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Thirty-eighth session

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTEEN HUNDRED AND
EIGHTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
On Friday, 4 June 1971, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. LANE (United Kingdom)

Examination of annual reports of the Administering Authorities on
the administration of Trust Territories, for the year ended
30 June 1970: (continued)

(a) Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Closing statement by Mr. Petrus Tun, Senator from the Yap District,
Congress of Micronesia, Special Adviser to the United States
delegation*

* Circulated in accordance with a decision taken by the Trusteeship Council
at its 1380th meeting, held on 4 June 1971 (see T/PV.1780, page 26)

Mr. TUN (Special Adviser): As this Council concludes its formal hearing and debates on the administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and begins to formulate its recommendations to the United States as an Administering Authority, I find it necessary to comment further on certain points and issues raised by the members of this Council during the past few days.

At the outset it is my hope that, in having directed attention to the important question of the future political status of Micronesia and the need to accelerate political education throughout these islands, I have not appeared to belittle past accomplishments and progress during the past years. Over the past two decades in Micronesia much can be said about policies and programmes which have benefited the people and moved them progressively towards a higher level of living standards and a greater share in the responsibility to run their own affairs and government. In this regard, we are grateful to the United States as an Administering Authority for the programmes it has instituted and for the changes it has effected to help Micronesia towards becoming a viable entity in the twentieth century world community. This Council has before it a sufficient amount of documents evidencing the diligent efforts of the Administering Authority to carry out effective programmes in education, health, sanitation, community development and related programme activities.

Much more, however, remains to be accomplished in terms of quality, scope, and full opportunity for the Micronesians in all fields of endeavour, and it is in that context that my remarks and observations to this Council should be considered.

Looking back to the various statements made by the members of this Council, I am most encouraged by the remarks made by the representative of the United States relative to the forthcoming discussions between representatives of Micronesia and the United States on the future political status of our islands. I am happy to learn that the United States Government would give serious and favourable consideration to an arrangement whereby Micronesia may become a self-governing country in free association with the United States. If this be the case, the way is now clear for our Micronesian delegation and the delegation of the United States to resume another round of discussions on this important issue and to explore various alternatives and steps whereby a mutually acceptable free

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associated constitutional and political status for Micronesia might be forged. I am confident that we would be able to report next year a much greater progress than we have been able to in the past years on this all-important question.

In my opening remarks I also made the suggestion that this Council might consider monitoring the political status discussions being conducted by representatives of the United States and Micronesia. The approach recommended by the representative of the United Kingdom for a contingency arrangement or plan for this Council to participate in the status negotiations in the event the Council were invited to take part in the discussions appears to me to be worthy of serious consideration. For aside from the fact that the advice, counsel, and assistance of this Council provided to the negotiation talks might prove to be the deciding factor in reaching mutually acceptable terms and conditions of a self-governing Micronesia in free association with the United States, the participation of this Council -- whether formally or informally as the circumstances might warrant or as called for by the participating parties -- in the negotiation talks could have the added effect or reassuring our Micronesian people that their best interests are being safeguarded and protected not only by their elected representatives in the Government but also by this Council to which their future well-being was entrusted.

Finally, I wish to amplify my remarks regarding the desirability for the Congress of Micronesia to participate more fully in the vital governmental process of budget development for Micronesia. It is often said that he who holds the purse strings exercises the power. Conversely, he who has no power over expenditure of funds does not have power. It is my opinion that so long as the people of Micronesia are not given the final power to expend funds and make decisions on which programmes and services should receive priority considerations, the time for them to exercise self-determination and self-governance becomes a moot question for the time being and is not the question of most immediate concern to us. But, while this need to involve Micronesians in the decision-making of budgetary processes is recognized, the difficulty of maintaining the integrity of the Micronesian recommendations on the budget once the documents have reached the federal government level invariably nullifies the Micronesian efforts and participation in the budget reviews and decisions.

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(Mr. Tun, Special Adviser)

In conclusion, Mr. President, I should like to thank you and the members of this Council for having made our short visit to New York a memorable event of our trip and for the many courtesies you have so kindly bestowed upon us.
