

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON



April 9, 1953

My dear Mr. Dodge:

Reference is made to a letter, dated March 25, 1953, from Mr. Roger W. Jones, Bureau of the Budget, requesting the views of the Department of State with respect to a proposed Executive Order amending Executive Order 10408 by which the administration of the islands of Tinian and Saipan in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was transferred from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of the Navy. As is indicated in the letter to Mr. Dodge from Mr. Roger Kent, General Counsel of the Department of Defense, a copy of which was enclosed in Mr. Jones' letter, the Department, in reply to a request from the Secretary of the Navy and having regard to the decision recorded by Executive Order 10408 and the administrative problems resulting therefrom, concurred in the proposal that the area transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of the Navy be extended to include the entire Northern Marianas District of the Trust Territory rather than only the islands of Tinian and Saipan as is presently provided by Executive Order 10408. In view of the fact that the Secretary of the Interior concurred in this proposal as indicated in his letter of December 30, 1952 to the Secretary of the Navy and referred to in the last paragraph of Mr. Kent's letter, the Department perceives no objection to the provisions of the proposed Executive Order which would affect the transfer of the remainder of the Northern Marianas District to the Department of the Navy.

The Department further considers that the provisions of paragraph two of the proposed Executive Order, emphasizing the fact that the transfer will not affect the rights or obligations of the United States under the Trusteeship Agreement and reaffirming the responsibility of the Secretary of State with respect to the international aspects of the administration of the Trust Territory, are strongly desirable in order to assist in offsetting possible criticisms of the transfer of a significant part of the Trust Territory from civil to Naval administration.

As you may be aware, prior to the transfer effected by Executive Order 10265, various Delegations in the United Nations expressed their sympathy with the announced policy of the United States to transfer administration of the Trust Territory to a civilian agency, and the Soviet Union used military administration as a recurrent propaganda theme in attacking the United States in the Trusteeship Council.

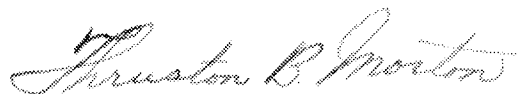
Following

The Honorable
Joseph M. Dodge,
Director, Bureau of the Budget.

Following the transfer in 1951, the Trusteeship Council, in its annual report to the Security Council on conditions in the Trust Territory, expressed its satisfaction at the transfer of authority to civilian administration. The return of part of the Trust Territory to administration by a military agency will no doubt result in speculation and comment in the United Nations and it is not unlikely that some Delegations may be critical of this action. The Department has been aware of this problem and has attempted to anticipate and offset such criticism by emphasizing that the recent transfer of Saipan and Tinian in no way diminishes the determination of the United States to fulfill its obligations under the Trusteeship Agreement. In view of this situation, the Department believes that the provisions of paragraph two of the proposed Executive Order will be useful in preventing or reassuring bona fide international concern over the transfer as well as in providing a means of countering the unfriendly propoganda attacks which may be expected.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:



Thurston B. Norton
Assistant Secretary



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BUREAU OF THE BUDGET