

UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL



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PETITION FROM DALE C. OTTO CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NEW GUINEA (T/PET.8/23)

Observations of the Government of Australia as Administering Authority

The Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the latter's note T/PET.8/22 and T/PET.8/23 of 24 May 1967 to which was attached two petitions concerning the Trust Territory of New Guinea.

In accordance with rule 86, paragraph 4 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council, the Australian Permanent Representative has the honour to make the following comments on the petition received from Mr. Dale C. Otto.

Mr. Otto arrived in the Trust Territory on 27 October 1965 as a volunteer attached to a Lutheran Mission. After a few days he decided to leave the Mission and to preach independently. The Catholic Mission in the Ambunti area reported on 30 December 1965 that Mr. Otto was greatly endangering the health and welfare of the native peoples by advocating a bread and fish diet and total abstinence from medicines. On 3 March 1966 Mr. Otto was reported to be dangerously ill with fever and he was subsequently transferred to Wewak hospital where his illness was confirmed by the District Medical Officer. As a patient, the petitioner refused to take medicine and tried to influence other native hospital patients to do likewise. Furthermore, Mr. Otto, by his behaviour, caused the hospital staff unnecessary work and was unable to pay his hospital expenses. He departed from the Trust Territory on 15 April 1966 at his own volition. His application to re-enter the Territory was rejected because it was considered that his teachings were dangerous and because of the trouble caused to the authorities, including the hospital staff, and the fact that he is not attached to any mission.

With regard to the petition from the Papua and New Guinea Native Ex-Service Association of Rabaul, the Permanent Representative of Australia is awaiting comments from the Australian Government.

New York
30 May 1967