Congress. Six members would be drawn from the U.S. Congress, six from the Micronesian Congress, and three from the Executive Branch with the Chairman selected by the President from among the members. Interior argues that we cannot accomplish our objective without having sizable, formal Congressional representation on a commission along lines they have proposed.

#### OUR PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

We do not favor either the make-up or functions of the commission proposed by Interior because it would come very close to dumping our Executive Branch responsibilities on the commission without assurance of a satisfactory result.

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Given the attitude of the Interior Committees in Congress, it is likely that such a commission would fail to appreciate the urgency and fail to recommend the degree of self-government necessary to end the Trusteeship Agreement for the TTPI.

As an alternative we would recommend that the Executive Branch: a) first decide on the specific program we want for the TTPI; b) conduct an extensive education campaign with the Congress; and then c) obtain Congressional endorsement for a Presidentially-appointed commission to work within guidelines established in advance by the President in consultation with the Congress.

For the specific program we would recommend an early announcement, perhaps by means of a joint Congressional resolution, stating our intention of granting internal self-government to the TTPI within five years followed by a plebiscite on the question of free association or independence. The commission we have in mind would not be designed to make broad policy recommendations, but rather to propose specific features of self-government and free association for the TTPI (e.g. questions of citizenship and political representation as well as budgetary, tax and customs arrangements).

A major effort would be required with the Congress to accomplish this program but we believe we could succeed if we were to present the question as a matter of urgency stemming from national security considerations.

I have attached a paper which could be used as a basis for discussion at our meeting.

Attachment:

Discussion paper.

Concurrences:

- EA/ANZ - Mr. Lindquist (substance) <sup>HP</sup>
- S/P - Capt. Behrens (substance) <sup>HP</sup>
- L/UNA - Mr. Reis (substance) <sup>HP</sup>
- H - Mr. White (draft) <sup>per WG</sup>

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