

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

4-24-67

APR 28 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MCPHERSON

Subject: Guam and Virgin Islands Governors

The Senate Interior Committee held further hearings on Wednesday on S. 449 and S. 450, bills to provide elected Governors for Guam and the Virgin Islands. Harold Seidman appeared before the Committee to present the Bureau's views on amendments we had proposed to authorize the President to annul local laws and to remove an elected Governor when necessary to protect the national security, foreign relations or property of the United States. (A copy of my memorandum to you, dated February 24, and a copy of Harold Seidman's testimony on this matter are attached.)

The hearing was rough, with Senator Church leading the attack on the Bureau's amendments on the grounds that they would improperly limit local self-government and constitute a reassertion of American colonialism at a very poor time. Senator Church indicated he would prefer the status quo (i.e., appointed Governors) to a proposal containing our amendments. The Guam legislature took the same position.

The Committee later reported out the bills without our proposed amendments.

The problem now is what to do in the House (assuming the Senate passes the bills as reported). One alternative would be to do nothing -- our views have not been requested so far. The other alternative would be to put our recommendations before the House Committee either in a voluntary report or by having Interior (which has been asked to report) present the amendments.

We recommend continuing to push for the amendments in the House. Do you agree?

(Signed) WILF Rommel

Wilfred H. Rommel  
Assistant Director for  
Legislative Reference

Attachments