

19 July 1957

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From: Secretary of the Navy
To: Secretary of Defense

Subj: Procurement of Land in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Ref: (a) SECDEF Secret memo for SECNAV of 4 May 1950, same subject

1. The Secretary of the Navy was designated as the sole agent for the implementation of the land acquisition program in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands by reference (a). Since this designation, which was made while the Navy was assigned responsibility for administration of the Trust Territory Islands, two changes in administrative responsibility were made; in July of 1951 administration of the Trust Territory was transferred from Navy to Interior and in 1953 administrative responsibility for the Northern Mariana Islands (Saipan District) was returned to the Navy. Recently it was learned that the Army and Coast Guard have started to negotiate directly with the Department of the Interior for additional land requirements in the Trust Territory. The question therefore arises as to whether reference (a) intended that the Navy continue to act as sole agent after procedures had been established and the initial land requirements had been negotiated.

2. The present positions are: Navy; willing and able to handle, however, there seems to be no reason for the Navy to act for other departments now that procedures are established and the initial procurement problems disposed of. Navy will continue to assist and advise upon request.

Interior; does not care; would just as soon deal directly as such dealings are necessary to a certain extent whether Navy acts as agent or not.

High Commissioner of the Trust Territory; High Commissioner agrees with the Interior position but believes that either method will prove satisfactory.

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per authority of
OPNAVINST C5513.10-5
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3. In view of the foregoing, information is requested as to whether it is the intent of reference (a) that the Navy continue to act as sole agent for land procurement in the Trust Territory since the initial requirements have been met.

Thomas S. Gates, Jr.

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