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MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

July 16, 1968

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Plans for Interdepartmental Cooperation Regarding the TTPI

PARTICIPANTS: Harrison M. Holland, DOD (ISA)
Donald F. McHenry, IO/UNP

On July 16, 1968, a few hours after the House Subcommittee hearing on the TTPI Status Commission bill, Harry Holland telephoned to tell me what Defense, on Deputy Secretary Nitze's orders, will do as a result of the hearing. Holland specified four directives that Nitze handed down:

(1) General Earle is to write a letter to Secretary Udall urging the creation of an interdepartmental committee to coordinate plans for the future of the TTPI. When informed that a similar working group already exists and that Harry Holland represented Defense on it, Nitze said that that was precisely the right level for the committee. Apparently, General Earle will send a letter to Udall anyway to emphasize Defense's strong support for such interdepartmental cooperation.

(2) The interdepartmental committee should study the specific options available to Micronesians. Holland did not elaborate on this point, however it appears that this committee, in Nitze's view, should in effect do the work of a status commission.

(3) Defense is to undertake on-site inspections in Micronesia to determine how Defense can use its facilities and equipment in the area to assist the Trust Territory.

(4) Under a directive soon to be issued to the three armed services, ISA will be the sole responsible branch within the Defense Department for the TTPI. Holland did not know in detail what this directive will say. However, he implied that ISA will have the final say on DOD activities in the TTPI, subject only to Nitze's or Clifford's veto. We will get a copy of the directive when it is issued.

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Comment: Nitze's directives are directly responsive to criticism aimed at the Executive Branch, and particularly DOD, during the hearings. Obviously, Defense could make a great contribution to development programs in the Trust Territory. This is particularly true of help with transportation, clearing of areas remaining mined after World War II, and emergency (e.g., typhoon) assistance. Given the known strong disagreements between Interior and State and the educational and developmental functions to which we believe a Status Commission should address itself, I have strong reservations about the proposal that the interdepartmental group spell out the details on the options Micronesians might have in a plebiscite. Nitze's procedure would be made much easier if he went back to our 1965 (?) proposal that such a group be chaired by a prestigious czar based in the White House. That individual could take on the responsibility of coordinating plans both within the Executive Branch and within the Congress and thus accomplish many of the purposes of our Status Commission proposal. At present, however, I would strongly suggest that we wait and see what action, if any, the House takes on the Status Commission bill.

cc: UNP - Mr. Gleysteen
IO - Mr. Allen

IO:UNP:JBLeonard:DFMcHenry:jkb
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