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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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interior*

JUN 27 1968

Dear Mr. Sisco:

The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is moving into a highly critical period. The next few years will be crucial in terms of political and economic development and it is our view that the actions of the several United States Government agencies involved in the administration of the area will, in the period lying immediately ahead, determine finally and conclusively the course of that development. The major agencies so involved in administration of the Trust Territory are the Department of the Interior, which by Executive Order has direct responsibility for civil administration; the Department of State, which is directly involved in terms of foreign policy and the United Nations; and the Department of Defense, which carries the national security responsibility.

As Micronesian sensitivity to American action increases, as it now is rapidly doing, the need for inter-agency consultation and advance planning becomes more pressing. We believe that we can no longer afford the informal and sporadic inter-agency consultation which has generally served in the past. Instead, we are convinced that we need to establish an inter-agency organization to meet periodically, and upon call whenever needed. This committee should be charged with the advance discussion of policies and programs of the concerned agencies as they affect the Trust Territory. It should serve as a clearance organization during the course of policy or program formulation and implementation and as a ready channel of communication among the agencies.

It is also appropriate to state the limitations upon such a group. We do not foresee it to be a group which would review and oversee the administration of the High Commissioner. Neither do we see it as a group which would interject itself in the channels of intra-agency administration.

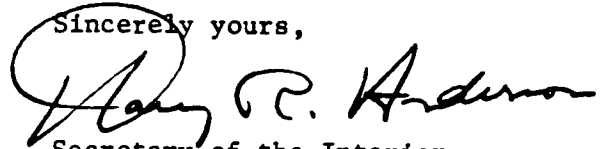
I recommend that we establish such a committee, to be chaired by the Director of the Office of Territories, with representation from such constituent components of your staff as you choose to designate. In the case of the Department of Defense, representation from each of the services may be desirable. We believe there should also be representation from the National Security Council and are so recommending. Lastly, from time to time and depending upon the subjects to be considered, the committee itself might wish to invite representation from other agencies with programs or expertise which can contribute to our common goals.

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We would suggest that the committee meet once a month but with full freedom to meet at any time should the need arise. Such a special meeting could be called by the chairman upon the request of any member of the committee.

Your reaction will be greatly appreciated. I am also addressing a similar letter to Assistant Secretary Warnke.

Sincerely yours,



Assistant
Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Joseph J. Sisco
Assistant Secretary for Inter-
national Organization Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520