



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

18 SEP 1961

Ser 0180P09B2

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Dear Mr. Cleveland:

This is in response to your letter of 5 September 1961 concerning the Department of State's plans for the future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and other territories administered by the United States. The Department of the Navy concurs fully with the United States Delegate to the General Assembly announcing that the United States plans to appoint local committees in these respective territories to recommend steps that each might take regarding their political future.

From a military point of view, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and the U. S. Territory of Guam are of paramount importance to our defense posture. The Mariana, Caroline and Marshall Islands provide potential logistic support bases and air transportation facilities to naval forces and other military activities in the Western Pacific. Additionally, the Marshall Islands comprise the area wherein our atomic tests have been conducted. As you know, current plans provide for testing the NIKE-ZEUS missile from a testing station at Kwajalein Island. The loss of any of these Islands would adversely affect our military capabilities in the Western Pacific.

Guam is the hub of our sea/air transportation routes to the Philippines, Japan, Australia and other perimeter defense areas. Much of the logistic support for our military forces deployed in the Western Pacific is staged through Guam. Over 35% of the Island is owned by the United States and controlled by U. S. military forces. Our Air Force bases and Naval bases in Guam make this Island one of the keystones in our Pacific defense system.

This Department concurs with Mr. Bingham's view that the United States Government should endeavor to promote the establishment of some sort of self-government in the island groups

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of the Trust Territory and concomitantly increase their ties with the United States. It is in our best interests to influence the inhabitants of the Trust Territory Islands to favor closer U. S. alignment, free from United Nations supervision, when self-determination as to their political future is voted upon.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ PAUL B. FAY, Jr.
Under Secretary of the Navy

Honorable Harland Cleveland
Assistant Secretary of State for
International Organization Affairs
Washington 25, D. C.

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