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Fifty-third Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 20 May 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. RAPIN (France)

- Organization of work
- Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1985: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- The future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1985
- Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, February 1986

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The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): At our first meeting the delegation of the Soviet Union requested that the documents mentioned in annex II to the Visiting Mission's report (T/1878) be translated into Russian and then distributed as official documents of the Council. That request would involve the translation and distribution of about 600 pages, and in subsequent talks with me representatives of the Soviet Union agreed that perhaps only the various documents on the economic development plan were of interest. They amount to about 60 pages. If no member of the Council has any objection, I shall as President give a positive response to that request by the delegation of the Soviet Union.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I am delighted to hear, Mr. President, that we shall not now be having 600 pages translated. I understand that the solution now is that 40 to 60 pages will be translated. When the matter was first raised I think it was suggested that we should have an estimate of how much the translation would cost. Obviously, that is no longer necessary for the full documentation, but I should still like to see an estimate of the cost of translating 60 pages of the petitions and documents annexed to the Visiting Mission's report.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I take it that there is no objection to my decision that we request the distribution of the documents as official documents of the Council, and that they be translated into Russian. I have noted the request by the representative of the United Kingdom.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1985: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1888) (continued)

THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1886) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before we take up the items on our agenda for this afternoon I wish to refer to the letters I received yesterday, which I mentioned at yesterday morning's meeting, from the Permanent Representatives of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. As I announced then, I should like the Council to decide now on the request submitted to us.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We should like to study those letters. Perhaps the Secretariat could distribute them.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The letters are in the process of being distributed. They are all identical. I read one out yesterday. But I shall now read out another, from Fiji, in the original language:

(spoke in English)

"On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request the Trusteeship Council to extend an invitation to my delegation under the terms of paragraph 1 of rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council to participate, without the right to vote, in the Council's discussion of agenda item 14, 'The future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands', at the fifty-third session of the Council."

The letter is signed by Mr. Winston Thompson, Permanent Representative.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Thank you, Mr. President, for being so kind as to read out that letter. At the same time, we should like to recall that we would nevertheless like to look at those letters.

We understood from what you said yesterday that the letters would be brought to the attention of all delegations. Of course, I do not exclude the fact that some delegations have already seen them. However, the Soviet delegation has not seen them and we would like to have them shown to us.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): A certain number of requests have been submitted; they are clear. Yesterday morning I gave instructions for the letters to be circulated as official documents, and that will be done.

In my discussions yesterday morning on that matter with all delegations members of the Council the subject of the request in the letters was very clear and I said to all delegations that I would ask the Council to take a decision on the letters at the beginning of the meeting this afternoon. That is what I intend to do now.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course no one is questioning your authority, Mr. President. Nevertheless, we should like to have an opportunity to look at those letters.

First, more than 30 hours have elapsed between the consultations and your statement at the beginning of this meeting.

Secondly, we should like further explanations from you, inter alia, regarding the rule of procedure of the Trusteeship Council governing representatives speaking before the Council. We are asking - and it is our right to do so - for explanations from the President of the Council before we take a decision.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In answer to those two points: the letter I have just read out mentions rule 15, paragraph 1; and all the letters express the wish of the delegations involved to speak on agenda item 14.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Thank you, Mr. President, for your explanation on rule 15.

Unfortunately, despite our many decades of work in the Trusteeship Council, the rules of procedure are in French and English only. I should like to read out rule 15, in English:

(spoke in English)

"Any member of the United Nations not a member of the Trusteeship Council, when invited to participate in a meeting or meetings of the Council, shall submit credentials for the representative appointed by it for this purpose in the same manner as provided in rule 14 ...".

(continued in Russian)

In that connection, we should like to ask: Who invited the representatives of those countries whose names were read out just now to speak at today's meeting?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): It seems to me that we are making slightly heavy weather of this issue, and I cannot fail to contrast the ease with which we agree to let petitioners be heard in this Chamber with the problems we seem to have over allowing States Members of the United Nations - indeed member States of the region - to participate in our proceedings. I am not entirely clear about the concern of the Soviet Union in this regard. But in view of the fact that he has read out a specific passage from the rules of procedure concerning inviting Member States to participate, may I take this opportunity formally to invite those representatives of the South Pacific countries who wrote to the President yesterday to participate in our deliberations.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am very grateful to you, Mr. President, for having given an opportunity to the representative of the United Kingdom to speak. We take note of his statement to the effect that, in connection with the requests, his delegation is formally extending an invitation to those States to participate in the meetings of the Trusteeship Council. In that connection, as I understand it, the representative of the United Kingdom will act not only in accordance with the rules indicated by you, Mr. President, but also with rule 14. Is my understanding of the statement by the representative of the United Kingdom correct?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I see no particular difficulty with the credentials question. I believe - to our shame - that the United Kingdom in fact was late in submitting its credentials this year, and it was agreed that we would take up the credentials item later on in the session. It seems to me perfectly reasonable to suggest that the South Pacific representatives should submit credentials in due time for our consideration.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I listened carefully to the statement by the representative of the United Kingdom. Of course he gave some explanations, but nevertheless the question is not completely clear to us. I am especially not clear about this type of statement from a country with parliamentary traditions, which it observes; a country which acts in accordance with existing highly respected rules and traditions.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

It is a fact, of course, that the United Kingdom has no Constitution. But traditions have developed over hundreds of years, and they are of great importance.

In this connection, I completely understand the statement by the United Kingdom representative that so far his delegation has not submitted its credentials - or, at least, submitted them belatedly - but is nevertheless insisting that the Council observe rule 14. Once again I take the liberty of reading out rule 14, in Shakespeare's language:

(spoke in English):

"The credentials of representatives on the Trusteeship Council shall normally be communicated to the Secretary-General not less than 24 hours before the meeting at which the representatives will take their seats. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of State or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the respective Member Governments".

(continued in Russian):

I would like to draw the particular attention of the representative of the United Kingdom to the second paragraph of rule 14:

(spoke in English):

"The credentials shall be examined by the Secretary-General, who shall submit a report thereon to the Trusteeship Council for approval".

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): I am a little bit puzzled by the proceedings here thus far. I would request some clarification.

My understanding of the situation is this: Yesterday, Mr. President, you informed the members of the Council that you had received letters from seven representatives of States of the South Pacific region. You then said - if I remember correctly; I do not have the verbatim record before me - that today we

(Miss Byrne, United States)

would decide what response to make to those requests. To my mind, that meant that the representatives in question had not been invited but that we would decide today whether or not they should be invited and under what rule. In fact, their requests are made under rule 15, which seems to us perfectly reasonable.

The remarks of the representative of the Soviet Union lead me to think that his delegation objects to having the representatives of these States speak. The statement of the United Kingdom representative was quite clear: it indicated that the United Kingdom would welcome their speaking before the Council.

If I have understood the proceedings thus far correctly, I can now proceed to say that the United States would also like to see an invitation extended to the seven representatives of States of the South Pacific region. We consider that there is ample precedent for this. If you would wish me to go into some detail on this, Mr. President, I should be happy to do so, but for the moment I shall stop there.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I would draw attention, first of all, to the fact that - contrary to the way in which our statement has just been interpreted - the Soviet delegation is in no way raising the question as to how we are proceeding with respect to these requests. We are just asking you, Mr. President, for clarification of some very important details in connection with the provisions of the Trusteeship Council's rules of procedure. Of course, all of us should be guided by those rules governing our activities. We have been guided by them in the past, and we should continue to be guided by them now.

We have listened carefully to the statements by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States. There are two different points of view. The

(Mr. Kotovoy, USSR)

representative of the United Kingdom said that he is now inviting these States, whereas the representative of the United States asked why we needed an invitation. Let us take a decision and end the matter. We should decide whether we wish to observe some kind of order here. This is the Trusteeship Council. This is not a Trust Territory. Hence, we must observe the existing rules of procedure.

My delegation is simply asking for clarification about the specific provisions of the rules of procedure that will guide us in this matter and about how faithfully we are going to observe those rules. I am requesting you, Mr. President, to answer those fully warranted questions by the Soviet delegation.

The question of inviting individuals is not a routine matter, as I have been informed by representatives of the Secretariat and members of the Soviet delegation who have been dealing with these matters for many years. I believe that some six years ago was the last time we heard representatives like those we are now talking about - but the human memory does lose some details over time. As the Russian lawyer Koni said, the human mind and memory unfortunately get rusty with the passage of time.

So let us just clear this matter up. Perhaps the representative of the Secretariat can give this clarification. What rules are in effect here in regard to inviting individuals to speak? It is our understanding that the United Kingdom representative is now officially inviting the representatives in question to speak. Let us have some clarification about what rules of procedure apply to extending that invitation.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I must confess that I am a little perturbed by the line taken by the representative of the Soviet Union. There is, of course, much on which we do not agree as far as Micronesia is concerned. But, surely, we are at one on the question of the openness of the Trusteeship Council,

(Mr. Mortimer, United Kingdom)

the great freedom with which our debate is carried on, without restrictions on the speakers. Last week we devoted some four full meetings, if I remember correctly, to hearing petitioners on the subject of Micronesia. Some came from the region; some were in fact New Yorkers who had no connection with the region. All of us made available our time to listen to those petitioners.

What I would like to say to the Soviet Union representative is this: Surely, in the best traditions of the Council, the Soviet Union would not be more restrictive about granting the right to speak to Member States of the United Nations who come from the region than about granting that right to petitioners, some of whom have no connection with the region.

The situation is, it seems to me, perfectly clear. A number of Member States of the region have submitted requests to speak in this debate. The President has asked us to consider whether or not we should agree to those requests. There appears to be some problem over whether or not the States have been invited to participate. I suggest that since the Council is the master of its own procedures, and since I have formally invited these Member States to participate - as, indeed, has the representative of the United States - we should now move to the consideration of whether or not they can participate.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Through you, Mr. President, I should like to put this question to the representative of the United Kingdom: who is objecting to the participation of the representatives of these States?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I have no idea at all who is objecting to this. I am sorry, perhaps I have been misled. If there is no objection to their participating, I assume that we can agree on that by consensus.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The question is quite a different one. It may be because Russian has not yet become a working language of the Trusteeship Council that we have perhaps not learned to achieve mutual understanding. I repeat once again that we are drawing the attention of the delegations of other countries to the relevant rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council relating to invitations. In this case we have asked a very simple, specific question. In inviting the delegations of these countries, to what extent has the United Kingdom delegation taken into account paragraphs 1 and 2 of rule 14?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I think it was Shakespeare's Richard II who at one point threw up his hands in exasperation and said, "Gentlemen, let us cease this windy argument and let the matter drop."

May we not now proceed to a decision on whether the South Pacific States may participate.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): That is exactly what I was going to propose.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Once again I note that in sheltering behind the eloquence and the marvellous lines of Shakespeare, the representative of the United Kingdom is unfortunately not acting in accordance with the rules of procedure that were adopted a few decades ago by our predecessors, including, no doubt, the representative of his own country.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

I should like to answer his quotation from Shakespeare, in English, with another quotation from Shakespeare:

(spoke in English)

"We knew not the doctrine of ill-doing, no, nor dreamed that any did."

The Winter's Tale, Act I: 2.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I am afraid I did not have the benefit of the interpretation of the end of the statement of the Soviet Union representative, but I thank him none the less.

I now invite all delegations to take a decision to hear the representatives who sent me letters yesterday asking to be allowed to participate in our debate without the right to vote, to whom the representative of the United Kingdom has issued an invitation.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connection with this decision, we should like once again to ask a question of the United Kingdom delegation. To what extent has that delegation observed and taken into account rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I wonder if we are not getting slightly ahead of ourselves here. The situation is really very clear. Before we proceed to the question of credentials, surely we must take a decision on the United Kingdom invitation to the South Pacific Member States to participate. It seems to me that rule 15 (1) is perfectly clear on this point. It says:

"Any member of the United Nations not a member of the Trusteeship Council, when invited to participate in a meeting or meetings of the Council, shall submit credentials for the representative appointed by it for this purpose ..."

So the rules of procedure are perfectly clear, and I suggest that we now move to a decision on whether the South Pacific States may participate.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): As we know, in Boris Gudonov there is a scene where Marina meets with the Pretender and, after lengthy explanations, finally says, "I listened to the speech not of a little boy, but of a man". I am grateful to the United Kingdom representative for his explanation. My understanding is that we are now deciding the question of the invitation to the representatives of the other countries. Could the United Kingdom representative confirm this?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I am not sure that I can make it any clearer than I already have. I have issued a formal invitation in the Council to the Member States that wrote to you yesterday, Mr. President, to participate in our deliberations. I cannot supplement that statement in any way.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now put to the Council the proposal of the United Kingdom representative. If I hear no objection on the part of any delegation, I shall take it that the proposal is accepted.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As I informed delegations during the consultations I held with them yesterday morning, I propose that the Council give effect to the decision it has just taken at a meeting tomorrow afternoon. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION TO THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, 1985 (T/1878)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does any member wish to comment on the report of the Visiting Mission, which was introduced at an earlier meeting?

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Before we comment on the report of the Visiting Mission - and I trust the Soviet delegation will not be the only one to wish to do so, for we would certainly like to hear the views of others - we have a number of questions. First, paragraph 7 of the report of the Visiting Mission reads as follows:

"In the course of its tour of the Trust Territory, the Mission received a number of written communications which were taken into account in the preparation of its report. The texts of these communications are filed and available for inspection in the United Nations Secretariat." (T/1878, para. 7)

We should like to ask the members who compiled the report if they could briefly give us some information in connection with those documents and make some comments on them, in the light of the fact that they were physically present in the Trust Territory at the relevant time.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): In reply to the question raised by the representative of the Soviet Union, although I was a participant in the Visiting Mission I must confess that I did not learn by heart all the petitions presented to us. I hope that the Council will forgive me for that. However, despite that omission, I can state that, with regard to some of them at least, they were submitted to us on the spot. That was the case, for example, with the petition of the Old Peoples Square Level and Justice Organization on Pohnpei and Kosrae, which I remember being submitted when we met with the representatives of the petitioner.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Perhaps the representative of France or a member of the Secretariat can help us with the following questions. Have those documents been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Trusteeship Council, and was there an opportunity for members of the Visiting Mission to meet and hear

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

the comments made on the specific documents and petitions to which the representative of France referred?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): As paragraph 7 of the report states,

"these communications are filed and available for inspection in the United Nations Secretariat."

That wording has already been noted by the representative of the Soviet Union. Those documents were not incorporated in the report in the interest of keeping the report brief, first, to make it more readable and, secondly, in order to save money. Quite apart from considerations of the current financial crisis, the Visiting Mission felt it more fitting not to duplicate documents needlessly. I feel this decision was justified since, once such communications are filed with the Secretariat of the Trusteeship Council, they are accessible and available to all members who wish to examine them. The Council secretariat can confirm that all such petitions and communications have indeed been turned over to it, and after reading then I am sure it will be possible to put questions on them.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have cleared up a few things, although, frankly, not everything we have learned has increased our understanding. In particular, we have not had the main thing, namely, clarification by the representative of France of whether these petitions were brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Trusteeship Council.

We of course understand that the financial aspect is of significance here, but we are discussing the fate of an entire people and its future and we cannot compromise the independence and freedom of that people or disregard its interests for financial reasons.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Without wishing to speak to the substance of the debate, I would point out that when the reports of visiting missions of the Trusteeship Council are drafted and issued they are submitted to the Secretariat, and therefore, by definition, to the Secretary-General, as well as to the President of the Trusteeship Council. Whether the Secretary-General and the President of the Trusteeship Council have actually personally taken note of such reports is something very few of us here can answer.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We should also like clarification with regard to something contained in paragraph 8 of the report, which states, inter alia:

"There was a general desire, particularly amongst the leaders of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, that the Trusteeship Agreement should be terminated quickly."

The paragraph goes on to say that one opposition party and a few individuals consider that early termination would be premature. Some legislators are also against the termination of the Trusteeship, since they feel that the United States has not fulfilled its obligations under article 6 of the Trusteeship Agreement. Having noted those various points of view, the paragraph nevertheless concludes as follows:

"We recommend that termination should be achieved as soon as possible."

That, in our view, disregards the views of quite a number of political groups and others in the Trust Territory; and we should like some additional explanations in this connection. Does not the conclusion embodied in the report represent some kind of pressure on those with a completely different view?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): I am extremely grateful to the representative of the Soviet Union for giving me an opportunity to give some clarifications. I think that from the very outset paragraph 8 speaks for itself. As was stressed by the representative of the Soviet Union, these are a few isolated individuals, certain legislators.

Now, what does that mean? First, that there was a small group that felt the United States had not fulfilled its obligations. When I say "small group", that means the majority felt otherwise - at least that is what the Mission not only understood but indeed heard. The Mission believed it was its duty to reflect the views of the majority it had heard. The majority - apart from a few individuals and some legislators - asked us for termination of the Trusteeship Agreement as soon as possible. That is what we have tried to reflect in the report.

I understand perfectly well that it is indeed the role of the Trusteeship Council to take into account the views expressed by a minority, and we try to do so every year when we hear petitioners. But it is also the Council's responsibility to take into account the wishes of the vast majority.

I must once again recall and make it clear that throughout the visit to Micronesia in July 1985 everyone we met, whether it was the people or the elected representatives - except for the small minority we have mentioned - asked for the rapid termination of trusteeship. Among the few opposed to it, some are opposed because they want closer relations with the United States - and that, again, is something that must be mentioned.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have listened attentively to these explanations. Nevertheless we should like to draw attention to the fact that it is not just a matter of some legislators or a few individuals; a whole opposition party is against termination of trusteeship. That is the first point. The second is that later, in

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

paragraph 10, it is said: "Except for the State of Pohnpei and for the same opposition party". So there is a whole State opposed to it. I would draw the Council's attention to that. In that case, the Visiting Mission of the Trusteeship Council, after a balanced presentation of the state of affairs, goes on to make a rather hasty conclusion, as we see it.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): The representative of the Soviet Union is quite right to point out what is stated regarding the State of Pohnpei. The Council is well aware that in Pohnpei we met with the least enthusiasm for the Free Association Agreement. But I do realize that we perhaps made an error of appreciation when we drafted the report. Without wishing to minimize its influence, I would point out that the opposition party represents a very few people, and I should like to say for the benefit of my Soviet colleague that if he had been there at the time of the Mission he would have seen for himself, at first hand, that that opposition party was really very small. It was only out of professional ethic that we went to the trouble of mentioning it.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): "Many", "few", "good" or "bad" are all relative terms, and they are particularly relative and politically doubtful when we are talking about the fate of a whole people. And in this regard I should like to draw attention to paragraph 8, in which we read the conclusion of the Mission that "termination should be achieved as soon as possible". Paragraph 9 states, "We found this sense of frustration perfectly understandable". Reading further, we find that "The Mission had received no official details", and so on.

"We found this sense of frustration perfectly understandable": what was it guided by? By internal motives or objective circumstances? We should like it to be perfectly clear what paragraph 9 means. What is the real meaning of the words, "We found this sense of frustration perfectly understandable"?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to avoid any polemics; I believe there should be none. I hope other delegations feel the same way.

I think I should constantly recall, so that it will be absolutely clear to everyone, that this report can only reflect what the members of the Visiting Mission heard when they travelled to Micronesia. The members of the Visiting Mission could not engage in wishful thinking, in interpreting. The members of the Visiting Mission confined themselves to reflecting what they found. I shall give a specific example. When we went to the Northern Marianas, I would say parenthetically that the Mission was the object of a verbal act of aggression in the sense that the representatives of the Northern Marianas, who in a referendum in 1975 decided on their future political status by choosing Commonwealth status with the United States, were particularly vehement in stating that 10 years would be a sufficiently long wait for termination of the trusteeship. They manifested great impatience. We felt that it was our duty to report this and to report also what was said to us by the other elected representatives of those entities, whether on their future political status, their economic and social progress or possible future deficiencies - and there are deficiencies and we must not cover up the realities of Micronesia. We attempted to do all this impartially and honestly and include it in our report.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation has listened very carefully. We might have gone along with the point of view that the Visiting Mission was not supposed to make any conclusion or summing-up. But how are we to interpret what is said in paragraph 8? Is this not a conclusion - "We recommend that termination should be achieved as soon as possible"?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): This is the last time I shall explain what I mean on this subject. I repeat, in saying that we recommend that the Trusteeship Agreement be terminated as soon as possible we are reflecting the views expressed by the local people.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We should like to refer to paragraph 10, chapter II, headed "Conclusions and recommendations" - I draw the attention of delegations to that heading. How are we to understand the following assertion in paragraph 10:

"We hope very much that every effort will be made urgently on all sides to resolve the difficulties - including the constitutional problem in Palau - that are impeding the early implementation of the Compact."

Does this not mean that the underlying proposal is to yield to the United States and change the relevant provisions in the Constitution of Palau? Can one assert that there is general support for the Compact when the report states that an opposition party, some individuals and an entire State do not support it? In that connection, could the Visiting Mission give details about the additional amendments to the Compact submitted by the Congress of the United States which, in the words of the Visiting Mission, resulted in a feeling of "general dismay"? It says in the report that

"the Mission had received no official details of these reported amendments before it left the Trust Territory".

So I understand the difficulties of the Mission, but perhaps someone could explain this aspect of the matter to us.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): During our journey in July we learned from the representatives that the United States Congress proposed to make certain amendments to the Compact of Free Association originally proposed for the Micronesian entities. The local representatives told us this without

(Mr. Rocher, France)

further details, because they did not know them, but they stressed that any amendment contrary to their interests with regard to the Compact of Free Association negotiated between the two parties might lead them to review their position.

Since that time, from the explanations provided to us by both sides, those amendments, far from being less favourable than what was provided for in the Compact, were more favourable to the different entities in the Territory.

Certainly, during the Mission's visit the question of amendments came up and led to some concern among the local people, but later, after the visit, that concern proved to be largely unwarranted.

With regard to the specific question relating to Palau, that question too was debated at length by the Council last week. As all members of the Council are aware, there was some incompatibility between the terms of the Constitution of Palau and some aspects of the Compact of Free Association. During the negotiations between the two parties those difficulties were resolved.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course we understand the difficulties of the representative of France and those experienced by the Mission when it was unable to get any detailed information through official channels on these amendments before the end of its work in the Trust Territory. I have two questions to ask: Was there an opportunity for the Mission to study these amendments after it returned from the Trust Territory and, if not, could the representative of the Administering Authority explain to us the nature of those amendments?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation was informed in a general way of the changes that were proposed. If I am not mistaken, those changes related to fishing and taxes, but, with your permission,

(Mr. Rocher, France)

Mr. President, I would urge the Administering Authority to provide the necessary additional information.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): As the Council already knows from previous statements when the Compact of Free Association was considered by the Congress it wished to make some amendments. Some of these were accepted and some were not. The amendments that the Congress agreed upon were then negotiated with the representatives of the freely associated States - that is, further negotiations took place.

The existing Compact of Free Association is the result of negotiations in which both sides agreed not only to the initial version but also to the amendments. What I am saying is that those amendments agreed upon by both sides figure in the Compact of Free Association. The amendments did not make any fundamental change in the Compact. They were on important, but specific matters that did not affect the political relationship.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

It is normal practice in negotiations to continue the negotiations when one side decides that something else is needed; the negotiations simply continue. The two sides came to an agreement, and that is entirely normal.

As the representative of France has already said, some of the amendments resulted in the considerable additional United States assistance to the Governments of the Micronesian States - that is, in the future, when the Compact comes into effect.

I repeat that the amendments were freely negotiated. They did not change the Compact's fundamental character, which remains intact.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have listened carefully, but the explanations given are not sufficient, and our delegation reserves its right to put other questions at a later stage. For now, so as not to make our work protracted, we turn again to paragraph 10. It begins with the words "Except for the State of Pohnpei". That is a short, very simple phrase, but there is a communication from the State of Pohnpei that I wish too read out. It is as follows:

"Our leaders have agreed and arranged for us to have a free association type of government with the United States of America. However, 70 to 75 per cent of the people of the State of Pohnpei still do not support this Free Association with the United States. Historical experiences make us fearful to engage to this Association. The United States has brought in numerous devastating weapons that have caused a lot of painful situations on these islands. The atomic bomb which was tested on Bikini Atoll continues to affect many lives in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and has introduced serious epidemics to our islands through the atmosphere.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

"In this Association we understand the 'Pacific' happiness of our people and the pride of our people will be surrendered to the United States and that all we can do is expect and wait for the day when our islands will be blown up into pieces by our partner.

"It was presented to this committee on May 28, 1985, when the representatives of this group appeared before the United Nations, that we do not want to see the Compact ratified. We do not want \$2 billion and \$200 million to purchase our islands and our lives.

"We were created by God with the sovereignty to these islands. Let us die or be killed by our own tools and/or our own weapons, but not by such weapons that our experiences has shown us, such as the Bikini atomic bomb".

I do not wish to continue reading out from the communication at this late hour. All delegations will have an opportunity to read it. It is among the documents in item 6 of annex II to the Visiting Mission's report. But I should like to hear from representatives of the delegations that comprised the Visiting Mission what can be said about the situation in the State of Pohnpei and the mood of the population. Has not too little attention been paid to that in the Visiting Mission's report?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation does not intend to venture into unknown territory. It is true that the State of Pohnpei has never hidden its opposition to the Compact of Free Association. The result of the plebiscite proves that. But the State of Pohnpei is one of the four States making up the Federated States of Micronesia. Once more, I rely on my memory, and I hope that the Council will excuse me if I am mistaken, but it seems to me that 58 per cent of the vote in the Federated States was in favour of the Compact. You and I, Mr. President, could not imagine Corrèze deciding to leave the rest of

(Mr. Rocher, France)

France against the will of 55 million French people if there were a vote. It is right to recognize the existence of opposition in the State of Pohnpei, but it is equally right to recognize the will of the majority. I also acknowledge the concern over certain statements here and there, for the minority should be recognized. In any case, that is what the Visiting Mission observed.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): I realize that the discussion is on the two reports of the Visiting Missions and that questions are being addressed to representatives who took part in those Missions, but the representative of the Soviet Union read out a petition concerning Pohnpei, and I think indicated that he would like to hear from representatives of the Administering Authority. I believe that there have been developments on the issue since the Visiting Mission. I would very much appreciate, Mr. President, your calling on Mr. Epel Ilon, a representative of the Federated States of Micronesia and a member of the delegation, for any comments he may wish to make about the line of questioning of the representative of the Soviet Union.

Mr. ILON (Adviser): I wish to add to the statement made earlier by the representative of France describing the fact that the Federated States of Micronesia is a democracy and that that is the way we operate when a majority decision is reached - which was the case with the plebiscite. Ponape state rejected the Compact but agreed to go along with the majority. That is our practice in the Federated States. The fact that the Soviet Union and the Council have received communications even from opposers of the Compact should indicate our Government's desire to maintain an open society, communicate all aspects of any issue, and continue to address the concerns of our people - but, again, abiding by majority rule. There have been problems, but we have worked on them, and in the end the Federated States of Micronesia is here indicating to the Council that we accept the majority decision and its wish - that is, free association.

The report reflects the situation in Micronesia, which was achieved fairly and according to democratic principles.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): A legitimate question arises in connection with the statement by the representative of the United States. If the majority opinion is respected in the islands, why was it necessary in Palau to have six referendums in a row? Of course, the first day of this session the representative of the United Kingdom assured us that that was a higher principle of democracy, but that kind of democracy is very doubtful. I should like to read out a petition:

"I am very disappointed, Mr. President" - this is addressed to you, Sir - "by the fact that on 24 February 1986 the people of Palau, for the sixth time, will be compelled to vote on the question of support for its Constitution, which it has already endorsed five times and each time by a significant majority. Is this not a new parody of democracy, Mr. President? What is the role of the Trusteeship Council in this respect?"

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

We really must ask ourselves what is the role of the Trusteeship Council here and who will answer that question. This is in no way rhetorical; it is a question about the future independent life of an entire people, albeit a small people. Who, apart from the members of the Trusteeship Council can truly assist that people?

When we read the Visiting Mission's report and see little phrases slipped in clouding the fate of that people. The Soviet delegation, at least, is genuinely and enormously concerned.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Are there any further comments?

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): If the other delegations have nothing more to say, the Soviet delegation would like to continue its consideration of this report. Among other things, we should like to draw representatives' attention to paragraphs 109, 111, 112, 113 and 115, concerning the adverse situation in another state - Kosrae, in the Eastern Caroline Islands. We are, of course, very grateful to the Visiting Mission for giving a very eloquent geographical description - "a single volcanic island". That language is fine but, unfortunately, the Mission's report is not equally enlightening in other aspects. We should like to know more.

The Mission reports that at a public meeting a representative said:

"many people did not fully understand the compact of free association. His group considered that its [the Compact's] financial provisions were inadequate for their needs, since United States assistance would decrease every five years. Kosraens, who are accustomed to imported food and a higher living standard, were not prepared to suffer a return to a subsistence economy. Now that they were better informed about the compact, they had decided that they did not wish to accept it.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

"The speaker submitted a petition to the Visiting Mission with some 2,500 signatures, requesting the Mission's assistance in obtaining a three-year postponement of the effective date of the compact to allow for political education and basic economic development ...

"At the request of the same speaker, about half of the people in the room raised their hands to indicate that they agreed with the petition's request to delay implementation of the compact.

"Another speaker asserted that the plebiscite had not been legitimate because the people were unaware then of provisions in the compact which would redound to their disadvantage ..." (paras. 111-113 and 115)

Furthermore, I should like, through you, Mr. President, to draw the attention of the representatives of other delegations to the assertion by another speaker that

"the political education campaign had presented only one point of view". That is an official conclusion of the Mission, that only one point of view was reflected in the political education campaign.

"They wished the Mission to help them in obtaining an objective assessment of the compact's provisions so that they could make a reasonable choice."

(para. 115)

I can understand that the representative of France may be tired by now, so perhaps someone else could answer my question which is this. What specifically, was done by the Visiting Mission?

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

Did it help in obtaining an objective assessment of the provisions of the Compact? In fact, even the lawyers and specialists we heard here as petitioners have so far been unable to fathom those provisions.

The final judgement about the Compact will probably be made by history. We should like to draw attention to that fact.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): At the very outset I would assure my Soviet colleague that I am not tired. The only thing that can tire me is having my motives impugned. That point has not been reached, so I shall try to respond to the concerns expressed by the Soviet representative.

First, I shall make a personal comment. Every year the Trusteeship Council has had the opportunity of hearing or reading petitions from Mr. Cruz. But members will agree that we did not hear anything about Mr. Cruz this year.

My second point - and one has to have been in the Territory to be able to make it here today - is that there is a twofold aspect to the initiative by the organization in question. First of all, there is the aspect of political opposition to the existing government. For, whether we like it or not - and this was the feeling of the Visiting Mission - a kind of takeover bid for power has been made by this organization in Kosrae, particularly, and in Ponape. Secondly, in actual fact this organization is complaining because it wants greater financial advantages. That has to be made clear; it has to be stated out loud, as I am now doing. Requests for financial assistance are being made by this organization.

But if one takes into account everything reported by the Mission, one must also agree that the position of the official authorities is different. We can see this, for example, in paragraph 118 of the report, which states, in part:

"The government officials said that the group the Mission had heard at the public meeting had misinterpreted and misrepresented the Compact".

(T/1878, para. 118)

(Mr. Rocher, France)

I should like to make it clear to my Soviet colleague that we reported faithfully both what was negative and what was positive in our Visiting Mission. We do not live in a perfect world, but we do live in a democratic world. We in the Mission appreciated the fact that the opposition, either to the Compact or to the local governments, was able to express itself freely. I would add, by way of conclusion, that it is to the credit of the administering Power and the local governments that they did recognize this right of free expression.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course, a very serious question arises in this respect: what is positive and what is negative? The representative of France regards as positive everything that is in favour of the Compact, and as negative everything that is against the Compact: is that how we are to understand it? It is not the purpose of my simple question to impute any ill intentions to anyone. But another question arises in this regard, and I should like to put it to the representative of France. Was the opposition able to benefit from any of the funds earmarked for the campaign? If so, how much money did it get to champion and defend its views?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): I am not able to reply for the opposition as to whether or not it benefited from funds during the political campaign, for the simple reason that no political campaign was going on when our Mission was in the Territory.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Through you, Mr. President, I should like to thank the representative of France for his very frank and honest answer. It is a particularly important answer in the light of the discussion we held here last week on the question whether funds were being used for political purposes and, if so, how they were being used. We remember the lengthy discussion that took place here in that regard.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): It is not my intention to conclude the Council's consideration of item 6 now. But I would point out that some members of delegations came here this afternoon to reply to questions on the report of the other Visiting Mission. I would therefore propose that we now proceed to the consideration of the other report so that the representatives who were members of that Mission and who are here this afternoon will not have come here for nothing. The Council will of course have an opportunity to resume its consideration of item 6, the report of the Visiting Mission contained in document T/1878.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to that procedure.

It was so decided.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION TO OBSERVE THE PLEBISCITE IN PALAU, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, FEBRUARY 1986 (T/1885)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The report of the Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau was introduced at an earlier meeting. I shall now call on any representatives who wish to make comments on or put questions about that report.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): When he introduced the present report, the representative of the United Kingdom made a rather sketchy statement, if I may put it that way. Perhaps he may wish to say something now to fill out his original statement, to give us some additional explanations that would help us to understand better the picture presented in the report.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): Let me start by thanking you, Mr. President, for your procedural suggestion, which has considerably eased my own lot. It was more suitable for me to be here this afternoon, and I am grateful to you for your suggestion and to the other members of the Council for agreeing to it.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

Of course, it is my wish to help the representative of the Soviet Union in any way I can. But I am bound to say that I thought my introductory statement was a model of clarity. I am further bound to say that I think our report - as indeed I said in my introductory statement - is a model of clarity. My own view - and I think I speak for my colleagues in saying this - is that if the representative of the Soviet Union were to read my statement and the report, he would find everything he wishes to know. I have nothing to add.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course the United Kingdom representative acted in accordance with the principle once enunciated by Chekhov, "talent makes for brevity and clarity".

We still have a number of questions on the report. First, does the Mission consider that it enjoyed sufficient time to do a truly thorough job of familiarizing itself with the state of affairs in Palau, and did it have a complete picture of the population's level of readiness for the so-called plebiscite and an understanding of the goals and essence of the questions asked in the course of the plebiscite?

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): The Soviet Union representative asked a number of questions. The first one applied directly to the Mission and the amount of time it spent in Palau. Naturally I should like to spend six months a year in Palau, but, like my colleagues, I have duties that require me to be here rather than there. We devoted 10 days to our visit to Palau and, as I said in my introductory statement, they were very busy days and we considered that in those 10 days we covered a great deal of ground and did in fact - to answer his question quite specifically - see enough of the islands and the arrangements for the plebiscite and the counting and declaration of the results to be satisfied that we were giving them complete and thorough coverage.

The Soviet Union representative went on to ask about the Palauans themselves and political education and so on. In an earlier question addressed to my colleague from France who went on a Visiting Mission in July 1985, he commented that the number of elections in Palau suggested to him that they were a parody. I would say that in fact, far from parodying democracy, they reinforced it, and, as we said in our report, it is a tribute to Palauan democracy that they have had so many plebiscites. They are not so-called plebiscites. They are real plebiscites,

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

and having observed one of them I can assure the representative of the Soviet Union of the reality of the plebiscite. As we said in our report, it was clear that Palauans knew how to run plebiscites. They did it extremely well under our watchful gaze and, as we said in the report, we considered that Palauans knew what they were being asked to do in terms of their future relationship with the United States.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In this regard I should like to request the representative of the United Kingdom to comment on the following point from a petition circulated on 14 March this year. It states:

"In the past, there have been complaints made that not all of the compact was translated into the Palauan language, and that many of the voter education funds allocated by the United States Department of the Interior have largely been spent on pro-compact advertising. For example, a recent media report referred to Ambassador Zeder making an appeal over television and suggesting to the people that they might not have another chance to obtain free association." (T/PET.10/372)

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): I must say that, having been to Palau, I prefer the evidence of my own eyes to evidence submitted sometimes rather spuriously by petitioners.

The Compact was translated not only into Belauan but also into Sonsorol and other local languages. In fact we were rather critical of this because we thought - as members will see from our report - that some of the money spent on these translations could have been better spent in other ways. But it is simply not true that translations were not available.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

We considered - and again we so indicated in our report, if the Soviet representative would like to read it - that:

"we had no doubt that the political education teams carried out their tasks with sincerity and to the best of their ability within the time frame allowed. They were also at pains to explain the Compact without advocating its acceptance ... The material [we saw] was of a strictly factual nature."
(T/1885, para. 10)

In my introductory statement I said that

"the political education teams made the best of a difficult job and did so with conviction and sincerity. There was no question of the programme being 'all beer and skittles' ...". (T/PV.1601, p. 34)

I think I have no more to say on that.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): If everything looks as rosy as it was described by the representative of the United Kingdom, we should like to ask: What is the reason for such conclusions as were written, in particular by representatives, in addressing their petition to the President of the Trusteeship Council and the Chairman of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau? It states, under the heading "Ballot Language" that there shall be a single question as follows:

"Do you approve free association with the United States as set forth in the Compact on Free Association and its related agreements?" (T/PET.10/385, p. 2)

And there is no other alternative given.

Consider the conclusions of those who were more familiar with the actual state of affairs:

"This ballot language does not provide for Palauans to choose an alternate status ... Further, the Administering Authority stated to the United Nations Trusteeship Council on 4 February that the education campaign for this

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

plebiscite will include information on status options in addition to free association, 'including independence'." (T/PET.10/385, p. 2)

I stress "including independence".

Then, later, in the question that was formulated there is not a single word about that. So where is the logic here - first, to circulate this kind of information and then not to allow the people of Palau to indicate their wish to enjoy these options?

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

If this is not a new compact, there is no need to hold another plebiscite. If it is a new compact of free association the Territory of Palau must have the right to choose it or any other status. It would therefore appear that in fact things are a great deal more complicated than the state of affairs just described by the representative of the United Kingdom.

A number of additional considerations thus arise. For example, the duration of financial compensation for Palau is 50 years. The United States Government does not bear the responsibility for, nor does it guarantee, those funds, according to the terms of section 211(f). According to the provisions of section 224, the Government of the United States may agree from time to time to the extension to Palau of additional grant assistance and services and programmes. However, the United States Government is not obliged to provide any additional assistance over the course of the 50-year duration of the present Compact. We all know about the continual inflation that takes place, which sometimes is very high and sometimes not so high, so the sums involved may change.

In this connection, we should like to draw the Council's attention to another aspect that had a bearing on the plebiscite observed by the Visiting Mission. The Compact is not clearly worded and complicates the choice facing the voters. What clear-cut choice can there be for the broad mass of public opinion if lawyers cannot arrive unanimously at an interpretation of that document?

Finally, did the representative of the United Kingdom bring us even one copy of that document in the Palauan language? If so, we should like to see it.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): That was a fairly substantial hodgepodge of question, some of which are more for the Administering Authority than for me. I ought perhaps to remind the Soviet representative - he may have forgotten, since he voted against the resolution - that the Council directed the Mission to observe the plebiscite, including the campaign and polling arrangements,

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

the casting of votes, the closure of voting, the counting of ballots and the declaration of results. It did not ask it to investigate the terms of the Compact, and I do not propose to do so here.

The Soviet representative described the situation as being more complicated than I had made it seem. With respect, it seems to me to be more simple. He also referred to the voters' having no clear-cut choice. It seems to me that the choice between the answer "Yes" and the answer "No" is extremely clear-cut, and 72 per cent of the people answered "Yes". They answered to the question

"Do you approve free association with the United States as set forth in the improved Compact of Free Association and its subsidiary agreements?" because that was the question on the ballot paper. It was on the ballot paper because the question of the form of association with the United States had been answered in a previous plebiscite, also observed by the Trusteeship Council, in 1983. It certainly did not seem to me that there was any need to ask that question all over again.

The penultimate paragraph of annex V to our report, which is a useful explanatory memorandum put out by the Political Education Committee reads as follows:

"The thirty-two improvements to Palau's Compact" - which explains what was going on between the two plebiscites - "have a two-fold benefit. First, they bring the Compact into conformity with Palau's Constitution and laws." I imagine the Soviet representative has no objection to that. The paragraph continues:

"Second, they assure Palau a sound economic basis for future growth and development."

Those seem to me to be admirable objectives, and, as I say, a 72 per cent positive vote seems to show acceptance that they were objectives that had been fulfilled.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

The answer to the last question is that I do not speak Palauan, I do not suppose he does either and I did not realize he would ask me for a copy. But I do have a copy if he would like it, and, indeed, I am sure the Secretariat could make one available to him. I do have a copy in English.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): A delegation's negative vote on any resolution does not necessarily mean that that delegation is not interested in the essence of the problem. As I understand it, the Trusteeship Council's Visiting Mission is funded by the United Nations. It notes that the Compact is an extremely complex document. That is why we drew attention to certain points in the Compact. The changes made in that document are also complex, and it is very difficult even for experienced voters to understand them. The Visiting Mission itself pointed out that only a few of the participants in the vote had a real concept of the details of the Compact. That is stated in paragraphs 9 and 11 of its report.

The report also points out that the goal of the political education programme was to inform and enlighten the population of Palau about the content of the Compact and thus give the people the opportunity to make a deliberate, conscious choice. The goals set forth in paragraph 6 were not achieved in the course of the plebiscite, and the Mission's conclusion in paragraph 28 that the voting

"enabled the voters to express their views in conditions of freedom and fairness"

is therefore surprising, as is the conclusion that the plebiscite

"represented yet another valid act of self-determination by the people of Palau". (para. 31)

Could members of the Mission comment on those points, which are rather contradictory, both in their essence and in logic?

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): I am delighted that the Soviet representatives should show signs of having read the bad bits of our report, because I assume that he has also read the good bits and that he will accord a similar degree of validity to the good as to the bad bits.

The fact that there are bad bits speaks volumes in favour both of the Mission and of the authorities in Palau, neither of which made any attempt to hide the fact that the Compact of Free Association is an extremely complex document. The attempt made in the political education campaign to explain it, or at least to explain the differences between the revised, improved Compact and earlier versions, set out in annex V struck us as rather creditable. The population of Palau includes a number of people of ages at which it is difficult for them to comprehend this sort of text in any language. Indeed, that is why we say in our report that there is an oral tradition in Palau, which remains strong.

We do not see any incompatibility in saying that the detail of the Compact of Free Association is rather hard to grasp. I am an accomplished diplomat, like the Soviet representative, and I cannot say that I grasp it. How do we expect people who are perhaps simpler than Mr. Kutovoy and myself to explain some of the finer details? What we said, what we judged and what we put in our report was that we felt that the population of Palau did have a sufficient knowledge of what was involved in terms of the relationship with the Administering Authority, both now and in the future to make a decision. I would repeat that 72 per cent of them made a decision in a positive direction.

I stand by the comment to which the Soviet representative has drawn attention: that the poll was conducted in a manner that enabled the voters to express their views in conditions of freedom and fairness. Indeed it did.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In paragraph 10 of the report it is said that the material that the Political Education Committee made available was "of a strictly factual nature". I would emphasize that. Could not the Mission tell us as what that material was?

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): The bulk of the material available was the Compact of Free Association itself in the various languages to which I have referred - I use the word "bulk" advisedly. It was for that reason that the Political Education Committee issued the document attached to annex V to our report. Also included, if I remember correctly, were some of the other annexes to our report, in particular annexes VI and VII, which contain the resolutions of the Council of Chiefs and the State Governors.

I repeat that it was our judgement that the material made available, of which I have referred to the principal components, was of a factual nature.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): For the information of the representative of the United Kingdom, the Secretariat does not have the text of the Compact in Palauan.

Do the members of the Mission consider it normal that the explanations given of the so-called explanatory memorandum to section 324 of the Compact conceals the right to introduce nuclear weapons on to the territory of Palau? I refer in particular to paragraph 19 in annex V of the Mission's report, which reads as follows:

"Section 324. This is a new section wherein the United States agrees not to use, test, store or dispose of nuclear, toxic chemical, gas or biological weapons intended for use in warfare within Palau's jurisdiction, in compliance with Article II, Section 3 of Palau's Constitution. This section does grant the United States the right to maneuver ships, run on nuclear fuel, through Palau's jurisdiction pursuant to Article XIII Section 6 of Palau's Constitution."

(Mr. Kotovoy, USSR)

We ask the representative of the United Kingdom to comment on that section on behalf of the Visiting Mission.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): I hate having to come back to our mandate, but I shall read it out again if necessary. To paraphrase that mandate, it was not our business to get into the question of the content of the Compact, or of the Constitution of Palau for that matter, and the compatibility of the two.

What I can say, speaking entirely personally, is that it seems to me that the revised wording of section 324 of the Compact mirrors exactly the prohibitions on nuclear matters in the Palau Constitution. I do not wish to repeat an exchange that took place between Mr. Oleandrov and the representative of the United States in the Council in February, but she explained it to Mr. Oleandrov in extremely clear terms. Suffice it to say that if one reads article XIII, section 6, of the Constitution, and section 324 of the Compact in English, one cannot find any difference between the two.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We asked that question only because of the so-called factual material there. In this connection we call attention again to the last sentence of paragraph 10 of the report. Since it was so complicated and difficult that the representative of the United Kingdom, when preparing for the visit, was unable to study all the material thoroughly, it is easy to imagine the enormous difficulties for the people of Palau when they had to vote without being familiar with all the details.

It is not our purpose to put the representative of the United Kingdom in a difficult position, but I should like to ask him the following.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

Last week the Soviet delegation requested the Secretariat to distribute a letter to the Council addressed to the senior representative of Palau, one of the members of the relevant Committee, which recommended, inter alia, that in the distribution of material relating to the Compact, account should be taken of the position of each and every State or Governor on the question of the Compact. Was the Visiting Mission aware of that letter?

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before calling on the representative of the United Kingdom, to whom the question was addressed, I should like to remind delegations - and this is my responsibility as President - that after six o'clock the cost of technical services increases considerably. In the circumstances, if members agree, I shall call on the representative of the United Kingdom to hear his reply. I shall then call on those delegations wishing to comment on that reply, but I hope that no further questions will be put until we resume consideration of the report at a subsequent meeting.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): It is unusual that I should be in a situation that the Soviet representative finds himself in quite frequently, which is not having a document in his own language. I do not have the document to which he is referring, and I should prefer to defer commenting on his question until I do have it.

Suffice it to say that annex III of our report makes it pretty clear what the Olbiil Era Kelulau, the National Congress of Palau, felt about the Compact. But I would be very happy to come back to this subject later, if necessary.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course we are sympathetic to the wish of our colleague from the United Kingdom and also to the proposal made by the President. We shall await continuation of our work on this subject. The Soviet delegation would like in particular to reserve its right to put further questions as well as to speak on the substance of these documents.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.