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OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

FINISH FILE

5710

Memorandum

TO : Op-00

DATE: Op-612/ds
Ser 00644P61

15 MAR 1961

FROM : Op-61

SUBJECT: U.S. Position on Establishment of Target Dates
for Self-Determination by Dependent Territories (C)Encl: (1) Copy of ASD/ISA ltr to ASST SECSTATE (IOA)
dtd 8 Mar 1961

OP-00	_____
OP-002	_____
OP-003	<u>PJA</u>
OP-004	_____
OP-005	_____
OP-006	_____

1. In response to an informal State request, DOD provided a Defense position on the holding of plebiscites in U.S. dependent territories and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. (encl (1)).

2. The Defense reply drew on the views of the JCS (JCS 2326/1) and, in addition, stated no objection to holding plebiscites.

3. Although STATE has received the Defense position, they have not resolved the divergent views within STATE. STATE's Bureau of European Affairs is opposing any U.S. initiative in the U.N. re: self-determination because of U.K. and French opposition.

Very resp'y
[Signature]

Copy to:

Op-09

Op-09B

Op-06

Op-60

J. M. Lee
Director Politico-Military Policy Division~~SECRET~~

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Washington 25, D. C.

Refer to: I-12,976/61

Mar 8 1961

International Security Affairs

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

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 Ryukyus-Bonin-Volcanic group (Pacific Islands under U.S. provisional administration) are essential to our basic national strategy.

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.

ENCLOSURE (1) to GNO Sec/Memo 00644P61
3-14-61

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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 reversionaist 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.

/S/ BUNDY

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