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DEPARTMENT OF STATE / GDC/MP

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

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on Political Future of the TTPI

TO : The Under Secretary
FROM : IO - Joseph J. Sisco
SUBJECT: Interior's Paper

Background

Several weeks ago, the Department of the Interior proposed legislation under which the US Congress would establish a status commission to make recommendations about the Trust Territory's future to the President and Congress. The Bureau of the Budget requested Interior to submit an "Issue Paper" on political development in the TTPI.

The Issue Paper, a copy of which was sent to you by Acting Secretary Luce, briefly describes at the outset Interior's recommended course of action and time schedule for the TTPI. Proceeding from the assumption that there is general agreement within the Executive Branch that our national objective for the Trust Territory is permanent association with the US, Interior maintains that integration with an existing state of the US is the most desirable ultimate political status for the Trust Territory. If thorough investigation reveals that integration is not feasible within a period of 2-3 years, Interior recommends that the TTPI become affiliated with the US without delay either as an unorganized, unincorporated territory (similar to American Samoa) or as an organized, unincorporated territory (similar to Guam). Interior believes its proposal for a ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~-oriented

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study commission is the surest and quickest means of obtaining this national objective; for ^{it} estimates that the study commission could be established, ~~among the selection~~ ^{survey the situation}, make its recommendations and hold a plebescite in as little as 20 months from the date of ~~enactment~~ ^{amendment} of legislation.

In a long background section, the assumptions underlying Interior's recommendation for an early UN-supervised plebescite to affect the permanent affiliation of the TTPI and the United States and possible types future political status are discussed. Independence and maintenance of the status-quo are quickly reviewed and rejected. Eight kinds of political association with the US are then ~~discussed~~ ^{considered}. These are (a) unorganized, unincorporated territory; (b) unorganized, unincorporated territory with locally drafted constitution (similar to American Samoa); (c) organized, unincorporated territory; (d) organized, incorporated territory; (e) union with Guam as a US territory; (f) Commonwealth (similar to Porto Rico); (g) admission as a State, and (h) union with an existing state of the US.

The paper suggests there are five methods to move ahead on planning for the political future of the TTPI. These are (1) Trust Territory Status Commission (favored by Interior); (2) Presidential Commission; (3) Executive Branch Task Force; (4) Executive Branch Communications requesting the Congress to extend a particular status to the Micronesians; and (5) a UN Recommended Commission. While stating that none of the above five methods satisfies all of the interested parties

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(Micronesians, U.S. Congress, Executive Branch, and the UN),
the
the paper concludes that/political states favored by Interior
"would be the most attainable method of meeting the various
needs of this nation's national security, be most acceptable
to the Congress and the Micronesians and do most to set the
stage for continued Micronesian growth and development.

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