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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

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TO : EA/ANZ - Mr. Robert W. Moore

DATE: March 6, 1969

FROM : EA/ANZ - Robert R. Blackburn

SUBJECT: Some Thoughts on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

1. There seems to be no doubt that the political situation in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands has deteriorated in terms of the U. S. objective of continued association in the past year. According to some views the deterioration is accelerating. Estimates of the time remaining for the U. S. to retrieve the situation vary from "already too late" to "maybe a few years." I have no way of knowing which is correct, but I would lean to the latter given the general Pacific attitude toward urgent action.

The conclusion above is based on a few pieces of paper, news stories and casual discussions over the past months with people directly concerned with the TTPI and with others who have contacts there. The range of indicators is from the visit by Professor Davidson and the subsequent trip which is being planned by the Micronesian Status Commission to the reports that Micronesian friends of individuals are now using such words as "independence," and "commonwealth."

3. The reasons for the situation are as many as the people one talks with, but they seem to be as follows:

a. The inability of State, Interior and Defense to agree on the means to achieve the objective which is stated only in classified documents. As the attached excerpt from the Marshall Islands Journal indicates, however, it is no secret to the Micronesians. (I understand the letter was from Norwood to the Marshall Islands district Peace Corps director. There was some attempt at "clarification" but it was feeble and not believed.)

b. The Administration of the Trust Territory has not been as sensitive as it might have been. I am not convinced

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it is as bad as many say, but there is ample evidence of its failure to take local sensibilities into account.

c. The Department of Defense, on occasion has been equally insensitive <sup>with</sup> ~~of~~ survey or inspection teams arriving in areas of the TTPI without having informed the Trust Territory Government. Worse they begin their activities in these areas without having at least discussed matters with local leaders. Local reaction is immediate, negative and visceral -- there is the fear that the Marshall Islanders experience of forced migration may be in the offing. I presume that the reasons for many of the surveys and inspections are classified, but something could be done.

d. The Peace Corps has not yet resolved the problem of involvement or non-involvement of its volunteers. If it were a usual host country-Peace Corps situation, the policy of non-involvement would be clear. Because the "host country Government" is composed of Americans, the PCV's do not feel under the same constraint and Peace Corps has not made clear to the volunteers the problems of involvement.

I do not believe the Peace Corps critics are correct in attributing all of the deterioration to the arrival of the volunteers, but the Peace Corps admits that some volunteers do become involved and do permit themselves to be used.

e. Lack of Policy coordination within the Department has led to fragmented responsibility. Because of the Trusteeship Agreement, the action office in the Department with respect to the TTPI has been the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. On some issues, other bureaus are brought in e.g. L/EA and EA/J for the Micronesian claims or have actual responsibility as EA/ANZ does with respect to the Pacific Islands Talks and the TTPI participation in the South Pacific Commission.

4. The EA Bureau has not however participated in the discussions concerning the political future of the TTPI. These discussions have a direct bearing on our Pacific policy which is the bureau's responsibility.

5. Given this considerable interest I would suggest at a minimum that the Bureau take part in the consultations

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which IO has with Interior and Defense. (It would probably be useful if J/PM were also involved.)

6. I think a better solution, however, would be to handle the TTPI in the manner of Chirep. (On matters concerning the Republic of China, EA/ROC has action; on matters concerning UN tactics and activities IO has action. There is close coordination between EA/ROC, EA/RA and IO/UNP.) In the case of the TTPI, EA should be the action office on matters concerning the political future and the TTPI's relations with other states and areas in the Pacific. IO would remain the action office for matters concerning the UN and the Trusteeship Council in particular.

Attachment:

Excerpt from Marshall Islands Journal.

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