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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Walt Rostow

I attach a rather provocative letter I received recently from a newspaperman on Guam. He thinks the Pacific Trust Territory islands are going to wind up in Japanese hands in the next five years. I have sent him a noncommittal reply (copy attached) but promised to pass his views along. In addition to yourself, I have sent copies to Dean Rusk, Stewart Udall, and Paul Nitze. For record straightening purposes, I attach a brief memorandum on the territory's present situation and prospects.

Rich
Richard Helms

Attachments - 3

26 July 1967
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Mr. Helms
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

We are in urgent danger of losing our islands in the Pacific.

I'm sorry if that first sentence makes me sound like just another crack-pot, but I honestly feel that I'm closer to the situation than most people. I sincerely believe that if somebody doesn't do something, or at least attempt to do something, that within five years the islands of the Trust Territory of the Pacific may be lost forever to the United States.

Please let me explain my reasoning, my motives, and my concern.

First, allow me to give you a brief resume on myself, so you can ascertain a fairly rational behavior pattern. I'm a graduate (1951) of the University of Wisconsin, and have edited and published a variety of newspapers in Wisconsin, Oregon, and California before coming to Guam two years ago to become managing editor of the Guam Daily News, a position I now hold. I have a large family, eight children, with one attending college at San Jose State in California. I'm president of a local PTA, active in community affairs, do some magazine writing on the side, am a stringer for AP, write a daily column, am working on a book (over 30,000 words written), and have made a hobby out of studying the political life in the surrounding islands. I'm a friend of Gov. Manuel Guerrero, Admiral Jones, of the Navy Command here, and Gen. William Crumm, at Andersen AFB, and of Bill Norwood, Trust Territory High Commissioner.

I'm not sure just how much your organization knows, or cares, about the Trust Territory islands. Perhaps it is the government's re-action just to silently dispose of them, and their responsibilities to them. I'm sure that somebody on your planning staff is aware of the situation as it exists today, and I would be pleased if you would call him in to verify or deny the outline I intend to present below. I don't have any hard and fast easy solutions, but I am enough of a patriot to want to do something. I don't intend to sit back and let this island empire slip out of our hands--at least without a fight. I can recall vividly how much money, and how much blood it cost us to gain the islands in the first place, and now we seem to be ready to set back complacently and let them slip through our hands without a struggle.

Let me proceed. The Trust Territory is, of course, a U.N. mandate. Pressure has been mounting rapidly to bring the question of self-government to a vote. Let me quote briefly from an article in the Micronesian Reporter, a publication of the T.T. government. It discusses the recent visit made by the U.N. Visiting Mission, with remarks from Dr. Angie Brooks, chairman from Nigeria:

"In discussing the matter of self-determination, Dr. Brooks said that the United Nations has always held that it is the will of the people to decide on the matter of Independence. Here, it would probably be done by the Congress of Micronesia. Of the 11 trust territories originally under the supervision of the U.N., only three remain... Nauru, New Guinea and Micronesia. The administration members have been told to guide the people. It has been suggested in the papers, she said, that the people are being forced to make a decision towards independence. We don't want to force an independent status,

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but feel you should start to think of this and educate towards it. The U.N. Trusteeship council is trying to stimulate the Administration to work in this direction also, she said.

When asked if the self-determination of the Micronesian people should be acceptable to both the U.S. and the U.N., Dr. Brooks said that that is the ultimate goal of the United Nations. The comment was then made that, in a sense, the self-determination is limited if there is a need to satisfy both the United States and the United Nations.

In answer to another remark stating that the Micronesians don't want any limitations placed when they make the decision as to their political future, Dr. Brooks said that the choice is free and the U.N. will send a plebiscite commissioner to protect the Micronesians from pressure by the Administration, but this does not mean that a decision is being forced on the Micronesians.

Senator Francisco T. Palacios then presented a formal proposal from the Marianas delegation and asked that it be presented to the U.N. Trusteeship Council. It began: The Marianas delegation in the Congress of Micronesia hereby informs the U.N. Visiting Mission of 1967 that the people of the Mariana Islands are ready and wish to be given the opportunity of having a plebiscite not later than October 22, 1970, for the determination of their political future."

Perhaps, sir, this might give you just a little background into the problem we face. It is obvious to all of us here that despite small voices of dissent, the people of Micronesia are rushing pell-mell into an election. The United Nations wants the election---to end the Trusteeship system. The people of Micronesia want the election because they are tired of being "a man without a country," without citizenship, without a flag, without a vote. They want a future, and now they have none, as wards.

But to my dismay, I find that because we have largely botched the job as administrators in the Trust Territory, the people will not vote to join the U.S. Nor, I believe, will they vote for ~~independence~~ independence. I feel strongly, that in three years, or five years at the latest--when ever the election is held, that the people of Micronesia will vote to return to Japan.

I don't know if this jibes with the information your office has gained. I don't know if you have people here gathering information about how the Micronesians feel. But I am convinced that the Japanese would win the majority of the vote--if it was held today, and more surely, if the vote was postponed for five years, the vote would become even more strongly Japanese---unless something is done.

How do I know this?

Because I am here, and because I talk to the people.

In my job as editor of the Guam Daily News I have been to Saipan several times, and have talked to members of the Congress of Micronesia many times, here on Guam, and in Saipan. I have sat in on political discussions many, many times, in smoke filled hotel rooms, and on the beach. I have been to Pagan, Tinian, Ulithi, Yap, Koror, Peliliu, Ag Anguar, Babelthaup, to name a few. I have talked to these people about the "Japanese times, when most of them were working, and now 25 years later when they are not working.

Part of our problem has been our own inability to communicate with the people. The U.S. administrators are "hill-top" people (on a hill complex on Saipan built for the C. A. incidentally.) A attended a cocktail party once for a group of Guamanian legislators on Saipan, to advocate "re-intergration"--the re-joining of the Marianas with Guam, and not one person from the "hill" came down to greet us, or associate with the "natives."

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This aloofness will surely turn against us on the day the patriots are cast. And we'll lose these islands. I'm not trying to be an alarmist, but instead, a realist. I want you people to be aware of one man's view, but I would suggest that you go out and find out for yourself.

There are several important things happening today in Micronesia that is going to "rock the boat" politically.

Hundreds of Peace Corps volunteers arrived last year, and this could, of course, be a step in the right direction towards Americanization---if this is what we want. But to put our national goals in the hands of a bearded 20 year old is a little risky. As you know, there are some great Peace Corps people---and there are some misfits. But it is obvious that things are happening, where as before we did little more than baby sit these people, for the past twenty years.

Secondly, the new Trust Territory administration, under the direction of Norwood, seems to have new enthusiasm for their duties. It is possible, with additional financial assistance from the U.S. Congress, that enough will happen in the next several years to change the thinking of the Micronesians.

Conversely, with a new direct Guam-Tokyo flight by Pan American (\$139 round trip-- in three hours), and the opening up of the Trust Territory to tourism, the Japanese will be coming here in droves. I know because I went up to Tokyo and asked them. They will, if allowed, build hotels, staff them, bring in merchandise, cultivate the land, and put the people to work. I believe that you'll see an influx of Japanese in these islands within the next few years that will stagger the imagination. It will be difficult to stop them, although the administration in the federal government may try through difficult-to-obtain visas, etc.

Finally, public and official opinion back on the U.S. mainland has shocked us living on Guam. Sen. Ellender of Louisiana, for instance, recently said of the Trust Territory islands at a congressional hearing..."Give 'em back to Japan". I wrote an editorial on this, thinking that perhaps he was misquoted. His reply was direct and plain. He wasn't misquoted. He can't see the worth of the islands, and sincerely believes in the policy he stated...."Give 'em back to Japan."

I also believe that our officials in Washington have not expressed any particular concern about what happens to these islands. I doubt whether anybody in the Department of the Interior is currently working on any long range planning in this regard. I know that the Trust Territory officials are not in any position to actively project the image of the American way of life, to try to convince the people that we do, indeed, want to keep these beautiful and strategic islands. I'm sure that the Peace Corps volunteers aren't really interested in the political future for these people, and are, I believe actually discouraged from attempting to influence them in anyway.

Finally, I'm sure you are aware of how the action lies in the rest of the Pacific. We are ~~slowly~~ slowly being pushed out of the Philippines, out of Okinawa, and the Bonin We will, eventually, lose our bases in Japan. It sure doesn't leave much left, except Guam, if we also lose the Trust Territory islands.

So, what is to be done?

That sir, is my purpose in writing to you.

I am convinced of four things:

1. There will be an election in the Trust Territory islands within five years.
2. There is better than a fifty percent chance right now, and it may grow with

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increasing Japanese influence, that the islands will vote to return to Japan.

3. That nobody, or at least very few people in the U.S. government, or private people are aware of the situation, or care particularly what happens.

4. That it would be a tragic mistake on the part of the U.S. if something isn't done, because we need this islands. From a military standpoint now, and an economic standpoint at a later date.

Again, we get back to my reason for writing.

I want to help, if you think help is necessary. Even if you don't agree I am considering doing something on my own, because of my convictions.

Perhaps I have helped a little, in just refreshing your memories on the situation. If you want any further information, please feel free to call on my at any time.

As I said, I am considering direct ~~dx~~ action on my own. I am thinking, for example, of starting a public relations firm (and giving my my newspaper editorship), moving my family enmasse to Truk, or Koror, or Ponape, to actively pursue direct salesmanship of American ideals to these people.

In this I would propose acting as a one-man lobbyist for the American interest in the Pacific. I propose attending the Congress of Micronesia sessions, to talk to my friends in that body, to see what they want, and how ~~we~~ we can help. I propose to write the U.S. Congressmen, collectively or singly, to see if we can stimulate further interest in the plight of the Micronesians. I propose, through brochures, pamphlets, and other material to bring the message of American to Micronesia. I plan, through magazine writing, or through my book (if I can get it published) to let the United States know the problems here, and the goals. And I plan, just by living among the people to influence a few, a few score, or a thousand just on my own.

But from a practical standpoint I don't know how to begin. Perhaps you could offer some advice, or reject the whole approach categorically. I have no funds of my own to operate on. I am a family man with eight children to feed, clothe, and educate. I obviously can't give ~~up~~ up a good job, and charge off into the islands like a knight in shining armor, despite all my good intentions. Yet, I think it is important.

Do you feel the project is worthwhile? Does your organization know of any group, any foundation in the U.S. that would be interested in helping this project get started? I'm not looking for financial gain, mind you, but only the opportunity to do something for my country.

We just don't have a voice here in the Pacific---and without a voice America is in grave danger of losing thousands of square miles of wonderful country. Time is, as the say, running out.

I would appreciate your views on this.

Very sincerely

Joseph C. Murphy

Joseph C. Murphy
Managing Editor
Guam Daily News

Agana, Guam, M.I.

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