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ADMINISTRATION OF GUAM, SAMOA, AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
TO BE PLACED UNDER UNITED STATES TRUSTEESHIP

COMMUNICATION

from

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Transmitting

COPY OF A REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE INDICATING A COURSE OF ACTION WHICH THE SECRETARIES OF STATE, WAR, NAVY, AND INTERIOR HAVE AGREED SHOULD BE FOLLOWED WITH RESPECT TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF GUAM, SAMOA, AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS TO BE PLACED UNDER UNITED STATES TRUSTEESHIP

June 19, 1947.--Referred to the Committee on Public Lands and ordered to be printed

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, June 19, 1947

HON. JOSEPH W. MARTIN, Jr.,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MY DEAR MR. SPEAKER: There is enclosed a copy of a report from the Secretary of State indicating a course of action which the Secretaries of State, War, Navy, and Interior have agreed should be followed with respect to the administration of Guam, Samoa, and the Pacific islands to be placed under United States trusteeship.

On October 20, 1945, I appointed a committee consisting of the Secretaries of these four Departments to make recommendations concerning this matter. After preliminary consideration it seemed inadvisable to formulate a final recommendation until a determination had been made of the status of certain islands formerly under Japanese control. In the meantime the Departments represented on the committee continued to give study to the problems involved.

After the United Nations Security Council approved a trusteeship agreement designating the United States as the administering authority for the former Japanese mandated islands, I requested that the members of the committee again give joint consideration to problems relating to the administration of the Pacific islands. The enclosed report has been submitted pursuant to that request.

I am sure that the agreement reached by the four Secretaries will be of interest to the Congress in connection with its consideration of legislation to provide civilian government for these islands and that the information obtained by the Departments in studying this question will also be helpful in the consideration of such legislation.

It has long been my view that the inhabitants of Guam and Samoa should enjoy those fundamental human rights and that democratic form of government which are the rich heritage of the people of the United States. We have already extended those rights and that form of government to other possessions of the United States, such as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and with respect to the inhabitants of the trust territory have given solemn assurance to the United Nations of our intention to grant these inhabitants a full measure of individual rights and liberties.

I hope that the Congress will approve legislation for the purposes indicated in the enclosed report and that such legislation will provide for the full enjoyment of civil rights and for the greatest practicable measure of self-government.

Very sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, June 18, 1947

The President,
The White House.

Dear Mr. President: Pursuant to your request, the Secretaries of State, War, Navy, and Interior have held several meetings and have agreed upon the following course of action:

1. Separate organic legislation for Guam to provide civil government and to grant citizenship, a bill of rights, and legislative powers to Guamanians should be enacted this session. In recent hearings on such organic legislation, the Departments have recommended the transfer of administration from the Navy Department to a civilian agency designated by the President at the earliest practicable date, the exact date to be determined by the President.
2. Organic legislation for American Samoa providing civil government and granting citizenship, a bill of rights, and legislative powers should be prepared by the Navy and Interior Departments and presented to the next session of Congress.
3. Suggestions for organic legislation for those Pacific islands placed under United States trusteeship are in preparation by the Department of State for presentation to Congress, provided favorable congressional action is taken on the trusteeship agreement to be shortly presented for approval.

4. The Navy Department should continue to have administrative responsibility for Guam and American Samoa on an interim basis pending the transfer to a civilian agency of the Government at the earliest practicable date, such date to be determined by the President. With respect to the trust territory, a similar transfer should be effected by the President at the earliest practicable date.

5. Provided Congress acts favorably on the trusteeship agreement, an Executive order should be issued when the agreement enters into force, terminating military government in the trust territory and delegating civil administration to the Navy Department on an interim basis, subject to the conditions set forth in paragraph 4.

Faithfully yours,

G. C. MARSHALL