

SECRET

15 JAN 1995

Refer to: I-12,976/61

Declassified
Authority EO 12356 MAR 8 1961
Name: . . . Chief, Declass Br
Rec. Mgt. Div, WHS

092
Jan 1961
Box 8

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
(INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS) - C-70502

SUBJECT: U.S. Position on Establishment of Target Dates
for Self-Determination by Dependent Territories

1. The Department of Defense has considered the question of establishing target dates for the holding of plebiscites in its three territories (Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands) and in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands for the purpose of giving the inhabitants the choice of either (a) complete independence or (b) continued association with the United States on a self-governing basis.

2. We have also reviewed U.S. military interests in the general area in question and have concluded that:

- a. It is in the U.S. national interest to maintain control over Guam, Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Trust Territory of the Pacific, and the Pacific Islands under provisional U.S. administration and thereby deny them to foreign interests;
- b. From a military viewpoint, the island of Guam and certain islands of the Trust Territory and of the Ryukyu-Bonin-Volcanic group (Pacific islands under U.S. provisional administration) are essential to our basic national strategy.

X
8 Mar 61

3. In the light of available evidence indicating that at the present time the inhabitants of all three territories and of the Trust Territory would choose continued association with the U.S., the Department of Defense perceives no objection to holding plebiscites in these areas and believes that U.S. long-term military interests would be served if permanent "non-colonial" arrangements could be evolved.

SECRET

RHBWade/ONSCA/79347/3E280

I-12976/61

ASD ISA AB 330 8/4 1960

4. We would like to point out that the U.S. position in the Ryukyus is a factor which should be kept in mind in connection with the holding of plebiscites in certain other Pacific islands. While a UN plebiscite in the three U.S. territories and in the Trust Territory would not directly affect the status of the Ryukyus, such a plebiscite could further stimulate revisionist pressures in the Ryukyus, Japan, and the Sino-Soviet Bloc. It is our view that any such pressures should be firmly resisted inasmuch as the U.S. position in the Ryukyus is a keystone of our forward strategy in the Pacific which must be retained for the foreseeable future.

SIGNED

William P. Bundy
Deputy Assistant Secretary

Orig - AstSecState(10) -C-70502
2 cys - R&C