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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

CONFIDENTIAL

TO : UNP - Mr. Gley~~st~~een

DATE: July 18, 1968

FROM : UNP - Donald F. McHenry *DMH*

SUBJECT: House Hearings on TTPI Status Commission

On Wednesday I had a rather long discussion with Ruth Van Cleve of Interior concerning her assessment of the House hearings on the TTPI Status Commission proposal. Mrs. Van Cleve said she was both encouraged and discouraged. She was encouraged that the Committee had held the hearings and that the Executive Branch had been able to present a rather formidable and united presentation. She was not, however, optimistic about favorable House action on the Commission proposal, particularly at this session of Congress. Congressman Foley had told her that he had gone into the hearing prepared to support the Status Commission proposal (with misgivings) and left strongly opposed. In Foley's view too many "loose ends" needed to be tied before the Commission would be approved and it was very probable that no commission would be necessary once those "loose ends" were tied.

At the same time, Mrs. Van Cleve said that Jesse Sterns of the Guam Reporter said that after the hearing, Subcommittee Chairman Carey commented that there had been real progress made and that the Subcommittee would return to the question at the end of the week. (Mrs. Van Cleve understands that the Committee is presently considering new ceiling legislation for the TTPI but knows of no plans to discuss the Status Commission proposal." Interior plans to wait a few days or longer before making any assessment as to whether or not it will be possible to get an acceptable Commission proposal from this session of Congress.

After the hearings, however, Secretary Udall had taken the position that we could not afford to wait another year before moving on to resolve the status question. If the Congress took no action, it might be desirable for the President to appoint a prestigious individual to coordinate the views of the several Departments concerned and to consult with Congress -- in other words, to perform the tasks of the proposed Status Commission.

REVIEWED BY B.A. RAAS DATE 3/23/87

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Udall suggested Ellsworth Bunker as the kind of person he had in mind. Mrs. Van Cleve recognized that Udall's proposal was almost precisely the same as that which the State Department had formally advocated two or three years ago. She did not, however, believe that Udall was aware of this fact. She herself remembered it rather clearly since Mr. Sisco became furious with her at the time, thinking she had leaked the proposal to the Congress. I indicated that I was not sure Mr. Sisco's wrath was directed at Mrs. Van Cleve but that Mr. Sisco had been very concerned that a highly classified paper under discussion within the Executive Branch had been given to Congress.

I suggested to Mrs. Van Cleve that we too would have to take several days to assess developments and that it might be useful for the three Departments to then exchange views on next steps.

cc: IO - Mr. Allen

*Keep in mind idea that
the Gen would also be
assigned role of supervising
Van Cleve's administration.*

IO:UNP:DFMcHenry:jkb
7/18/68