

July 17, 1974


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MEMORANDUM FOR THE MARIANAS FILE

Subject: Separate Administration

I talked with Jim Berg on July 15, regarding the current review of separate administration within the Department of the Interior. I learned the following:

- (1) There is apparently an inter-departmental argument going on within the administration regarding separate administration. As a result of this, there is no memorandum available for our review on this subject. The critical issue seems to be whether a referendum must be held within the Marianas before the United States can accede to any request by the Marianas District Legislature for separate administration. The Department of State takes the position that such a referendum is necessary, making the not irrational point that otherwise separate administration is tantamount to foreclosing the people from rejecting separate status for the Marianas when that question is subsequently presented to them. The Department of the Interior responds by relying upon the unanimous views of the members of the Commission to the effect that no such referendum is necessary.
- (2) Mr. Berg repeated the United States view that it wants a request for separate administration as opposed to a blueprint. I said that I was aware of this but that we could profit from any research which they had done on this issue. I said that it would be very difficult to explain to our client exactly what such a request would produce unless we were better informed as to the intentions of the United States. Mr. Berg recognized this but had no solution to offer.
- (3) He plans to go to Saipan on or about July 23. He is still pessimistic regarding the enactment of acceptable land legislation. It might be desirable for one of us to call him on July 22 to see what the situation is at that point.

 Howard P. Willens

cc: Mr. Helfer

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