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PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS : The Under Secretary *Udall*

July 28, 1967

THROUGH: S/S *Udall*

FROM : IO - David H. Popper *DHP*

SUBJECT: House Interior Committee Hearing on Trust Territory -- INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Secretary Udall had a relatively successful encounter, July 26, with the Interior Subcommittee on the political future of the Trust Territory. Although his prepared statement did not argue for moving the TTPI toward self-government, it in no way undercut our view on the narrow options available under the Trusteeship Agreement. Moreover, in his responses to questions Udall effectively made the case that the TTPI is not an American territory and that we must proceed in a manner which reflects our defense interests, our special obligations to the United Nations, and our tradition as a democratic, anti-colonial power.

Most members of the Subcommittee welcomed news that Interior, State and Defense have agreed on draft legislation to establish a study commission. The Interior Department staff came away feeling the session had been relatively auspicious. We would agree in that a majority of members seemed sympathetic, but Congressman Aspinall has obvious reservations which will need to be dealt with.

① Congressional questioning centered around the following topics:

1) Jurisdiction

Aspinall and Saylor were not satisfied that a commission could do anything which their own Committee could not do better or which the Solomon Report had not already done. Udall pointed out that in view of the TTPI's special status

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and the United Nations' involvement, he thought it would be better to have a commission which would hear testimony from all quarters and make well-publicized recommendations. In essence, we needed the broadest possible consensus and a commission appeared a good way of developing one. Congress would, of course, be well represented on a Commission.

2) Independence

Aspinall and Saylor expressed reservations about offering the TTPI a choice of independence, particularly since the pattern in almost all other plebiscites was for territories to choose independence whereas we sought the TTPI's continued association. Aspinall emphasized that Congress would never agree to the proposed procedure unless his Committee determined in advance that the Departments of Defense and State were also prepared to risk an offer of independence. Saylor went so far as to deride the alternative of independence suggesting that we would not carry it through even if it were in fact chosen by the Micronesians. Udall disagreed, and asked that Saylor at least refrain from airing his views publicly. More generally he replied that all the Departments would be prepared to testify clearly on the matter of independence. He personally believed we could not accomplish our purpose without a formal expression of views by the people of the TTPI in which they would have independence as one choice. This had been the pattern in the UN, and he did not see how the United States could depart from it. Congressman Ryan strongly endorsed this opinion.

3) Timing

Several Congressmen hoped we could move promptly but also expressed concern that we might be force-feeding the Micronesians more than they could digest at this stage of political sophistication. Subcommittee Chairman Carey, for example, while understanding the need to offer the

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Micronesians a choice, wondered whether they could meaningfully choose between the alternatives presented. Udall suggested that we would have time before 1972 to undertake a program of education in the TTPI to clarify the issues. He repeated several times that if we did not move too slowly he was reasonably certain we would get the choice we wanted.

Concurrence: H - Mr. White *jm*

cc: EA
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