



Trusteeship Council

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PETITION FROM MS. THERESE M. ARGOUD CONCERNING THE  
TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85, paragraph 1, of  
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2810 Varsity Circle, No. 3  
Honolulu, HI 96826

22 October 1987

The President and members  
Trusteeship Council  
United Nations  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed a letter to the Honourable Ron De Lugo, Chairman of the House Interior Subcommittee on Insular and International Affairs, regarding the current crisis in Palau. Serious attention needs to be paid to the apparent illegality of the referendum which approved the constitutional amendment, and to the need for a thorough investigation of the circumstances leading to the withdrawal of the lawsuits.

Please consider the important issues raised and call for appropriate action to be taken.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Therese M. ARGOUD

Enclosure

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Enclosure

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Honolulu, HI 96826

22 October 1987

The Honourable Ron De Lugo  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honourable Ron De Lugo,

I am writing to you in response to the current crisis in Palau. As an American citizen and former student who had conducted extensive research on the Republic of Palau, I consider it an obligation to speak out against the injustices occurring in Palau.

It is clear that moves on the part of the United States Government to obtain passage of the Compact, namely, the two recently held referendums, have created considerable division and strife among Palau's own people. Under the "Trust Territory" agreement the United States was given the responsibility to promote the development of Palau as one of the Trust Territories in a manner that would strengthen, and not weaken, the Palauan culture and society. In the light of this responsibility, the House Interior Subcommittee on Insular and International Affairs, representing the United States in this matter, should seriously consider the following:

1. The apparent illegality of the referendum which approved the constitutional amendment (the United States Congressional Research Service stated that amendments could not constitutionally be approved prior to November 1988);
2. The need for a thorough investigation of the circumstance which led to the withdrawal of the lawsuits challenging the legality of the two referenda.

Granted that, the United States Department of the Interior should be applauded in its decision to dispatch an agent to assist Palauan police in finding Bedor's assassin, the Palauan police are not impartial (having shown support for the Compact), and therefore, would show little concern for protecting those in the opposition. The climate of violence has apparently reached such a level that Judge Hefner was brought in to hear the lawsuits because Palau's own Chief Justice Mamoru Nakamura's life and the life of his family had been threatened.

In view of the violence and threats of violence against Palauans seeking to uphold Palau's anti-nuclear Constitution as the very rudiment of their society, I urge you to withhold approval of the Compact until at least the legal status of the referenda can be established. In addition, please call for the Department of the Interior to investigate thoroughly the recent violence in Palau and to station a team of reputable observers to monitor the situation there.

I would appreciate hearing from you and thank you for your immediate attention to such an important concern.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Therese M. ARGOUD, M.P.H.

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