

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

APR 26 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Administration of Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territories.

You will recall that on June 19, 1947, you sent a communication to the Congress reiterating your support of civil government and a full measure of civil rights for the inhabitants of Guam and American Samoa, and transmitting a report of the Secretary of State which indicated that the Secretaries of State, Navy, Army and the Interior agreed that the transfer of administration of these islands, as well as of the Trust Territories, from the Navy Department to a civilian agency, should be effectuated at the earliest practicable date. Likewise, your Committee on Civil Rights recommended in 1947 that the enactment by the Congress of legislation for Guam and American Samoa should transfer them from naval administration to civilian control. Finally, on February 11, 1948, you informed the Secretaries of State, Army, Navy and the Interior that you intended, upon approval of organic acts for these Pacific Islands, to designate the Department of Interior as the civilian agency with general supervision over civil administration of the entire group of islands.

The Department of the Interior has submitted a draft of proposed organic legislation for Guam and American Samoa providing a civil government for these islands, bestowing American citizenship upon the inhabitants and guaranteeing them basic civil rights. The draft likewise provides that the local government shall be under the supervision of "a civilian department or agency", and that the Governor to be appointed by the President shall be a civilian or retired officer of the Armed Forces. The Department of State has indicated that it has no objection to the Interior draft, insofar as it relates to the foreign policy of the United States.

The Department of Navy has also submitted a proposed draft of organic legislation for Guam and American Samoa providing that the local government shall be under the supervision of an "executive department or agency of the Government of the United States", and that the Governor may be a civilian or a regular or retired officer of the Armed Forces. This is the sole major area of difference between the Interior and Navy drafts.

In light of the declaration of policy heretofore announced on this subject, it is recommended that the Interior draft be designated as the Administration measure. Adoption of the Navy draft, which clearly permits continued military supervision of these islands, would be interpreted as a reversal of previously-declared policy as well as a withdrawal from the position taken by the Administration in organic legislation submitted to the 80th Congress. Accordingly, the attached letter of clearance has been prepared, advising the Department of the Interior that its drafts, subject to consideration of certain revisions suggested by the Department of Justice and the staff of the Bureau of the Budget, have the approval of the President.

The Department of State is preparing organic legislation for the Trust Territories, likewise providing for civilian administration. The draft is to be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget shortly.

In order to enable the interested agencies to formulate realistic plans for the eventual transfer of all of the islands from naval to civilian authority, and to facilitate the accomplishment of this objective, it is suggested that the Secretaries of the Interior and the Navy be advised of your desire that without regard to the status of pending organic legislation, the two Departments cooperate in establishing target dates for the transfer of Guam, American Samoa and the Trust Territories to civilian administration. It is recommended that the target date for Guam be set within the next twelve months, and that target dates for American Samoa and the Trust Territories be set within the next two to three years. Plans developed within such a framework can be integrated with the legislation that ultimately is enacted. The need for target dates in preparatory planning is indicated in the letter to you from Secretary Krug on March 10, 1949, which letter you referred to this office for recommended action. Accordingly, the attached letters to the Secretaries of the Interior and Navy, indicating your desires that such time limits be established, are transmitted herewith for your signature.

Frank Pace Jr.

Director.

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Attachments:

Drafts of letters to Secretaries
of Interior and Navy.

