



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

August 20, 1969

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→ Trust
Territories

MEMORANDUM FOR The Assistant General Counsel
(International Affairs)

SUBJECT: Proposed Micronesia "Organic Act"

This is in response to the request in your memorandum of August 15th, subject as above, for our views with respect to pending proposals for citizenship in the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It is assumed that these proposals contemplate United States citizenship for certain inhabitants of the Trust Territory.

The conferring of United States citizenship would, inter alia, entail for the individuals affected an obligation and/or opportunity for service in the armed forces of the United States through induction or enlistment. The resulting additional source of manpower would constitute both an advantage and a disadvantage for the Department of Defense. The availability of Micronesians might be advantageous in the event of a major war by reason of the resulting enlargement of the overall manpower pool. However, this possible advantage could be more than offset by problems of assimilation of these non-Americans and by language difficulties of the kind that marked our attempts to integrate Puerto Ricans and Cubans into our armed forces.

Entry of Micronesians into the armed forces might also entail additional costs in excess of those associated with native-born Americans. Such additional costs would include expenditures for transportation of Micronesians to our mainland bases for training and the possibility of greater dependent costs.

With respect to security, personal security investigations for Micronesians who become members of the armed forces or civilian employees of the Department of Defense might be more difficult than for native-born Americans, particularly in the cases

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of those individuals who have recently come to the islands of the Trust Territory from mainland Asia. Further, individuals having relatives behind the "bamboo curtain" might present special problems.

Our experience with the Nisei who became members of the armed forces during World War II was very favorable but this precedent probably does not provide a good analogy because most of these Japanese-Americans had had the opportunity to absorb American culture over a period of generations or at least for several decades and hence were better equipped for ready assimilation than would be true in the case of the Micronesians.

For the foregoing reasons we believe Defense might have reservations about the advisability of adopting the subject citizenship proposals.



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