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United States Department of the Interior

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OFFICE OF TERRITORIES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

Bill
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JAN 13 1970

Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretary, Public Land Management

From: Director, Office of Territories

Subject: Major Program & Policy Issues, FY 1972

Enclosed is the issue paper on the Trust Territory political status that you requested we forward to you in your memorandum of December 22, 1969. The classification of this paper follows that of previous issue papers concerned with the Trust Territory political status.

We will forward papers on the additional subject matter included in your December 22 memorandum as soon as we have completed them.

(Sgd.) Elizabeth P. Farrington
Elizabeth P. Farrington

*Enclosure (Cys 174 94)
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Incoming memo held pending complete reply - SN.

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TRUST TERRITORY POLITICAL STATUS
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I. WHERE WE NOW STAND.

A. BACKGROUND

(1) The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) has been administered by the United States under a Trusteeship Agreement with the United Nations Security Council, approved by the President on July 18, 1947, pursuant to authority granted by a joint resolution of the Congress. The terms of this unique "strategic trust" give the United States full authority over the Territory, including the right to establish military bases. The terms require the United States to "promote the development of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Trust Territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned . . .".

Shortly after the new Administration took office, the Under Secretaries of the Departments of Interior, State and Defense met (March 24, 1969) to determine the future political status of the Trust Territory with the view to a reasonably early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. From that meeting, a Working Group consisting of representatives of each of the three departments, was organized to prepare what, in effect, was a new issue paper on the future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. From that group there was issued a comprehensive report on April 22, 1969 (copy enclosed). The main recommendation of that report was for the Executive Branch to start working towards an offer to the Micronesians of a status of an unincorporated territory of the United States.

(2) One of the stimuli which caused the convening of the three Under Secretaries on March 24, as noted above, was the imminence of a report to be issued by the Future Political Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia -- in other words, recognition on the part of this Administration that it, too, should be prepared with a coordinated and agreed upon position as to our recommendation for the future political status of Micronesia. The final report of the Micronesian Status Commission, issued in July 1969, recommended as its first choice that there be a "self-governing Micronesian state in free association with the United States". It would be well to note that in its report, the Commission equated the term "free association with the United States" with a definition ascribed to the United Nations which reads as follows:

- "(a) Free association should be the result of a free and voluntary choice by the peoples of the territory concerned expressed by informed and democratic processes. It should be one which respects the individuality and the cultural characteristics of the territory and its peoples, and retains for the peoples of the territory, which is associated with an Independent State, the freedom to modify its status through the expression of their will by democratic means through constitutional processes.
- "(b) The associated territory should have the right to determine its internal constitution without outside interference, in accordance with due constitutional processes and the

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freely expressed wishes of the people. This does not preclude consultations as appropriate or necessary under the terms of the free association agreed upon."

It would be well, also, to note that the Micronesian Status Report discussed what it considered to be the three most practical alternatives to its first choice "self-governing and free association with the United States" position -- these are: (1) independence, (2) integration with the United States, or (3) integration with another major power. It would appear from the discussion of the alternative "integration with the United States" that the Status Commission, in its reasoning and judgment, did not equate its "self-governing and free association" position with the "Unincorporated territory" position which emanated from the Under Secretaries' Working Committee.

B. PRESENT SITUATION

On September 12, 1969, the Department of the Interior issued a press release indicating that a Micronesian Delegation would arrive in Washington to discuss the future political status of Micronesia. This delegation, presumably, was formed on the basis of a joint resolution of the Congress of Micronesia (July 24, 1969), urgently requesting the President and Congress of the United States to "give serious consideration to the future political status of Micronesia and the ways in which this status should be finally resolved." The delegation was composed of five Senators and five Representatives of the Congress of Micronesia. Assistant Secretary Harrison Loesch was named to lead the discussions with the Micronesian Delegation. The initial discussions included, as observers, representatives of the United States House and Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committees and representatives of the

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Department of State. Upon completion of these preliminary discussions and after the departure of the Micronesian Delegation, Assistant Secretary Loesch announced a forthcoming visit to the TTPI where, among other things, he would continue his informal discussions with the Micronesian Delegation members as to the future political status. As part of such visit, he was to leave with these members proposed legislation entitled "to provide for the political status of the TTPI". This proposed legislation would provide that the TTPI be associated with the United States as a "self-governing unincorporated territory of the United States, to be known as 'Micronesia'".

II. WHAT ARE OUR OBJECTIVES AND GOALS?

A. OBJECTIVE

As early as April 18, 1962, with the issuance of a National Security Memorandum (No. 145) by the President of the United States, our national objective was, and is, permanent association of Micronesia with the United States Government. We see nothing in the foreseeable future to either modify or eliminate such objective.

B. GOALS

To achieve that national objective, our goals may be listed as follows:

- (1) To incorporate a government of Micronesia into the United States as an unincorporated territory.
- (2) Simultaneously to continue our accelerated development program looking towards a massive upgrading of community facilities in Micronesia, a wide-spread effort to insure universal education to the highest potential, i.e. secondary

educational attainments approximating the general average in the United States, and income and employment levels which will foster a money economy with eventual elimination of the rather substantial pockets of subsistence levels now prevalent in Micronesia. These and other goals are detailed in the Fiscal Year 1971 Program Memorandum.

III. ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives for reaching our national objective in particular and our goals in general, have been analyzed in depth and published in classified formal reports twice within the past three years, the most recent being the report of April 22, 1969, of the Under Secretaries' Working Committee as mentioned above. These alternatives are discussed in that part of the report entitled "Options and Criteria -- Analyses of Options". A somewhat similar discussion, but in a different format, was presented in the issue paper (SECRET) which was forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget on March 31, 1967, copies of which are available in the Secretarial files.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since both analyses within the past three years, i.e. the issue paper of March 31, 1967, and the Under Secretaries' Working Committee Issue Paper of April 22, 1969, opt for an unincorporated territory as our best alternative, we would be hard put to suggest any other alternative, particularly since we see little or no evidence that the current members of the Interior Committees in general, and the House Interior Committee in particular, would approve anything other than the proposed political status legislation which, of course, incorporates the unincorporated territory legislation.

Such legislation might, however, be modified to this extent. We believe that it would be better to promote it among the Micronesians as a standing offer to them for consideration over a reasonable period of time. As such, we would suggest that thought be given to modifying Section 416 of our current proposal so that the offer of the United States to the people of Micronesia of a status as an unincorporated territory would be theirs to consider for a period of five to ten years, at the end of which time, if no referendum is undertaken, the Trusteeship Agreement would not be terminated, but would continue until such time as there is mutual agreement between the United States and the people of Micronesia for a termination of such agreement. We would look toward the Congress to agree to pass such legislation as a standing offer to the Micronesians, even though the Micronesians show little or no enthusiasm at this time for a status as an unincorporated territory. Undoubtedly we would have to do a considerable amount of missionary work on an informal basis with the Interior Committees in order to develop a favorable climate for passage of this kind of legislation.

We believe that such an arrangement would have these advantages:

A. It does not appear as an "ultimatum" to the Micronesians that they must "buy" this bill approximately six months after it is passed -- which may be the effect Section 416 of the proposed bill in its present form would have on them.

B. It perpetuates, in a more favorable climate, for a possible maximum of five to ten years, assuming the Micronesians do not desire to hold the referendum on this matter, our Trusteeship Agreement which, in turn, does no harm to our national objective.

C. It gives the United States a chance to essentially complete its new massive program for Micronesian development and for incorporation of a great preponderance of Micronesians into the higher positions in the present Trust Territory Government. We would look to these high-ranking Micronesian Government officials both to look with favor upon continued association with the United States and to disseminate this favorable attitude towards the people with whom they come in contact as policy-makers.

D. It should minimize United Nations and other exhortations as to when and how we will end the Trusteeship Agreement since it will both offer the Micronesians a definite change in status, while at the same time give them ample time in which to decide whether to accept the offer or not -- even if they do not accept the offer, they can still be assured of the United States continuing its Trusteeship obligations both during the time period permitted under the new Act and after the expiration of such time period.

E. It would permit the Micronesians to observe for a reasonable period of time the operations of the Government of Guam with its own elected Governor. In addition, we would expect continued efforts on the part of both the political powers in Guam and those in Saipan to seek simultaneous voting acquiescence on the part of their respective citizens for integration -- a success of this nature more likely would react towards giving the remainder of the Micronesian districts a more favorable attitude towards the "unincorporated territory" offer.