



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

SEP 4 1974

Memorandum

To: Mr. Norman E. Ross, Jr., Assistant Director,
Domestic Council

From: ^{Acting} Director of Territorial Affairs

Subject: Draft reply to Mr. Philip R. Toomin of Chicago,
Illinois

In response to your request of August 29, 1974, enclosed is a draft reply to Mr. Philip R. Toomin, concerning the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

(Sgd.) Fred Radewagen

Enclosure

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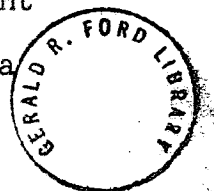


Dear Mr. Toomin:

~~The President has asked me to reply to your letter of August 21, 1974, regarding United States administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and the negotiations for the future political status of the area.~~ He also wishes to express his appreciation for your service there as a member of the Trust Territory High Court and for your continued interest in Micronesian affairs.

As you know, the negotiations presently being conducted with the Marshalls and Carolines and with the Marianas are in the hands of the Executive Branch and the responsibility of the President's Personal Representative Ambassador F. Haydn Williams. Final approval of any agreements resulting from these negotiations will involve the legislatures of the respective areas, the Micronesian and Marianas public in formal plebiscite and, of course, the U.S. Congress on behalf of the American people. Our administration of the area to date has also involved the U.S. Congress, most particularly in some of the sectors to which you refer such as the overall Trust Territory Federal grant, Federal program assistance and, to some extent, Trust Territory government personnel levels.

As the result of close coordination and continual consultation with the Congress and with the elected and appointed leaders in the Trust Territory, the United States Government has determined that a return of the Micronesian people to a



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completely traditional way of life with a subsistence economy would not meet the requirements for Micronesian growth generated by the need for a politically stable entity in the western Pacific, local desires, United States national and security policy and United Nations concerns. It has for the past decade been our goal to assist the Micronesian peoples in joining the family of Pacific nations while not transgressing the boundaries of either local absorptive capacity or United States budgetary constraints. While we would not state categorically that all of our programs have been totally successful, it is certain that we have proceeded as quickly and as far as the Micronesians themselves have been prepared to move. We plan to continue our efforts and programs in this direction.

You may be assured that the United States administration of the Trust Territory is under constant review at the ~~staff~~ and policymaking levels of this Government and we are putting our best efforts into melding a plethora of needs, priorities and goals into unified, coordinated and fiscally responsible policy decisions.

Sincerely yours,



THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

REFERRAL

To: Mr. Amb F. Haydn Williams
Micronesia Status Negotiations
Department of the Interior

Date: August 29, 1974

*Mr. Stanley S. Carpenter
Director, Territorial Affairs -
Dept. of Interior*

ACTION REQUESTED

- Draft reply for:
 - President's signature.
 - Undersigned's signature.
- Memorandum for use as enclosure to reply.
- Direct reply.
- Furnish information copy.
- Suitable acknowledgment or other appropriate handling.
- Furnish copy of reply, if any.
- For your information.
- For comment.

NOTE

Prompt action is essential.

If more than 72 hours' delay is encountered, please telephone the undersigned immediately, Code 1450.

Basic correspondence should be returned when draft reply, memorandum, or comment is requested.

REMARKS:

Please prepare appropriate reply and return ENTIRE file to Norman E. Ross, Room 218, OEOB, Domestic Council

Description:

Letter: Telegram: Other:

To: The President

From: Philip R. Toomin

Date: August 21, 1974

Subject: Reexamination of the purposes we should be serving in these islands.

By direction of the President:

Norman E. Ross, Jr.
Norman E. Ross, Jr.
Assistant Director
Domestic Council



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encl

LAW OFFICES OF

PHILIP R. TOOMIN

Received
Aug 26

120 SOUTH LASALLE STREET
CHICAGO 60603
TELEPHONE 236-8525

August 21, 1974

RL
The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. President:

Your forceful words concerning the necessity of combating inflation by reducing, among other things, the cost of government, impels the writing of this letter. It is intended to call to your attention the profligacy which surrounds our trusteeship of the islands of the Pacific taken from Japan at the end of World War II. The writer served as a member of the High Court of these islands in the later years of the Eisenhower administration, traveling to all of the islands in the District centers. I have returned twice since 1960, my last visit two years ago at the dedication of the posh new courthouse on Truk atoll. I regularly receive the publications of our Trust Territory administration, and have corresponded from time to time with staff members who were there during my time. I feel therefore, that I am quite conversant with the problems now current, including the native movement for separation from our over solicitous embrace.

Mr. President, the budget during my time was scarcely six millions annually under the Scottish-type control of a dedicated civil servant, Delmas Nucker, working under the late Fred Seaton. The budget today is over sixty millions with much more to come if the ambitious improvement plans of the present administration can be wheedled out of the Washington budget makers.

Obviously, the cost of government must be high when native Congressmen receive a salary of \$1000 per month which in the native trade marts has buying power of ten times that sum.

It must be high when it includes the social welfare programs and bureaucracy which characterize our own administrative services, such as HUD, HEW, Community Action Programs, Office of Aging, Social Security and a host of others.



PHILIP R. TOOMIN

The President

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August 21, 1974

So in 25 years, we have transformed the simple tropical way of life consistent with a subsistence economy, into a government-regulated monstrosity where the only appealing career is employment by the Government. I am sure that you will find, that this formerly simple island culture utilizes government employment per capita in excess of that required in our highly industrialized States.

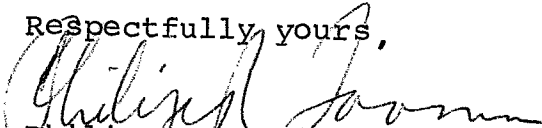
The payoff for our benevolent trusteeship is now apparent in the economic terms demanded by our Micronesian wards in connection with termination of our stewardship. They would like us to contribute fifty millions per year toward their economic development and welfare, and another fifty for the privilege of retaining a military presence in these islands. These would be in addition to continuance of our social welfare programs and the rental for lands needed for military uses. In short, this would mean at least \$5,000 per year for each family, thus enabling them all to enjoy at our expense the idyllic life of perpetual loafing.

Objections have been voiced to this perpetuation of almsgiving as being against the best interest of both donees and donor. Enclosed is a copy of the editorial of August 29, 1971, of the Chicago Tribune which I am sure you will find enlightening. What I believe is sorely needed is a reexamination of the purposes we should be serving in these islands, which should lead us to a speedy termination of our trusteeship. By so doing, we can eliminate this continuous drain on American resources and restore the indigenous population to their traditional way of life.

I hope you will find it possible to initiate the appropriate examination by your staff.

Wishing you all good luck in your difficult tasks, I am,

Respectfully yours,


Philip R. Toomin

PRT/bs
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Chicago Tribune

FOUNDED JUNE 10, 1847

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Sunday, August 23, 1971

THE NEWSPAPER is an institution developed by modern civilization to present the news of the day, to foster commerce and industry, to inform and lead public opinion, and to furnish that check upon government which no constitution has ever been able to provide.

—THE TRIBUNE CREDO

The White Man's Folly

What the Great White Father in Washington has done to the American Indian, he is now doing to the people of Micronesia. We're ashamed of having deprived the Indian of the opportunity to care for himself, and we lament the debilitating effect of badly planned welfare programs on the poor today; yet here we are, busily inflicting the same evils on our trust territory in the Pacific.

Philip R. Toomin, who spent two years as a judge in the territory, describes this tragedy in the summer issue of the magazine *Modern Age*.

After World War II, the United States was given a United Nations trusteeship over the former Japanese islands of the Western Pacific: the Gilberts, Marshalls and Marianas, inhabited by about 100,000 natives. Their adequate if primitive economy was based on crops and fishing until disrupted by the war.

Then came the American bureaucracy, functioning under a U. N. assignment to promote education, economic self-sufficiency, and ultimately self-government. Instead of restoring the prewar economy, our government undertook to rebuild the territory in Western fashion, possibly as a tourist resort.

But the islands are not endowed by nature to compete with Hawaii, Fiji and the Caribbean. Moreover, they are almost bereft of natural resources. The people are being educated to expect something better than farming and fishing, yet there is very little else for them to do.

Except, of course, working for the government—and by last year one out of every 10 adult natives was doing just that. Just there be any charges of discrimination, they were paid at American rates—thus playing havoc with the local price structure. And for this previously unheard-of salary, the chief function is to convey the blessings of the modern welfare state to the rest of their people.

The United States has transplanted to Eniwetok, Yap and hundreds of other palm-clad islands just about every anti-poverty program known in the big cities here at home, including the Neighbor-

hood Youth Corps, the Job Corps, Community Action Programs, Community Development, the Office of Aging, and Social Security.

The cost of government (including welfare) has soared so high that local taxes can cover only about 5 per cent of the budget. The remaining 95 per cent must be paid by American taxpayers. Half of the population is still under 20, and few productive jobs are awaiting those still in school. "It takes no seer," Mr. Toomin writes, "to predict the pressure on government to subsidize uneconomic programs" to provide the needed jobs.

Meanwhile, the example and exhortations of other Afro-Asian peoples have led some of the islanders to demand the promised self-government, and even total independence. What would they live on? Simple, it seems. They've borrowed a solution from the American Indians and have filed claims amounting to \$3 billion for damage done by the United States during the war. The interest alone on this would yield about \$6,000 for each Micronesian family, adequate to live in permanent comfort without having to work or even hold a government job.

Of course, this is preposterous. Mr. Toomin sums it up neatly: "In our anxiety to provide ever-increasing social services to the Micronesians, we have made it well nigh impossible for them ever to afford the luxury of self-government." Instead of promoting economic self-sufficiency, we have deprived them of any chance of attaining it in the foreseeable future.

So what do we do now? Cut back on the handouts and invite a U. N. resolution denouncing us as irresponsible mercenaries? Or resign ourselves, in Mr. Toomin's words, to "a permanent subsidy for a population which can survive only as long as the American people is willing to continue in the role of almsgiver"?

Like many other afflictions, the welfare habit is easier to get into than out of. It's a shame to inflict it on others.



