

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

February 19, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. PIERSON

Subject: Guam and Virgin Islands Governors

As I mentioned to you on Saturday, the House Interior Committee is holding hearings tomorrow on legislation which would provide for an elected Governor of Guam. That Committee earlier held hearings on similar legislation for the Virgin Islands and we understand the Committee is about to report that bill.

As you know, two issues are presented by these bills:

- they do not authorize the President to remove an elected Governor for cause, and
- they would repeal the President's existing authority to veto enactments of the local legislatures under certain circumstances.

Our memorandum of February 24, 1967, to Harry McPherson (copy attached) spells out the background of these issues in some detail. Also attached are copies of our reports to the Senate Interior Committee on this legislation.

As you will recall, the Budget Bureau's reports to the Senate Committee argued that the President should have removal and annulment powers.

As my memorandum to Harry McPherson of April 28, 1967, (copy attached) points out, the Bureau testified at the Senate hearing and found rough going. The Senate Committee later reported out the bills without the proposed amendments.

Assistant Secretary Harry Anderson, at our request, made a check this morning of Chairman Aspinall's feelings on these amendments. We understand that the Chairman is quite negative.

The merits of the proposed amendments, of course, continue to be the same. The question therefore is a tactical one. In light of the Senate Committee's action and the reported attitude of the House Committee Chairman, should we continue to push for the amendments in the House Committee?

As in the past, Interior's proposed report on the Guam bill did not take up the question of the amendments affecting Presidential powers. The Budget Bureau has been responsible for putting forward and supporting these amendments.

Interior is very anxious to get its report up to the Committee early this afternoon. We would propose to give it advice that there would be no objection but that the Bureau of the Budget would submit its views separately. This is the same advice we gave Interior the last time around. If it is decided not to push the amendments in the House Committee, we can quietly advise the Committee staff that no further views will be submitted.

(Signed) Wilf Rommel

Wilfred H. Rommel
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference

Attachments