

## **DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY**

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### **Biography**

Dwight D. Eisenhower was the 34<sup>th</sup> president of the United States and served for two full terms – from January 1953 to January 1961. He graduated from West Point in 1916 and served as a professional soldier whose career spanned two world wars. A colonel at the beginning of World War II, Eisenhower was a five-star general by the time Germany surrendered in 1945. He became president of Columbia University in 1948 and returned to Europe in 1950 at President Truman’s request to serve as NATO commander. He won the presidency as the Republican candidate in 1952, with Richard M. Nixon as his running mate. He continued Truman’s internationalist policies in foreign affairs but pursued a more conservative, pro-business domestic program. He won overwhelmingly a second term in 1956, during which he encountered serious foreign and domestic problems. He used federal troops to force school integration in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957; and in 1958 he sent U.S. marines to Lebanon. A summit meeting with the Soviet Union was cancelled in 1959 after a U.S. spy plane was shot down over Russia. Notwithstanding these difficulties and his reputation as a “hands-off” president, Eisenhower left office in 1961 as one of the most popular presidents in American history.

### **Nature of Document Search**

We visited the Eisenhower Library on April 28-29, 2004. The key words in our search for relevant documents were: Micronesia, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Mariana Islands, the Caroline Islands, and the Marshall Islands. We looked at the White House Central Files for 1953-1961; selected files relating to the Departments of Defense, State, and Interior, the Executive Office of the President, and the United Nations; the Office of Special Assistant for National Security Affairs 1952-1961; the National Security Council Series, including Administrative Subseries, Policy Paper Subseries, Status of Project Subseries, and Subject Subseries; Special Assistant Series, including papers from the files of Dillon Anderson, Robert Cutler, and Gordon Gray; and National Security Council Staff: Papers (1948-61). Most documents referring specifically to the Central Intelligence Agency had been withdrawn from these files. In addition, we looked at collections of papers donated by officials who served in the Eisenhower administration, including Secretary of State John Foster Dulles (1953-59), Christian A. Herter, who served as Under Secretary of State (1957-59) and then as Secretary of State

(1959-61), and Fred A. Seaton, who served as Secretary of the Interior during 1956-61, and made two trips to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during this period.

### **Highlights of Eisenhower Library Documents**

Even before he took office in January 1953, President-Elect Eisenhower traveled through the Western Pacific on his way to the Korean battlefield where the United States had been engaged in a United Nations-sanctioned war against the forces of North Korea since 1950. According to a detailed Secret Service report found in the Library, this visit was in fulfillment of his campaign pledge to visit the troops and his travel had to be “conducted in the utmost secrecy.” The lengthy trip report submitted by the agents in charge of the trip to the head of the Secret Service detailed the security arrangements in place to maintain the secrecy of the trip and to protect the President-Elect and his small entourage from any unauthorized intrusion. After this visit to Korea, Eisenhower flew to Guam and then traveled by ship to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

#### **Memorandum, December 19, 1952, Rowley and Whitaker to Baughman**

Apart from a few, largely administrative matters relating to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Library documents reflect no policy debates or decisions during this administration relating to the trusteeship involving the president, the National Security Council, or other White House officials. Under the terms of the 1947 Trusteeship Agreement with the United Nations, the United States essentially was permitted to govern the islands as though they were part of the continental United States with very little concern for possible criticism within the UN. On January 1, 1953 the Department of the Navy assumed administrative responsibility for most of the Northern Marianas as directed by President Truman in the last months of his administration. Both the Navy and the Department of the Interior, which remained responsible for Rota (and some smaller islands) in the Northern Marianas, the Caroline Islands, and the Marshall Islands, administered the Trust Territory under the limited funding provided by the U.S. Congress in a manner that prompted criticism that the United States was running an “anthropological zoo” because little economic or social development occurred. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that President Eisenhower’s National Security Council records do not include any policy directive or study that focused on the Trust Territory and its role, present or future, in furthering United States defense and national security objectives in the Western Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

Very early in the Eisenhower Administration the president was asked to revisit his predecessor’s decision placing Saipan and Tinian under the Department of the Navy. The Department of Defense recommended that all the other Northern Mariana Islands also be moved from Interior to the Navy. Defense recommended an amendment to the earlier executive order because 83% of the total Northern Marianas population resided on Saipan and Tinian and “the remaining islands of the Northern Marianas have become a difficult

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the policies followed by the Eisenhower Administration with respect to the Trust Territory, see Willens & Siemer, *National Security and Self-Determination: United States Policy in Micronesia (1961-1972)* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000), 9-12, 15-16.

problem of effective and economical administration.” Defense advised the White House that the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, the Department of State, and the Department of the Interior had endorsed this proposal. Subsequently, however, Interior recommended that Rota not be included in the transfer. In support of its position, Interior emphasized Rota’s links with Guam, the High Commissioner’s view that he could administer Rota through his liaison on Guam, and his report that Rota’s leaders told him that they desired to remain under his administration. Interior’s recommendation was accepted by all the concerned agencies and reflected in the amendment to the executive order.

**Letter, March 4, 1953, Kent to Dodge**  
**Letter, April 9, 1953, Morton to Dodge**  
**Letter, June 5, 1953, Lewis to Dodge**  
**Letter, June 10, 1953, Jones to Attorney General**  
**Executive Order No. 10470, July 17, 1953**

Acting on the recommendation of his Secretary of the Interior, President Eisenhower appointed Frank Elbert Midkiff of Hawaii to serve as the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory. The president was urged to act promptly because Congress was delaying action on a proposed organic act providing governmental institutions for administering the Trust Territory and was soliciting the view of the new administration regarding it. After Midkiff was appointed, he took his first inspection trip to the area, and the administration waited for his recommendations before responding to the pending inquiry from the House Subcommittee on Territories and Insular Possessions. The Library documents also contain extensive correspondence between Midkiff and Sherman Adams in the White House regarding Midkiff’s petition, ultimately unsuccessful, to be given ambassadorial rank as had been done with regard to his predecessors in this position. Midkiff served as High Commissioner until mid-1954, when Trust Territory headquarters were moved from Hawaii to Guam, and Midkiff advised the president that his interests and responsibilities in Hawaii precluded his moving to Guam.

**Letter, February 9, 1953, Saylor to Adams**  
**Memorandum, March 5, 1953, McKay to President**  
**Memorandum, May 11, 1953, Jones to Persons**  
**Memorandum, May 31, 1953, Midkiff to Adams**  
**Memorandum, June 9, 1953, Lewis to Willis**  
**Letter, August 12, 1953, Adams to Midkiff**  
**Letter, August 16, 1953, Midkiff to Adams**  
**Letter, July 28, 1954, Midkiff to President**  
**Letter, August 5, 1954, President to Midkiff**

A few documents in the Library’s collection refer to the interest of the Central Intelligence Agency in using land in the Northern Marianas. As reflected in documents at the Truman Library, the CIA was a strong advocate of the Navy assuming administrative responsibility for Saipan and Tinian. It also supported the move early in the Eisenhower

Administration to place the other Northern Mariana islands under the Navy, advising the Bureau of the Budget that although the CIA “does not at this time have plans for Agency utilization or facilities on Mariana Islands [deletion for security reasons] it is believed that it will be to the best interest of national security, and will provide stronger internal security for this area, if the proposed additional transfer is made.” One National Security Council directive (NSC 146/2), entitled “Formosa & Chinese National Government,” almost certainly led to the construction of the CIA facility on Saipan for training of Chinese nationalists known as the Naval Technical Training Unit. Paragraph 11 of this directive stated United States policy to include: “Encourage and covertly assist the Chinese National Government to develop and extend logistical support of, anti-communist guerrillas on the mainland of China, for purposes of resistance and intelligence.” The “action agency” responsible for carrying out this policy was identified as the CIA. A progress report dated July 16, 1954, regarding this directive summarized the actions taken with respect to other aspects of the directive but indicated that any report of action regarding this specific objective “will be separately reported” to the White House Operations Coordinating Board. The same practice was followed seven months later in considering another progress report, reflecting the general effort to exclude any references to CIA operations from written documents submitted to the White House. Library documents containing any references to the work of the CIA or its personnel are not available to the public.

**Letter, April 22, 1953, Dulles to Jones  
Progress Report on NSC 146/2, July 16, 1954, prepared by Operations  
Coordinating Board**

The documents reveal one occasion on which President Eisenhower was asked to focus on the status of the Trust Territory. While the president was engaged in his reelection campaign in 1956 he received some unsolicited advice from Henry Cabot Lodge, the United States representative to the United Nations. Lodge proposed that the president make the following statement: “If re-elected I intend to send a message to the next Congress recommending a study of the rate of progress towards self-government or independence which our few remaining American dependent territories can be expected to make in the future. I refer to the Virgin Islands, Guam, Samoa, and the Trusteeship Islands in the Pacific.” According to Lodge, “The purpose would be to enable Congress to pass an Act setting final target dates for the establishment of self-government or independence – possibly along the lines of the system followed by Puerto Rico. This study would not, of course, include Alaska or Hawaii, which are under active Congressional consideration for admission to the Union.” Lodge contended that this proposal “should not distress the Pentagon because we can make the same kind of base agreements with each of these islands as they become self-governing as we have today with the Philippines.” He suggested that his approach “would make a real hit here at home and would have a magnificent effect abroad – except among the so-called colonial powers who really would be in no position to object to something that you said about our own United States possessions.”

**Letter, September 19, 1956, Lodge to President**

President Eisenhower sent Lodge's suggestion to Secretary of State Dulles, asking for his thoughts. During their meeting on October 2, 1956, Dulles raised the subject with the president. In his memorandum about the meeting, Dulles observed that the president "said it seemed a bit 'half-baked.'" Dulles reported that he responded that he "was afraid that it would raise serious questions with reference to Okinawa and the President said that he had that same thinking in mind. The President's feeling was that we should not now decide to act in the sense of Ambassador Lodge's suggestion." There is no indication in the Library documents reviewed that the subject was raised again during this administration.

**Memorandum for the Record, October 2, 1956, prepared by Dulles**

The most informative documents regarding life in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during these years were found in the papers donated to the Library by Fred A. Seaton, who served as Secretary of the Interior Department during 1956-61. These papers include press releases from Interior's Office of Territories from 1956-60 and detailed materials relating to his two visits to the Trust Territory in 1957 and 1959. These documents include the press releases and itineraries of his trips; programs of events in some districts; the speeches given and heard in the various districts of the Trust Territory; the menus of meals eaten; the names of the indigenous entertainers, Trust Territory officials, and local dignitaries in some districts; and innumerable "thank you" notes sent after the secretary returned home.

**Personnel Listing, July 31, 1957, prepared by Trust Territory  
Press Release, August 7, 1957, prepared by Interior Department  
*Guam Daily News*, August 25, 1957**

The documents contained in the Seaton collection about his trips include many given him (or taken by him) that are not specifically related to his visits. For example, during his visit to Ponape he acquired a two-page speech delivered (on an unspecified date) by the district administrator to new members of his staff. Obviously reflecting his dissatisfaction with the earlier indiscretions of some Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) officials, he cautioned his new colleagues not to discuss with the indigenous people any differences within the district (or TTPI) administration and to make special efforts to learn about the local community. The Ponape file also included a 20-page description of Nan Madol, the more than 100 semi-artificial islands off the southeast corner of Ponape prepared by the TTPI Education Department of the Ponape District in 1956. The booklet describes Nan Madol as "some of the most famous examples of aboriginal architecture in this part of the world."

**Press Release, October 7, 1959, prepared by Interior Department  
Speech, October 31, 1959, Heron to Trust Territory employees**

Another document included in the secretary's trip file was a catalogue for the 1959-60 academic year at the Pacific Islands Central School (PICS). This was a school

that attracted many of the best students from all six districts of the Trust Territory and was one of the most successful steps taken by the TTPI to encourage a Micronesian identity, rather than one based primarily on district or island relationships. Although ultimately the Trust Territory did divide into four separate political entities after the trusteeship terminated, many of the leaders in these entities had been educated at PICS and valued both their academic training there and the opportunity to get to know and respect their counterparts from other districts. This 25-page catalogue provides a detailed picture of PICS at this point of its history, including its faculty members, admission requirements, student fees and activities, curriculum requirements, courses of study, and course descriptions.

**Catalogue, September 30, 1959, Pacific Islands Central School (1959-60)**

The Seaton materials provide a very down-to-earth and unvarnished view of the Trust Territory during the Eisenhower years. They provide a snapshot of life in these Pacific islands after a decade of American administration under the Trusteeship Agreement of 1947 and a few years before the United Nations, with an enlarged membership including many former colonies, began to examine United States policies in the Trust Territory with a more critical eye.