

**CIVIL VERSUS MILITARY ADMINISTRATION:  
THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT'S POSITION ON  
U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES, 1945–1947**

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Between 1945 and 1947, the United States set out to, and largely succeeded in, creating an exclusive strategic sphere in the Pacific Basin. Concerned about a potentially resurgent Japan and an increasingly threatening Soviet Union, the United States was determined to turn the Pacific Ocean into an “American lake.” The United States, however, had to ensure these measures did not appear to be imperialistic. Accordingly, the War, Navy, State, and Interior Departments debated with each other about how to create the American lake effect without the United States being branded a colonial power. The Interior Department thought that it had the answer. Because of its history of territorial administration, Interior was convinced that it was best suited to Pacific Island civil administration. Its ideas would lead to Pacific Islands that became more thoroughly colonized and Americanized by the 1990s than anyone in the 1940s probably ever hoped was possible.

BETWEEN 1945 AND 1947, the United States set out to, and largely succeeded in, creating an exclusive strategic sphere in the Pacific Basin, especially north of the Equator. The United States had been highly traumatized by the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor as well as its defeats in the Pacific in the first few months of 1942. Moreover, the United States had been acutely aware of the Pacific War's costs, especially the bloody island-hopping campaigns of 1942–1945. Now concerned about a future, potentially resurgent Japan and the more realistic fear of an expansionist USSR, American strategic policymakers, planners, and analysts wanted to turn the Pacific Basin into a postwar “American lake” to the greatest extent possible. One major problem, however, was bureaucratic consensus within the Executive Branch. The War, Navy, State, and Interior Departments were tasked with planning for

and carrying out a postwar defense and administration of the island groups conquered and liberated from Japan. The Departments all agreed with the idea of creating an American lake in the postwar Pacific but they disagreed, sometimes vehemently, about how to carry this task out. The Army and Navy were determined that the United States annex the Pacific Island territories. The State Department, however, was acutely aware of the United States' own anticolonial rhetoric from the prewar and wartime periods, not to mention the anti-imperial tide rising in European colonies since the interwar period. State was also sensitive that anything smacking of U.S. imperialism would be used by the Soviets for propaganda purposes. Therefore, State Department officers wanted a security solution carried out under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) that gave the United States *carte blanche* in the postwar Pacific but did not make the United States look imperialistic in the process!<sup>1</sup>

The Interior Department had a dilemma similar to the State Department's. Even more distrusted by the military services than the State Department was, Interior thought it absolutely necessary, for reasons cited below, that the civilian populations of island groups such as Micronesia be administered by a civilian agency. Yet at the same time, the Interior Department had to meet criticism that if the Pacific Islands were base facilities needed for postwar U.S. strategic security, civilian administration might interfere with the military's defense of the area in time of war or national emergency. Therefore, Interior not only had to clearly assert its position on this subject, but it had to meet these criticisms from the War and Navy Departments. As the other Executive Branch Departments did at times, Interior employed a fascinating "useable history" of U.S. territorial administration as a way to argue its case. By asserting their ideas that U.S. security and prestige would be enhanced by Interior Department administration, Interior Department officials were also suggesting an even more thoroughly imperial solution to the United States' dilemma in the postwar Pacific than the other three Departments were proposing. By arguing that their Department should administer the civilian populations of these island groups, for instance, officers at Interior were, wittingly or unwittingly, outlining a situation in which those civilian populations would be more fully integrated into the American polity than they might have been if merely left under U.S. military administration.

### **Methodology and Historiography**

This article is part of my second monograph on U.S. strategic policy toward the Pacific Basin between 1945 and 1947. In the first book, I focused on analyzing U.S. policy in the context of both the origins of the Cold War and

the history of U.S. imperialism. Taking U.S. actions in the Pacific Basin to be a case of great power imperialism, I explored why the United States wanted to be the predominant power in the region in the years following World War Two. Contextualizing this history with interwar and wartime events, I found the United States intent on consolidating its military, political, economic, and cultural control over these strategically located Pacific Island groups because of fears of a potentially resurgent Japan and a potentially aggressive Soviet Union. The second book investigates American policy toward the Pacific Basin from a more bureaucratic perspective. Staying within the same time period and using many of the same primary sources, I am exploring U.S. policy from the positions of the four Executive Departments involved in Pacific Basin defense and administration. This second book, in turn, has led me to write an additional monograph on the rivalries between these Departments and on their various perspectives about the defense and administration of these territories.<sup>2</sup>

The documents I analyze in this piece are small in number and are exclusively “metropolitan” in nature because my particular focus is strategic policy history and my particular intent is to mine these sources as intensively as possible and to a greater degree than has been done before. In addition, I have chosen to limit my studies to the 1945–1947 time period because I am seeking to connect Pacific Basin affairs to larger themes of global American policy in the first two years of the Cold War. It is true that, from a Pacific Basin perspective, 1947 does not seem as logical a conclusion as the early 1950s, given the start of the Korean War, the signing of the U.S.–Japan Peace Treaty, and the transfer of Micronesian administration from the Navy to the Interior Department. The year 1947 is a key year, however, in the history of American foreign policy because of the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as well as the beginning formulation of the Containment Doctrine. In addition, 1947 is a key year for Micronesian history since 1947 is the year that the United States gained UN acceptance of its strategic trusteeship idea for the former Japanese Mandates. Moreover, 1947 is significant for U.S. policy toward the Pacific Basin because 1947 represents the beginning of the “Reverse Course” in Japan. Up to that point in time, the United States intended its occupations of Japan and southern Korea to be brief and thought that its future in the Pacific would entail a defensive perimeter based on U.S. control of the Aleutians, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, Micronesia, and Hawaii. U.S. intervention in the Asian mainland was not perceived as a certainty by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and the U.S. Army was even in the process of withdrawing most of its ground forces from the Philippines. After 1947, however, American policy in the region became one of rebuilding Japan based on the prewar *zaibatsu*. In addition, U.S. policy

focused on the idea of a more permanent positioning of U.S. forces in Japan and a more active political, economic, and, eventually, military engagement in mainland East and Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of historiography, U.S. policy toward the Pacific Basin is probably one of the most understudied dimensions of Early Cold War U.S. foreign relations. Yet U.S. Pacific Basin policy is vitally important in understanding both the origins and outcome of the Pacific War. In addition, those interwar and wartime events are important to understanding postwar U.S. policy toward East Asia given the United States' legacy of paranoia from the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor. Finally, the region's importance is clear as an example of U.S. Early Cold War unilateralism.<sup>4</sup> Still, most works on the United States in the postwar Pacific tend to either cover a later period with minimal attention to the later 1940s,<sup>5</sup> focus on the issues of civil administration *per se*,<sup>6</sup> or concentrate on U.S. policy toward one island or island group rather than the entire Basin.<sup>7</sup> Other valuable works analyze U.S. actions from a cultural, but not necessarily strategic, policy perspective,<sup>8</sup> or analyze U.S. strategic policy over a longer time period rather than intensively exploring a shorter time period.<sup>9</sup> Additional works are simply dated. While they were valuable starting points, these earlier pieces did not have the advantage of time, perspective, or fully accessible archival material.<sup>10</sup> Thus, this study, while far from being a comprehensive account, is intended as a narrative to begin detailed investigation of the Interior Department's role in lobbying for the civil administration of U.S. Pacific territories in the immediate postwar period. This article is largely a narrative since I have allowed the historical actors in the primary sources to speak for themselves. I have, in turn, taken this tack because their words speak very eloquently to both the fears and the arrogance of U.S. policymakers and planners *vis-à-vis* the Pacific Basin in this time period. It is hoped that this study may lead other scholars to explore additional dimensions of the U.S. occupation of the Pacific Islands, both that of the immediate postwar period as well as events of later years.

### **Interior's Case for Pacific Island Civil Administration**

The Interior Department's position on the postwar administration of the former Japanese Mandates, as well as the postwar administration of prewar U.S. Pacific Basin possessions, started to become clear at least as early as November 1944, if not before. On 1 November 1944, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes sent a short note to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal that he had received word from a "reliable" source that the Navy was working on a bill to transfer jurisdiction of the Islands from Interior to the Navy Department. Ickes did not specify whether the Islands in question were pre-

war American possessions or the newly conquered territories in Micronesia, but he did remind Forrestal that he had mentioned the matter to President Franklin Roosevelt. He also told Forrestal that Roosevelt had expressed his opposition to the Navy having administrative control of the island groups. Ickes reiterated that he was “virtually certain” that work was being done on this—without Forrestal’s knowledge—by Captain Donald Ramsey, Legislative Counsel to Rear Admiral Oswald Colclough, the Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG). Ickes finished by asking Forrestal that he take immediate steps to put a stop to this “enterprise.”<sup>11</sup>

A few days before Roosevelt died in April 1945, Ickes also sent the President a memo about issues that had come up with the Army and the Navy *vis-à-vis* what he called the “international trusteeship problem.” Ickes began by telling Roosevelt that he was particularly disturbed about some reports that had come to him that outlined the military services’ attitude toward trusteeship. He was informed about these attitudes by Under Secretary of the Interior Abe Fortas, who had told him that the Army and the Navy wanted to have the United States insist on complete sovereignty over the former Japanese Mandates. Ickes further reported to the President that he had been told that the two services were either urging that international trusteeship not be discussed at the upcoming inaugural UN San Francisco Conference or that the matter not be discussed until the United States had a “firm agreement” about United States jurisdiction over Micronesia. Ickes additionally told Roosevelt that he agreed with the idea that the United States should be the administering power of the former Japanese Mandates and that the “arrangement” worked out by the interdepartmental State-War-Navy-Interior Committee (SWNCC) should assure for the United States Government all of the rights it could possibly desire for security purposes. He was concerned, however, that the arrangement had gone too far in providing a “scheme” by which those areas were now exempted from international accountability. He thought that if the United States insisted on complete sovereignty, an “international grab-bag” of colonial territories would result that would end in “serious prejudice” to U.S. interests and to the idea of a peaceful world organization.<sup>12</sup>

As an example, Ickes argued that the British might respond to U.S. sovereignty over Micronesia by claiming “absolute title” to certain areas of the Middle East that reflected their security interests but that would interfere with U.S. strategic interests because of the United States’ great stake in Middle Eastern oil. He also thought it would be a mistake to fail to reach an agreement on the subject of mandated territories at the San Francisco Conference. He said that the elimination of the topic would arouse suspicion and be a continuing source of hostility and distrust, and he did not think the new

international organization or any international organization could be successfully launched until these vital issues had been "boldly confronted" and dealt with by way of "practical idealism." In conclusion, Ickes urged to Roosevelt that the mandated territories and any other territories separated from Japan be placed under the trusteeship system, with only such safeguards as might be necessary for U.S. national security. He then thought that the United States should make a prompt decision as to a policy and be "vigorous" in its efforts to gain acceptance for that policy in San Francisco.<sup>13</sup>

It was clear, however, that President Harry Truman was not prepared after the end of the war to discuss these matters with Ickes. No doubt consumed by rising tensions with the Soviet Union, Truman nevertheless received a letter about trusteeship from Ickes about a week and a half after the Japanese surrender in September 1945. Ickes began the letter by asserting his belief that immediate attention should be given to the question of civil administration in the former Japanese territories. He first argued that it would be in keeping with American traditions to devise "suitable" means by which civilian administration of the Islands could take place while providing for the security interests of the nation. Ickes understood that some time would pass before decisions would be made about the disposition of the former Japanese Mandates, but he had already asked the Interior Department's Division of Territories and Island Possessions to make a general study of Pacific Island issues and be prepared to make more detailed plans as well. He asserted to Truman that full use should be made of the "expert" opinion in the Department of the Interior, the Federal agency he claimed had long been responsible for the "well-being" of indigenous peoples in U.S. territories. Ickes then provided Truman with a historical lesson about the Federal administration of these indigenous peoples. Reiterating that military administration of civil affairs had prevailed at various times in the Philippines, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, he argued that in all of these cases civil administration had later been transferred to the Interior Department. Only Guam and American Samoa remained under military administration. In addition, the Interior Department was administering Baker, Howland, Jarvis, Canton, and Enderbury Islands in the Pacific Basin. Furthermore, the War Department's Bureau of Insular Affairs had become part of Interior's Division of Territories and Island Possessions, and Interior had been administering the Philippines toward independence since the 1930s.<sup>14</sup>

Ickes therefore thought that there was every reason to believe that the "sound" conduct of civil administration in inhabited areas adjacent to strategic bases would support, not handicap, the military services. He argued that neither U.S. security nor prestige would be served by a policy of military rule in the former Japanese Mandates since such a policy would appear to be akin

to the militaristic policies of the old colonial powers and it might even appear more militaristic than that of the Japanese, who at least staffed their South Seas Bureau with civilians. He similarly pointed out to Truman that the British Army and Navy had also worked closely with civilian administrators and tolerated local “self-rule” in vital outposts such as Ceylon, Singapore, the Fiji Islands, and the Northwest Frontier of India. Ickes admitted that differences of opinion between military and civilian personnel could arise in such situations, but he thought that adequate safeguards could be made for military and policing functions. He thought that if the military services were given strict control of the actual base areas in the Islands, just as they were in the mainland United States, and that if the military and civilian departments maintained close liaison, joint administrative efforts could work. Ickes was, accordingly, going to ask the Division of Territories and Island Possessions to draft a detailed report along these lines and he thought that the War, Navy, and State Departments should be consulted. Truman returned a quick note the next day, however, asserting that he had read Ickes’ letter with great interest but that it was too early to discuss this subject and that he would be “glad” to talk it over with Ickes at a later date.<sup>15</sup>

Later in the month, Fortas, at this time Acting Secretary of the Interior, wrote Truman, telling him that he had been informed that the President had referred the subject to the other three Departments. Fortas stated to Truman that he was sure the President intended to draw upon the Interior Department’s long experience in “handling” the problems of indigenous peoples. Fortas even cited how the Interior Department had dealt with Indian affairs for over one hundred years as well as carrying out the civil administration in nearly all U.S. possessions! Fortas also pointed out to Truman that by having the Navy continue to administer Guam and American Samoa, the United States took on the “dubious” distinction of being the only Pacific power that governed an inhabited colonial area as if it were a military base. He did not think this was a status that could be justified or welcomed by the American people in lieu of “enlightened” opinion about the administration of dependent peoples. Fortas said he recognized the vital interests of the State Department and the military services in determining the policies and methods of administration of these strategic areas. In fact, he thought it best to treat the issue as a single U.S. problem and he realized that world attention would be focused on what the United States did *vis-à-vis* the administration of the Pacific Islands. Fortas thought that if the United States committed itself to Civil Government, the action would strengthen the United States’ case before the world for exclusive retention and control of strategic areas such as Micronesia. Fortas then told Truman that the Interior Department would like to assist in this process by provid-

ing "expert" opinion on Civil Government that was oriented toward the ultimate attainment of democratic institutions and economic stability in these areas. In addition, he thought Interior's experiences in these areas would help in creating an organization to administer the Islands that met both U.S. security needs and UN obligations. He ended the letter by asking Truman to advise the other Departments about Interior's obvious role in the deliberations.<sup>16</sup> This time, Truman responded to Ickes. Again stating that final decisions would be a long time in coming, Truman also said that solving the administrative problems should begin at once. Accordingly, Truman invited the Interior Department, in light of its long association with the governance of dependent peoples and territories, to take part in the administrative planning for the Pacific territories.<sup>17</sup>

By October 1945, Truman had established what has been variously called the Cabinet Committee, the Committee of Four Secretaries, and the Quadripartite Committee. This body was comprised of the Secretaries from the four Departments or their representatives and it was tasked with discussing the issue of Pacific Island administration. Though the four Secretaries apparently did not meet at this time, they did start exchanging various ideas about how U.S. security and political interests in the Pacific could be met.<sup>18</sup> One example of these exchanges was a late December 1945 letter from Ickes to Forrestal. Ickes began the letter by stating to Forrestal that the administrative problems in the Pacific Islands were not hypothetical future ones to solve but immediate ones arising from U.S. control of the area. He assumed that interim measures taken in this first period of administration would go far in determining for some time to come the administration, trade, and relations with the indigenous peoples of the region. He was also sure that awaiting a formal international agreement about the disposition of the former Japanese territories without providing for orderly administration would probably not serve the United States' best interests. Ickes also told Forrestal that he was unaware as to why disputes over trusteeship or sovereign control were having any bearing on the problem. According to Ickes, the United States had, for the time being, assumed actual governing responsibility for the area. Even if island groups such as Micronesia were eventually assigned to another power, Ickes maintained that the United States still had the current responsibility for the inhabitants' welfare. He also assumed that the islands would be under continuous international scrutiny and that U.S. actions therefore acquired an importance out of proportion to the islands' small size and population. He thus thought that it was in U.S. interests to "assist the natives of the islands toward a better way of life within the limits of their capabilities and the potentialities of their environment." Ickes additionally thought that in "terms of ultimate economy and goodwill,



such a policy would benefit our relations with peoples far beyond the limits of the island area.”<sup>19</sup>

Ickes was sure that the American people would favor Civil Government of the Pacific Islands in order to achieve these goals. Not only did he think American traditions were opposed to military rule, but he argued, as he had to Truman a few months before, that even a colonial power like Japan had “outgrown” it. Ickes was certain that Forrestal must be concerned about so many people at home and abroad perceiving the U.S. military as more focused on its strategic interests in the Pacific Islands than its concern for the civil rights and economic welfare of the inhabitants. In fact, Ickes seemed to recognize that the strategic position of the island groups was as significant from a political perspective as it was from a military point of view since he thought that the United States could “gain a great advantage if we can go to the peace table with a record of interim civilian administration that clearly demonstrates the democratic, nonimperialistic attitude of this Government toward the island peoples.” Ickes concluded the letter by claiming that he could not understand why attention should only be focused on the United States acquiring its bases in the region when “local human problems” also constituted an immediate and pressing responsibility of the United States Government. He even reminded Forrestal that Truman’s memos on this subject referred to “islands,” not “bases.” He therefore thought that the four Departments needed to begin work on these immediate and long-term issues in a similar kind of context, and he requested that Forrestal have the Cabinet Committee draft an interim report for the President by 1 February 1946. He also told Forrestal that he was sending a copy of this letter to Truman.<sup>20</sup>

It is unclear if such a report from the four Secretaries ever got to Truman by February 1946. It was, however, apparent to Wesley Clark, Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior, that the State Department agreed with the idea of civil administration in the Pacific Islands. It was also apparent to Clark that the military services still desired these “bases” to be under their control.<sup>21</sup> Clark had also been supplied with further information on the subject for Ickes by Eric Beecroft, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior. Beecroft made the argument that the United States should carry out its responsibilities in the former Japanese Mandates in accord with the “basic objectives” of the trusteeship system as outlined in the UN Charter. To him, this meant that Military Government should be replaced by Civil Government as soon as possible so that the economic, educational, and public health measures needed for the local inhabitants’ welfare could be provided for. He thought this replacement of Civil for Military Government should also take place in Guam and American Samoa and that these latter two locations should have organic acts of legislation with standards consistent with other

American territories. Beecroft, claiming that he had taken his information from military officers who had served in Micronesia, thought that the abilities and intelligence of the local inhabitants meant that they could “progress” rapidly toward self-government, as he thought the Hawai’ian people had. Not surprisingly, he believed that the Interior Department, through the Division of Territories and Island Possessions, should be the agency to conduct this American supervision of Pacific Island territories. Citing Interior’s over 100 years of experience in U.S. territories, he thought it was the agency best suited to meeting the international standards of the UN. Again citing Fortas’ earlier note about the United States being the only Pacific power to govern civilian populations as if they were part of a military base, Beecroft stated that he was sure that American opinion would not justify the continuation of a policy that even the Japanese had avoided.<sup>22</sup>

Edwin Arnold, the Director of Interior’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions, continued to call for the civil administration of the former Japanese Mandates by his Division in a late February 1946 report, even as the War, Navy, and State Departments agreed on deferring the question until the status of Micronesia had been determined by the UN. Apparently, Interior was the only one of the four Departments to disagree with this decision as it was submitted to Truman in heavily revised form by Secretary of State James Byrnes, Chairman of the Cabinet Committee.<sup>23</sup> Arnold instead proposed that Military Government be replaced by Civil Government in all of the Pacific Islands under control of the U.S. armed services except those islands or parts of islands that had been designated as military reservations. He meant the proposal to apply to Guam, American Samoa, the Pacific Islands already under U.S. sovereign control, all of the Micronesian Islands formerly under Japanese Mandate, and the Ryukyus, Bonins, and Volcanos. He further thought that this policy should apply to any Pacific Islands that may come under U.S. administration “from time to time.” Of course, the administrative agency was to be Interior’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions. Citing the previously noted “evidence” of Interior Department experience in territorial administration, Arnold also pointed out the Interior Department’s administration of the Philippine Islands as that archipelago prepared for independence. In addition, he brought up Interior’s efforts in Hawai’ian and Alaskan preparations for statehood, the Department’s assistance to Puerto Rico as that island territory set about to determine its future status in the U.S. polity, and Interior’s role in the Virgin Islands’ “increasing” amount of self-government. He repeated the need for the United States to avoid being the only Pacific power that governed civilian populations as if they were military bases.<sup>24</sup>

Arnold further argued that even if some delay in transferring the eventual jurisdiction of the Pacific Islands did take place, the United States should im-

mediately make and announce the decision to employ civil administration in the Pacific. He asserted, again, that this action would strengthen U.S. claims for military and administrative supervision of the region, belying beliefs that U.S. interest in the region was narrowly military, and allow the United States to insist on “proper standards” of civil administration by other powers over their territories. Arnold admitted that even an immediate interim civil administration might be subject to change because of later international agreements. However, he still thought that sound military use of the Islands could be provided for concerning both the current civil administration of these territories as well as future trusteeship regimes. In addition, Arnold asserted that an immediate change to civil administration would ease the necessary final adjustments that would have to be made by the Executive Departments when the final disposition of the Pacific territories was determined. He also argued that an immediate change would alleviate the problem of civil affairs personnel thinking the current administration was only a temporary one. He further thought that an immediate change in administrative regime would provide for a continuity of responsibility among those carrying out island administration. Finally, he asserted that American experience in Micronesia already indicated that any division of the Islands for administrative purposes would multiply problems of administration. Therefore, Arnold thought that if American taxpayers were to be relieved of the cost of island administration and if the Island populations were to enjoy adequate conditions, all of Micronesia, including Guam, should be under a single administrative unit. Arnold also thought that treating the entire region as a single administrative entity would allow for a more economical management of problems such as transportation, communication, food distribution, public health, and public finance.<sup>25</sup>

### **Interior’s Plan for Pacific Island Civil Administration**

Another Interior Department position paper from this time period quite specifically outlined the issues that Interior had with the State, War, and Navy Departments over the administration of the former Japanese Mandates. These differences, in turn, give the reader a fairly detailed picture of Interior’s position on the whole issue. The position paper began by calling for Civil Government over all civilian populations under the American flag in time of peace. Such Civil Governments were to be founded on organic legislation or constitutions wherein Congress would prescribe the form of government over the area concerned. The paper also called for the type of government to be “democratic” in form in the sense that the local population would participate to the fullest degree possible, or at least to the “fullest

capability” of the population in question. Organic acts, in turn, needed to contain a bill of rights whereby Congress extended guarantees to the local population against the infringement of basic liberties. These personal freedoms were to be guaranteed to inhabitants of the United States and its territories by the Constitution and laws of the United States. It was also argued that these Civil Governments should be “reasonably true” to American political traditions, i.e., they were to consist of a checks and balances system of executive, legislative, and judicial branches that were free and equal to each other. The position paper did talk, however, about the right and power of the U.S. military to take, use, and exclusively occupy such land areas and harbor and anchorage facilities as were needed for the national defense. Moreover, these military rights were to be “confirmed and safeguarded.”<sup>26</sup>

Administrative responsibility was to be centralized in one office or agency of the United States Government, and that agency had to be given a status of “sufficient importance” in the structure of government and enough access to the highest councils of government in order to give power and effects to its policies. The author of the position paper assumed that the agency in question needed some access to the President at the Cabinet level so that it could treat the other Departments on an equal basis. This independence in position would supposedly allow the agency in question to “effectively” look after the interests of the people under its charge. The position paper also reiterated many of the points put forth earlier by Ickes, Fortas, and Beecroft. Since the Interior Department had such long experience and working knowledge of U.S. dependent areas, it was assumed by the author to be the agency of choice. The author also called for the Department’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions to be combined with a new office for territorial administration if Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) were not put under Interior Department jurisdiction. The author preferred, however, that instead of having the Government create some new agency, all matters having to do with the civil administration of the Pacific territories should be placed with the Division because of its long record of territorial administration and its small budget.<sup>27</sup>

Several points were made in detail as well about the organic legislation in question. There was a call for separate pieces of organic legislation for Guam and American Samoa since Guam was seen as “more advanced” economically, politically, and socially than American Samoa. Guam’s population, for instance, was supposedly more familiar with American political structures and philosophies because of contact, training, and association with Americans. In addition, its Spanish-Filipino-Chamorro population allegedly had a closer affinity “to western (modern) civilization than do the native (Polynesian) Samoans.” It was also thought that the organic legislation should

grant United States citizenship to both the Guamanians and the American Samoans without any kind of test or naturalization proceedings. It was further thought that the idea of a bill of rights be made more explicit in terms of the right of trial by jury if the defendant wanted to be tried in such a manner. The author of the position paper was not so concerned whether locally elected legislatures were one- or two-house chambers, since Guam had a two-house body and American Samoa had a one-house body. The fact that these bodies were locally elected, however, was considered important, but the author was concerned that Samoa's legislature or Fono was largely composed of hereditary chiefs, something the author attributed to American Samoa's "lack of concept" of Jeffersonian democracy, Western suffrage, or democratic election processes. It was thought that the answer to a legislature for American Samoa was quite difficult because of this situation, but that having a two-house body with one being hereditary and one being elective might be the answer. Legislation that set up an independent judiciary, including a system of local courts and a separate Federal court or a right of appeal to the Federal courts, was also thought necessary. The position paper was prepared for the organic act to be drafted by the Navy Department for American Samoa but not for Guam. Several bills on Guam had already been introduced in Congress and the author felt that it would be easier to get one of these passed and then propose changes later on where desirable. The author did not, however, think that the State Department should be solely responsible for drafting the organic legislation for the TTPI since Interior did not think that TTPI administration should be regarded as a "foreign affairs" issue under the purview of the State Department. The paper argued that Interior and "other interested departments" should have a hand in drafting such legislation but that the legislation should follow the basic premises mentioned earlier in the paper.<sup>28</sup>

Interior obviously wanted the laws to authorize the President to determine which agency of the U.S. Government should have permanent administrative responsibility. Interior wanted the President, however, to have all of the points listed before him when he made such a decision. Interior was willing to see the Navy have interim responsibility for the TTPI-pending determination of a permanent agency for such administration—as long as "interim" was clearly spelled out in terms of the number of years. Interior specifically did not want the "interim" administration of Guam and American Samoa to be more than one year since the Islands had already been U.S. possessions under naval administration for more than fifty years! Along these lines, the position paper agreed with the other Departments that an Executive Order should be issued with Congressional approval that terminated Military Government in the TTPI and instituted interim civil administration

responsibilities to the Navy. Again, however, the position paper called for "interim" to be clearly defined.<sup>29</sup>

### **Krug's Report**

Between the spring of 1946 and the spring of 1947, it was finally decided within the Truman Administration that the United States would unilaterally offer to administer the former Japanese Mandates as a UN strategic trusteeship, with the United States as the sole administering power. While the JCS still wanted annexation, Truman was not prepared to go that far. Nor, however, was he prepared to fully entrust the UN with administering territories that were seen to be vital to future U.S. security in the Pacific and East Asia. Accordingly, the United States offered a strategic trusteeship under the terms developed by Abe Fortas in March 1945. While many of the Great Powers were not happy with what they took to be U.S. unilateralism, they were also not prepared to oppose U.S. actions at this time. Also within this time frame, Harold Ickes left government service in February 1946 over policy disagreements with Truman. While Under Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman became Acting Secretary for a few weeks, Julius Krug became Secretary of the Interior by the spring of 1946. Within this context, there were attempts by Interior Department officials in 1946 and 1947 to build coalitions with certain State Department personnel over the issue of the UN strategic trusteeship. Specifically, this coalition building related to the fact that Truman had not yet determined which U.S. Executive Department was to administer the TTPI since the Navy had only been given interim authority to conduct Naval Civil Government.<sup>30</sup> For instance, in mid-April 1947, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Girard Davidson wrote a quick note to Krug, reminding the latter to talk to Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson about the civilian administration of the Islands. Davidson thought that the "lower echelons" of the State Department favored civil administration, as the Interior Department did, but he thought that the intermediate group of State Department personnel and the Secretariat were opposed to this and "rather friendly" to military control. Davidson assumed Acheson himself favored civilian administration, but he thought that the latter would want to have the Interior Department "carry the ball" on this point.<sup>31</sup>

One month later, Krug also sent a report to Truman about his ideas concerning Pacific Island civil administration after he paid a visit to Guam, American Samoa, the former Japanese Mandates, and Okinawa. The report was sent to Truman at the same time that a Navy report on the same Islands was being released to the public. Krug hoped that both reports would go far in maintaining and "arousing" American public interest in the issue of Pa-

cific Island governance. At the same time, the report clearly portrays Krug's ideas for governing the Islands as well as Interior Department notions about the Pacific Islands that reflect the imperial perceptions noted earlier in this article.<sup>32</sup> Krug began his report by stating that it was his firm belief that the United States had to practice democracy in the Pacific as it practiced it at home. He also said that the United States had to convince the rest of the world that the United States practiced democracy as part of the American way of life, just as it advocated that concept to the global community. He further asserted that if the United States was to stand before the world as a champion of free and representative government, it had to practice in its own dependent areas what it was preaching abroad. He complained that the United States was currently imposing on the Guamanians, the American Samoans, and the Micronesians a form of government that Americans would not stand for on the mainland and which the United States would probably criticize another government for. He complained in further detail that all power in these areas was held by the American military governors and that the Pacific Islanders were being denied such basic civil rights as trial by jury, right of appeal, and taxation with representation. He asserted that since the military governors held all executive, legislative, and judicial power in their hands, the Pacific Islanders had no voice in matters such as education, public health, or the economic aspects of their community's lives.<sup>33</sup>

Krug's answer to this dilemma was to establish Civil Government for all civil populations under the U.S. flag in time of peace. He was therefore asking Truman to seek legislation from Congress to establish local self-government in Guam and American Samoa, provide for civilian governors on those Islands, and extend U.S. citizenship and other basic civil rights to the Islanders as was afforded to mainlanders by the United States Constitution. In addition, Krug recommended that the United States declare at the earliest possible moment its intent to administer the TTPI through civil administration. He also wanted Congress to define just what "civil rights" would mean for the Pacific Islanders in the TTPI and to define the political status the Islanders would have. In addition, Krug wanted the Islanders to be granted the maximum degree of political rights by Congress. He therefore wanted civilian administrators to replace the military governors, civil courts to replace the military provost courts, and local municipal bodies to become legislative assemblies. Krug thought that it was equally important that these political changes be accompanied by a program of economic reconstruction and development. He thought it was vital that the inhabitants of the former Japanese Mandates in particular receive economic assistance in the form of trade good programs and the development of local markets for products such as copra. Since their economic ties with Japan had been completely severed

and those with the United States had not yet been established, Krug thought that there should be an economic program tied with the political one that was geared to the well-being of the Micronesians. In addition, Krug saw an American political and economic development program being supplemented by an educational one that was "designed to assist these island peoples in raising themselves to a reasonably modern social and cultural level." Krug admitted there were many aspects of indigenous culture that should be preserved but he thought that the United States had more responsibility in this matter than just "preserving" the Pacific Islanders as an "exhibit" of "by-gone" culture. Krug outlined for Truman the degree to which this program would require cooperation between the many specialized Federal agencies. He envisioned the Navy or Coast Guard furnishing transportation and communication facilities in these territories. Moreover, the central administering agency would have to have the coordinating authority to ensure that Federal agencies specializing in education, public health, agriculture, and fisheries were cooperating and performing. Therefore, he thought that a "fully coordinated" organization was dictated from the start for reasons of economy, sound administration, the Pacific Islands' needs for development, and the special responsibilities that the United States was assuming under the UN Trusteeship Agreement.<sup>34</sup>

Krug also told Truman that there was no doubt in his mind about the strategic importance of the Pacific Islands and their value to the United States as forward outposts of defense. He knew the military services had to be afforded free access to all of the Islands at all times and that the military must be allowed to set aside and exclusively control islands or parts of islands and their surrounding waters as was necessary for the establishment and maintenance of military and naval bases. He also understood that the military services needed to have exclusive jurisdiction over its bases and reservations. He did not think, however, that civilian administration of the nonmilitary areas of these military reservations was incompatible with an effective national defense. For instance, Krug pointed out that military and naval "mastery" of the Civil Governments of Puerto Rico, Alaska, and the U.S. Virgin Islands had not been necessary during the war. Moreover, he thought that the emergency in Hawaii demonstrated that military control could be extended to an entire strategic area when necessary and then withdrawn to the military reservations once the emergency had passed. He further asserted that the war had provided many examples of close cooperation between civilian and military agencies for the good of the national interest. In his view, to now keep the Pacific Islands under permanent military administration would admit a basic weakness in American governmental principles. He thought that instituting Civil Government in the Pacific Islands as soon as possible and



actually practicing democracy there would be the best way for the United States to “overcome the nondemocratic philosophies of government which today are bidding for control of the whole of Asia.”<sup>35</sup>

Krug then went into more detailed observations about specific areas of the Pacific Islands that he had visited. On Guam, he found a people who “appear to be cheerful and well-fed but somewhat impatient with the lag in the rebuilding of their communities and in the reconstruction of their economy.” In addition, he found that their recent experiences had caused them to develop a “political consciousness” supposedly “far beyond” that which existed on the Island before the war. He specifically said that Guamanian political leaders wanted Guam’s political status and civil rights “fixed” by Congress, a pledge made by the United States on repeated occasions since 1898. Krug next discussed the destruction on the Island, especially from the American naval and air bombardment and the ground fighting needed to liberate Guam from Japanese control. Structures of all kinds, as well as breadfruit, coconut, and timber trees, were down; devastation was highly evident everywhere he went; livestock was largely gone; and permanent housing construction had not yet begun. Krug told Truman that the Island had never been economically self-sufficient in its modern history and that there was no industry, but that in peacetime the soil had at least been fertile and the livestock plentiful. He also reminded Truman, however, that about fifty percent of the Island was to be turned into military reservations, creating a situation where many of the Guamanian farmers would be made landless. Moreover, many had been forced into temporary refugee camps operated by the Naval Military Government.<sup>36</sup>

Krug again criticized the present situation in which neither the 23,000 Guamanians nor the American civilians on the Island had an effective part in enacting the laws that governed them since all power was vested in the U.S. Naval Governor, Rear Admiral Charles Pownall. He admitted that Admiral Pownall occasionally sought advice from what Krug saw as an effective Guam Congress, but he also related that that local body was without authority. Krug went into detail about Pownall’s powers, including the authority to tax, the power to appoint and remove judges who presided without juries, and the ability to sit in review of the judges and their decisions. There was apparently no right of appeal for either local inhabitants or American citizens residing on Guam other than Pownall’s decision to submit capital cases to the Secretary of the Navy for review. In addition, Pownall was obviously in control of the Navy and Marine Corps personnel as well as the Guamanian policemen who enforced the laws. While Krug said he was not trying to imply that Pownall had been out of line in his actions, he thought that any system that vested so much power in one person was intolerable and completely out of character for people living under the American flag.<sup>37</sup>

Krug went back to the economic needs of the Island, in particular to the fact that so much taxable property such as buildings had been destroyed, that so much land was reserved for the military, and that all of the Island's financial needs had to come from Federal funds and local taxes levied by the Navy. Krug saw a definite need to change this situation so that private businesses were revived that could supply the food, clothing, and other needs of the local economy. He also reported that the Bank of Guam, owned and operated by the Navy, was the only institution of commercial credit on the Island but that this institution did not take the risks normally associated with private banking ventures. In a related manner, Krug informed Truman that the Navy and a shipping firm known as American President Lines supplied most of the local freight transportation needs and that the shipping firm had taken care of some postal business until the reestablishment of the U.S. Post Office on Guam. The Post Office now shipped much of the light consumer goods that came to Guam, but he still thought that passenger service to and from the Island was inadequate. Pan-American Airways had recently reestablished its facilities on Guam, which would connect Guam with the Philippines, China, Japan, Hawaii, and the mainland United States, as had been the case before the war. Shipping for civilian passengers was not adequate, however, as American President Lines was soon to end service and military craft could not accommodate much civilian traffic. Still, Krug saw a positive development in the establishment on Guam of a trans-Pacific commercial cable relay station since this gave the civilian population access to cable facilities at commercial rates.<sup>38</sup>

While Krug thought the Navy was extending adequate health care to local American civilians and the Guamanians, he also pointed out that these were functions normally carried out by local governments or the medical profession in most American communities of Guam's size. He did have praise for both the Army and Navy in ensuring sanitation, pest control, and medical education but he thought that the Guamanians could take over these functions from Navy personnel. Krug did, however, have praise for the state of education on Guam. Apparently, the Naval Government prescribed the curriculum and selected the teachers, spent a considerable portion of its funds on education, and had done quite a bit to "raise the cultural level of the people and to teach them the general principles of the American way of life." He remarked on the prolific use of the English language by the Guamanians and the general "progress" that had been made in this area. In summation as regarded Guam, Krug thought that the people of Guam were ready for autonomy in their local affairs under a civil governor. According to Krug, the Guamanians "have made remarkable progress under American sovereignty. They speak our language with facility; they understand our political philoso-

phy and have the same social organization and institutions on the island.” Moreover, Krug praised the Guamanians for being devout Christians for generations and for demonstrating their loyalty to the United States during the war. Because the Guam Congress had been in operation since 1931, he thought it was well qualified to assume legislative powers and that the people of Guam were ready to enact local laws and have a voice in determining how their tax dollars were spent. Finally, Krug thought that the Guamanians were entitled to these rights. He was especially receptive to the idea that they have a role in creating the laws under which they lived. For this reason, he wanted U.S. Marines withdrawn as village policemen, the local courts freed of the “heavy hand” of executive control, and the Guamanians and local Americans to have the right of appeal to the U.S. Federal court system.<sup>39</sup>

Krug thought that the American Samoans were likewise healthy, well fed, and “adequately housed according to native standards,” but he was also convinced that the American Samoans had had less contact with mainland Americans. He admitted that the Samoans who lived and worked around the American naval base at Pago Pago spoke English, practiced American religious and social forms, and had a “good understanding” of American political philosophy. Samoans of the “back country,” however, still lived in a “native” society of handicrafts economy and the cultivation of tropical crops, and he found that they still retained their tribal customs and only spoke “our language” with difficulty.<sup>40</sup>

Krug reported that the laws of American Samoa, like those on Guam, were promulgated by the Naval Governor, Captain Vernon Huber, who had absolute and final authority. Like Pownall on Guam, Huber had control of the court system, though he too referred capital cases to the Secretary of the Navy if this was requested by the defendant. As on Guam, there was no right of appeal to the U.S. court system. Huber also had complete authority in local matters, including taxation, just as on Guam. Failure to pay the poll tax levied by the Naval Government, for instance, was punishable by imprisonment. The Naval Government also had control over the funds from customs levied on all food and clothes imported into the Island. Imports and exports were also apparently regulated by a Commodity Administrator who was appointed by Huber. Further, Huber had complete authority over a six-person Department of Samoan Industry, a governmental cooperative marketing agent for Samoan products that was to oversee fair trade practices. According to Krug, an example of Huber’s control was the fact that copra and related palm products could not be exported unless they were consigned to persons in the United States, except upon specific authority of the Naval Governor. Apparently, profits from these activities were deposited to the credit of the Naval Government of American Samoa.<sup>41</sup>

Krug also related, without any editorial comment, that health and sanitation in Samoa were the responsibility of the Naval Government and that naval medical personnel were providing care at a newly completed hospital. In addition, he related how the Naval Government maintained and operated the school system and that there were a number of church schools on the Island. He found the schools in Pago Pago to be sufficient, but he thought that those in the rural areas were "somewhat primitive" and needed higher physical plant and teaching standards. While he favored the American Samoans providing some of the funding for their school system through local taxation, he thought that the United States needed to continue to bear some of this cost itself.<sup>42</sup>

Krug also described the Bank of American Samoa in terms similar to those of the Bank of Guam, with the addition that non-Samoans could not extend credit to Samoans in excess of twenty-five dollars without the permission of Huber, something Krug did not mention in relation to the Bank of Guam. Krug further pointed out another difference with Guam: that of a complete lack of civilian communication facilities on American Samoa. Navy radio facilities were sometimes made available to the Samoans. In addition, a passenger line named the Matson Line carried civilian passengers and mail and took care of freight needs on an unscheduled basis. According to Krug, there was also an interisland freight and passenger service that had been privately owned before the war but was now operated by the Naval Government at a substantial profit. He understood, however, that the Naval Government meant to return this line to private ownership in the near future.<sup>43</sup>

Krug then returned to indigenous politics. The only "semblance" of a legislative body that he found in American Samoa was the annual "Fono" or general meeting of chiefs and native officials. This body was presided over by Huber but was no more than an advisory council. Although he thought the Samoans should be given a greater role in making the laws they live under, Krug was convinced that the Fono, as presently constituted, could not be transformed into a democratically elected legislative body. He thought the chiefs and family heads would be able to "unduly" influence any voting by members of their clans. Yet at the same time, Krug did not think that the American Samoans should be governed by executive fiat. He wanted to establish an elective legislature "without delay" and without regard for the present-day "hierarchy." He thought that for a time the new assembly would be dominated by bloc voting under the family heads. He also thought, however, that with experience in the use of the voting franchise the American Samoans "would soon adapt themselves to democratic institutions."<sup>44</sup>

In conclusion, as on Guam, he wanted to afford the full protection of civil liberties to the American Samoans. This meant having local courts freed from

the purview of the Naval Governor, extending the U.S. Constitution and laws to the American Samoans “so far as they can possibly be made applicable,” and divorcing local executive power from local legislative and judicial functions. Krug thought that all of these changes needed to be legislatively enacted by Act of Congress. Finally, he wanted a civilian governor who was to be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate.<sup>45</sup>

Krug admitted to Truman that his visit to the former Japanese Mandates was brief and, in fact, limited to visiting Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. While he said he did not have an opportunity to converse with the local inhabitants, he was informed that they were glad to be rid of their Japanese masters and that they were quite friendly to the United States. He was also informed that the Micronesians were law abiding to a “remarkable degree.” He further understood that while their affairs were administered by the Naval Military Government, Micronesian local government was largely carried out through local chiefs, though military provost courts tried the more serious criminal cases. Krug also told Truman that he had been informed that the Island economies had been completely disrupted and were in a “chaotic” condition. In addition, he thought that action to improve these economic circumstances was long overdue. As an example, he described a situation in which prewar Japanese sources of consumer goods and prewar Japanese markets for Micronesian goods no longer existed. Communication and interisland shipping were also largely unavailable. Because of this, he thought it was necessary that the U.S. Government continue to assist the Micronesians in procuring trade goods and in disposing of copra, shells, handicrafts, and other local products. He also thought, however, that this aid should be gradually withdrawn and replaced by forms of private enterprise in which the locals acted as owners and operators. In the interim, he thought “reasonable” regulation of non-Micronesians needed to take place so as to prevent exploitation but he did not think the area should be kept permanently closed to “legitimate” non-Micronesian traders and commercial enterprises.<sup>46</sup>

Krug then provided a historical lesson to Truman about the civilian administration of Micronesia by relating that the Japanese naval squadron commander who took possession of Micronesia from the Germans in 1914 established a military administration as part of the garrison force. However, Krug told Truman that the military administration was transferred to a civilian administration in July 1918. Although this civilian administration remained under the command of the local Japanese naval garrison commander, the naval garrison was abolished in 1922 upon Japan’s award as administering power of the League of Nations Mandate over Micronesia. A civilian agency, the South Seas Bureau, then presided over Micronesia until just a few years before the outbreak of the war. Krug used this example of Japanese admin-

istration to then argue that while Micronesia clearly had to be kept under U.S. control for purposes of American national security, it did not follow that this governance had to be by way of military administration. He thought that the civilian populations of the Islands were entitled to a civilian type of government in which they were encouraged to participate. In fact, he thought it best if the Micronesians were given a "maximum measure" of local self-government. He envisioned this self-government not necessarily as the imposition of American political processes and institutions in all cases, but the continuance of indigenous customs on some Islands. The bottom line for him was that the establishment of local municipal councils be based on a democratic franchise. He also wanted a situation in which TTPI administration was subject at all times to public criticism and responsible to the "democratically expressed" needs of the people. Since Article Eleven of the proposed Trusteeship Agreement granted the Micronesians the status of TTPI citizens and afforded them diplomatic and consular protection when they were outside of Micronesia or the United States, Krug assumed that there was nothing in the proposed Agreement that prevented the United States from extending all American citizenship rights and protections to the Micronesians! He thought that these rights should be guaranteed by Act of Congress and that the Micronesians should be given a system of civil courts to replace the military ones. Finally, he thought that all of these measures could be realized without danger to U.S. military security. In his view, "a local society of self-respecting human beings, imbued with the love for democracy ... can be the greatest asset to our own security and a forward bulwark of the American way of life."<sup>47</sup>

Krug then made comments on Okinawa in the final section of his report. He reminded Truman that the Island was part of the sovereign territory of Japan, along with the rest of the Ryukyus, and that it was also under the military administration of the United States. He reported that much of the Island had been "utterly" devastated, that the population had suffered much physical hardship, and that they were in such a pitiful state that they could use whatever economic aid the United States would provide. Krug also saw the Army's Military Government as quite able, especially in regard to its ability to return the Okinawans to their lands. In turn, he thought that the Okinawans were quite adept at starting to restore these lands, sometimes even without the benefit of draft animals. Additionally, he said that the Okinawans were providing themselves with temporary housing, with the assistance of the Army. Schools had also been started and he thought that, with the guidance of the Army's Military Government officers, "these industrious people are learning the ways of democracy and are participating to a limited extent to their own government."<sup>48</sup>

Krug concluded his report to Truman by asserting that he was supported by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Japan, in the idea that Military Government be withdrawn as the Okinawans proceeded down the road to democracy. To Krug, an early withdrawal of the Military Government would entail its replacement by a civil administration in which the Okinawans would be given more responsibility in the conduct of their own affairs. "We must be prepared to permit these people to practice the democracy we preach." In addition, Krug thought that the "form" and not only the words of "our way of life" must be established in Okinawa as proof to the people of the Far East "that democracy is suited to oriental peoples living in an oriental economy. A truly democratic Okinawa and Japan, lying as they do off the mainland of Asia, can serve as a spearhead of our way of life."<sup>49</sup>

In fact, eventual civil administration of the Pacific Islands was assumed at this time by some White House officials. Later in the same month that Krug's report was submitted, a memo from John Kingsley, White House Office Program Coordinator, to John Steelman, the Assistant to the President, talked about Krug's report as an interesting and valuable one that was arguing for "probably the only sound policy in the long run." It seemed to Kingsley that the only question about military versus civilian control over the Pacific Islands was the matter of timing that transfer of control. While he did not think that the present was the right time for Civil Government, Kingsley thought there would be an advantage in publicizing the fact that the Truman Administration was considering the possibility. Accordingly, he favored the publication of Krug's report.<sup>50</sup>

### Conclusion

The Interior Department did not take over the civil administration of Guam, American Samoa, and the TTPI in 1947 when the strategic trusteeship came into effect. In fact, what took place between 1947 and 1951 was an interim Naval Civil Government. During this time period, the Navy and the Interior Department both lobbied the President for long-term administrative control over the Islands. In addition, Congress held hearings, with testimony by officials from both Departments. Eventually, all three territories were transferred to Interior Department authority between 1950 and 1951, but not before there was quite a bit of bureaucratic haggling between the Navy and Interior. Truman, in fact, convinced Congress to leave the Navy with the authority to prevent any foreigners that the Navy thought might be national security risks from entering these territories, and Truman himself was able to keep sole authority in determining which areas were closed for security

reasons. Nor did the matter end there. Probably because the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) wanted to use the Northern Mariana Islands for training purposes, President Truman ordered the Marianas, minus Guam and Rota, back into Navy Department control in 1952. The Northern Marianas stayed under Navy control until 1962 when they were transferred back to the Interior Department. Moreover, the Department of Defense (DOD) took control of various islands that were being used for strategic purposes, such as Kwajalein, which became part of the United States' Pacific Missile Test Center and still is today. Interior carried out a civil administration role in the remaining islands of the TTPI into the 1960s, but in that decade civil administration by both Departments began to give way to "free association" status negotiations between the United States and separate areas of Micronesia, such as the Northern Marianas, the Palau Islands, the Marshall Islands, and what eventually became the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Into the 1980s, the United States negotiated separate political status agreements with the remainder of the Islands that, in turn, became either U.S. commonwealths or nominally independent republics that still relied on the United States for military security.<sup>51</sup>

The United States' legacy in Micronesia has not been a stellar one. No matter which bureaucracy was responsible, Micronesia today is a highly urbanized, congested, and overly populated group of islands. Moreover, its population is experiencing tremendous social and economic problems because it has become accustomed to a mainland American material lifestyle that has been subsidized by the U.S. Government but that cannot be sustained without those subsidies. In particular, there are significant ecological problems ensuing from urbanization and the creation of an American-style infrastructure, and there are extraordinarily high rates of alcoholism and teenage suicide. One suspects, in fact, that the United States' legacy in Pacific Island groups such as Micronesia is highly similar to its disastrous results in the administration of American Indian reservations in the United States itself. This legacy is why the Interior Department's position for administering the Pacific Basin territories is such a fascinating study of useable history. Interior's arguments are a case study in the Department's own assumptions about its alleged past successes. In addition, Interior Department officials were making strong assumptions about the failures of the other Executive Branch Departments when it came to the future administration of the Pacific territories. Probably most intriguing from this author's perspective is that the Interior Department, contrary to beliefs in the War, Navy, and State Departments, did not ignore U.S. security interests in the Pacific or the political dilemmas the United States encountered in turning the Pacific Basin into an American lake. In their own imperialistic way, Interior Department



officials created an argument for the civil administration of the Pacific Island territories that eventually succeeded in coupling and integrating those territories into the American polity more thoroughly than they would have been under strictly military administration. For better or worse, post-1951 Interior Department administration in places such as Micronesia succeeded in creating an American lake in the Pacific Basin more than U.S. military and diplomatic officers probably ever imagined.<sup>52</sup>

### Endnote

The author wishes to thank the publishers of *American Diplomacy* for permission to reprint a portion of his article "'Americanism' and Strategic Security: The Pacific Basin, 1943–1947," *American Diplomacy*, Volume II, No. 3, Oct-Dec 1997, [www.americandiplomacy.org](http://www.americandiplomacy.org) for this manuscript. The author also wishes to thank Greenwood Press for permission to reprint excerpts from Chapter 7 of his book *Creating an American Lake: United States Imperialism and Strategic Security, 1945–1947* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), and he acknowledges that the article is based on Chapter 6 of his book *Governing the American Lake: The U.S. Defense and Administration of the Pacific, 1945–1947* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2007).

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11. Ickes to Forrestal, 1 November 1944, folder 16-1-18, General Correspondence 1944–1947, Records of Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, 1940–1947, box 50, Record Group 80, General Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Navy (hereafter cited as RG 80), National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter cited as NA II).
12. Ickes to Roosevelt, 5 April 1945, *Foreign Relations of the United States* series (hereafter cited as *FRUS*) 1945, 1:198–199. The arrangement that Ickes was referring to was an idea put forth by Fortas to the War, Navy, and State Departments in March 1945 that created a category of "strategic" trusteeships. This new category of trusteeships, which was eventually accepted by the UN, gave the trustee power virtually full control over the territory, including the right to military fortification. In effect, Fortas' idea allowed the U.S. to annex Micronesia, though in the name of the UN. Because, however, there was a chance of the arrangement being vetoed on the UN Security Council, especially by the Soviets, the military services were reluctant between 1945 and 1947 to subscribe to the idea until they were ordered to do so by Truman in the winter of 1946–1947. See William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and Decolonization of the British Empire*,

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14. Ickes to Truman, 12 September 1945, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, White House Official Files (hereafter cited as WHOF), Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri (hereafter cited as HSTL), 1–2.

15. Truman to Ickes, 13 September 1945, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

16. Fortas to Truman, 28 September 1945, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

17. Truman to Ickes, undated, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

18. Acting Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman to incoming Secretary of the Interior Julius Krug, 18, 15 March 1946, folder Julius A. Krug, 1946–1947, box 401, Papers of Harold Ickes, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as the Ickes Papers), Washington, D.C.

19. Ickes to Forrester, 29 December 1945, folder Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, folder OF 85-L, box 572, WHOF, HSTL, 1.

20. *Ibid.*, 2.

21. Clark to Ickes, 12 February 1946, folder Pacific Islands, 1946–1948, box 76, Ickes Papers, Library of Congress.

22. Beecroft, “The Pacific Islands,” folder Pacific Islands, 1946–1948, box 76, Ickes Papers, Library of Congress, 1–2.

23. Byrnes to Truman, 6 March 1946, folder Pacific Islands Commission, box 133, President’s Secretary’s Files (hereafter cited as PSF), HSTL.

24. Arnold to Secretary of State Byrnes, Secretary of War Robert Patterson, Secretary of the Navy Forrester, and Acting Secretary of the Interior Chapman, 20 February 1946, folder Pacific Islands Commission, box 133, PSF, HSTL, 1.

25. *Ibid.*, 2–3.

26. “Suggested Position for State-War-Navy-Interior Conversations,” no date, folder Pacific Islands, 1946–1948, box 76, Ickes Papers, Library of Congress, 1–2.

27. *Ibid.*, 1–3.

28. *Ibid.*, 3–5.

29. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

30. It is not entirely clear why other interested powers such as the USSR acquiesced to U.S. demands. In my first book, I speculated that the Soviets may have given in to U.S. demands since their continued protest of U.S. actions probably would have resulted in U.S. annexation of Micronesia, a situation that would have left them without any real mechanism by which to protest U.S. actions. In addition, the War Department's *Intelligence Review* argued that the USSR sacrificed its claims to a voice in Pacific Island trusteeships so as to gain U.S. support for Soviet claims in Eastern Europe and East Asia. It may also have been that Soviet awareness of international support in the UN General Assembly for U.S. actions or fear of other unilateral U.S. trusteeship claims may have caused the Soviets to accept the American *a fait accompli*. Most likely, however, the Soviets ceased to resist the idea of a prepeace treaty agreement because if the matter was kept within the UN, the USSR could suggest changes to the document's wording that, if rebuffed, would have allowed it to renew charges of American imperialism in the Pacific Basin. See Friedman, *Creating an American Lake*, 88–89. Moreover, there is documentary evidence of Soviet fears of U.S. interference in the Kuriles and Sakhalin during the negotiations for a Japanese peace treaty. In August 1947, State Department Counselor Charles Bohlen thought that the USSR was objecting to a large number of nations being included in the negotiations over the Japanese Peace Treaty out of fear that the Yalta Agreement, which gave the Soviets the right to occupy the Kuriles and Sakhalin, would be reopened. See Bohlen to Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett, 12 August 1947, *FRUS 1947*, 6:487. Perhaps this fear caused the Soviets to concede to the U.S. earlier in the year. Nor is it entirely clear why other nations such as Great Britain and Australia gave in to U.S. demands, since they too had issues with the unilateral manner by which the U.S. presented its Draft Trusteeship Agreement. In the greater scheme of diplomatic issues in that time period, however, it is easy to see why those two nations, as well as powers such as France and China, "allowed" the U.S. a free hand in the Western Pacific in return for U.S. aid for their numerous domestic and international problems. See Friedman, *Governing the American Lake*, 59–64; and Wytenbach, "Micronesia and Strategic Trusteeship," 193–246.

31. Davidson to Krug, 17 April 1947, folder Civil Government in the Pacific, box 74, Papers of Julius Krug, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

32. Krug to Truman, 12 May 1947, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

33. Krug, "Report To The President, Pacific Island Inspection Tour Of J.A. Krug, Secretary Of The Interior, February-March 1947," folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL, 1.

34. *Ibid.*, 1–3.

35. *Ibid.*, 3.

36. *Ibid.*, 4; see also Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 1–200.

37. Krug, "Report To The President, Pacific Island Inspection Tour Of J.A. Krug, Secretary Of The Interior, February-March 1947," folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL, 1 and 4–5.

38. *Ibid.*, 5–7.

39. *Ibid.*, 5–7. The reader should also understand that American officials from the Interior Department were not the only individuals protesting the Navy's actions on Pacific Islands like Guam. The Guamanians by this time had been protesting American naval governance since the 1920s at least, both informally and through official bodies such as the Guam Congress. The Guamanians, in fact, had offered quite sophisticated arguments as to why they should be accorded basic civil rights such as U.S. citizenship granted by Congress and self-rule on the order of a mainland U.S. state. For obvious reasons, these prewar protests and arguments became ever more emphatic after the end of the Pacific War. Thus, if Krug thought that he was rushing to the defense of the Pacific Islanders, he was quite mistaken since the Guamanians had already been defending themselves for the past few decades. See Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 113–149 and 186–216 as well as Howard Willens and Deanne Siemer, *National Security and Self-Determination: United States Policy in Micronesia, 1961–1972* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2000), 19–24.

40. *Ibid.*, 7.

41. *Ibid.*, 7–8.

42. *Ibid.*, 8–9.

43. *Ibid.*, 9.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*, 9–10.

46. *Ibid.*, 10.

47. *Ibid.*, 10–11.

48. *Ibid.*, 12.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Kingsley to Steelman, 19 May 1947, attached to the Krug Report, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

51. Wyttenbach, "Micronesia and Strategic Trusteeship," 247–275 and 277–297; Willens and Siemer, *National Security and Self-Determination*, 4–5, 6, 8–12, 15, and 27–49; Gary Smith, *Micronesia: Decolonization and U.S. Military Interests in the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands* (Canberra, Australia: Australian National University, 1991), 80–93; and Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia*, 158–240.

52. Dirk Ballendorf, "An Historical Perspective on Economic Development in Micronesia, 1783–1945," *Asian Culture (Asian-Pacific Culture) Quarterly* 19 (Summer 1991): 56; *idem.*, "Micronesia: Retrospection and Introspection," *Asian Culture* 22 (Spring 1994): 43; *idem.*, "A Historical Perspective on the Adaptation and Addition of Western Technology and Its Transfer in Micronesia," *Asian Culture (Asian-Pacific Culture) Quarterly* 18

(Autumn 1990): 41; Robert Kiste, "Termination of the U.S. Trusteeship in Micronesia," *The Journal of Pacific History* 21 (October 1986): 132; Ellen Boneparth and M. James Wilkinson, "Terminating Trusteeship for the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands: Independence and Self-Sufficiency in the Post-Cold War Pacific," *Pacific Studies* 18 (June 1995): 68, 69, 70, and 72; Francis Hezel and Michael Levin, "New Trends in Micronesian Migration: FSM Migration to Guam and the Marianas, 1990–1993," *Pacific Studies* 19 (March 1996): 91–114; Kate Gailbraith, Glenda Bendure, and Ned Friary, *Micronesia* (Melbourne, Australia: Lonely Planet, 2000), 35; Thomas Pinhey, Daniel Lennon, and Nicholas Pinhey, "Consumer Debt, Alcohol Use, and Domestic Violence in Guam," *Pacific Studies* 20 (September 1997): 51–60; and Donald Rubenstein, "Love and Suffering: Adolescent Socialization and Suicide in Micronesia," *The Contemporary Pacific* 7 (Spring 1995): 21–53. For the extent to which Micronesia was at least partially Americanized under both the Navy and Interior Department administrations and then free association with the U.S., see Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia*, passim.