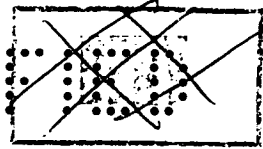


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EXCISE

RDS or XDS EXT. DATE _____ REASON(S) Discussion Paper for Meeting with
TS AUTH. _____ ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS Interior, Defense, and White House
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3-15-67

*State must
also recognize
geographic
importance?
Defense?*

Problem

1. We have a determination by the JCS that they consider it essential for strategic reasons that the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) continue to be associated with the United States. We also have an international commitment under the 1947 trusteeship agreement with the UN Security Council to promote the TTPI's independence or self-government. As long as we move promptly we are confident that these requirements can be reconciled by permitting the people of the Territory to exercise their right of self-determination in circumstances which highlight the advantage of the Territory's continued association with us.

incomplete

2. Our belief is that the sooner the TTPI is given an opportunity for self-determination, the sooner we will get from the Micronesians the answer which will best protect our strategic interests. Our failure to move swiftly enough could, however, jeopardize the generally

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ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS SECS. 1.3(a)(3) 1.4(b)
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favorable political climate which exists in the Territory today. Although local sentiment remains tame by usual standards of anti-colonialism, there has recently been a distinct growth of local interest in the TTPI's political future. We must in any case anticipate keen international scrutiny of our administration by the UN Trusteeship Council.

Congress of Micronesia

Proposed Policy

3. In broad terms we propose a dual approach toward the TTPI's future. One aspect--reflected in current requests for appropriations--would be acceleration of the Territory's economic development to the point that it would underscore ^{for the Micronesian} the value of ^{continued} association with the U.S. and undercut ^{potential} criticism from various sources. The other would be a defined program for early self-government and self-determination followed by action in the UN effectively terminating the TTPI's trusteeship status.

4. For the political program we favor an early announcement, through a concurrent Congressional resolution, stating our intention to grant internal self-government to the TTPI within a period of five years followed by a

plebiscite on the question of independence or free association with the United States. We think it virtually certain the people of the Territory would choose free association with us, thus ensuring our strategic interest. The trusteeshp system would necessarily remain in effect until such a plebiscite.

5. A plebiscite could also offer an additional option of full integration with the U.S., but we doubt that Congress would be prepared for this measure in the absence of parallel action on the American territories in the Pacific.

Feasibility

6. Assuming we consulted the UN adequately about our plans and permitted sufficient UN association with the plebiscite, we could end the trusteeshp status of the TTPI as soon as the new institutional arrangements were formally approved by Congress and the Micronesian Legislature.

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it would be generally understood

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in the UN that we had fulfilled the terms of our agreement. To the extent that we could not fully accommodate the problem in an organic act for Micronesia, we would anticipate some demands in the UN for inclusion of a specific provision permitting the people of Micronesia to opt out of ~~a choice of~~ ^{from a status of} free association with the U.S. This and other possible objections would have to be met by general statements which, while not satisfying our irreconcilable critics, would signal our decision to cease reporting to the UN or receiving UN visiting missions.

7. The proposed procedure should be satisfactory in the TTPI. The people of Micronesia would almost certainly reject independence if the desired alternative of free association were offered early enough and explained clearly enough.

8. While there would be political difficulties if the TTPI were to be leapfrogged to self-government over the American territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Somoa, the five-year period before a final plebiscite in the Trust Territory should allow enough time to avoid such a situation.

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9. A major effort would be required with the Congress to ensure ultimate endorsement of the arrangements chosen in a Micronesian plebiscite. We believe, however, that Congressional leaders would accept the program if presented in the context of national security.

Specific Program

10. We envisage three phases in carrying out this proposed policy for self-government and self-determination in the Trust Territory. First, we need a decision within the Executive Branch as to precisely what we want; second, we need extensive consultations with Congressional leaders and their support of a concurrent resolution supporting such a policy; and third we need a Presidential commission to work out the specific institutions within the guidelines set out in advance by the President and Congress.

11. Specifically, we recommend the following steps:
- (a) Executive Branch agreement on a progressive program of self-government and self-determination over a five-year period followed by a plebiscite offering Micronesians a choice between free association and independence;
 - (b) identification of the key political and economic

features of the program which should be discussed in advance with the Congress to insure adequate support; (c) consultations with the Interior, Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate by senior officials of Interior, State, Defense and the White House; (d) adoption of a concurrent Congressional resolution along the lines of the attached draft; (e) consultation with the UN Trusteeship Council; (f) appointment of a Presidential commission of _____ members to recommend specific arrangements for Micronesia's free association with the United States (e.g. questions of citizenship and political representation as well as budgetary, tax, and customs arrangements); and (g) implementation of those first steps toward self-government which could be undertaken in advance of the Commission's recommendations.

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