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Fifty-third Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 27 May 1986, at 10.45 a.m.

President: Mr. RAPIN (France)

- 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)
- Examination of petitions listed in the annex to the agenda (continued)
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

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): As agreed last week, the Council will now begin the general debate.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): This is the first time that I have had the opportunity to speak before the Trusteeship Council. I am pleased thus to show my country's interest in the Micronesian populations. Last year I had the pleasure of welcoming to the French Mission several of their constitutional representatives as part of the delegation of the Administering Authority, along with the delegations of the other members of the Council.

The interest of the French authorities in the Micronesian populations and the attention they have given to their future status has been constant. My country has participated in all the Visiting Missions to observe plebiscites and most of the other Missions of the Council to the Territory, particularly the last two, which took place in July 1985 and February 1986. Moreover, at earlier sessions of the Council my delegation has participated very actively in the discussion of the reports of the Administering Authority, always bearing in mind the interests of Micronesia and its inhabitants.

I would also recall that for some years now the Council has done France the honour - an honour it has shared with the United Kingdom - of entrusting it with its presidency, which has, if that were possible, increased even further France's interest in the last trusteeship of the United Nations. Finally, the participation of our delegation in the drawing up of the conclusions and annual recommendations of the Council has made it possible for France throughout recent years positively and directly to contribute to Micronesia's evolution.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

The fifty-third session of the Trusteeship Council is a unique one. The Administering Authority, in the voice of the Permanent Representative of the United States, on 16 May 1986 officially requested the Trusteeship Council to recognize that the time had come to remove the trusteeship from the Territory of the Pacific Islands. The request was not unexpected, but that in no way reduced its importance, and it will come as no surprise that France will devote most of this statement to it.

Since 1947, over the last 39 years of trusteeship, Micronesia has seen many changes in the political, economic and social spheres. France, which has exercised responsibility as an Administering Authority since the Second World War, knows that true economic and social changes take place relatively slowly. Preserving the harmony of a traditional society, without slowing economic development, or even promoting it, is a difficult exercise but one that is inevitable in the world of today. My country has made an effort to follow up on these changes at every opportunity, to analyse them, to interpret them, and even to pass judgement on them, for that is its duty as a member of the Council in accordance with Article 87 of the Charter.

But it is in the political area that fundamental facts have intervened. In 1975, the population of the Northern Marianas freely chose to establish a Commonwealth in Political Union with the United States rather than any other political status. In February 1983 Palau, in June of that year the Federated States of Micronesia, and in September of that year the Marshall Islands freely chose the status of free association with the United States in response to a series of questions, each of which gave them the option of independence. The inhabitants of Palau, having exercised that choice, in February last decided the form they intended to give it. Each of these five ballots took place in the presence of an observer Mission from the United Nations.

(Mr. de Kemoullaria, France)

Following the comments made by those Missions and the conclusions contained in their reports, it is clear to France that the populations of Micronesia have exercised, under the monitoring of the United Nations, their right to self-determination. In this respect, I should like to quote an important passage from the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations:

"The establishment of a sovereign and independent State, the free association or integration with an independent State or the emergence into any other political status freely determined by a people constitute modes of implementing the right of self-determination by that people." (General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), annex)

The Micronesians freely made their choice between the various means of exercising their right to self-determination.

Given that fundamental fact, the constitutional authorities of the Territory made known their desire to see the trusteeship come to an end. They solemnly repeated that request before the Council at the opening of this session. In its report, the latest Visiting Mission of the United Nations expressed the concerns of the populations of Micronesia along these lines. Finally, as we were able to note on 21 May, it is also the wish of a large number of States of the region to be able to accelerate the development of their relations with the four entities of the Territory once they have taken their future into their own hands under conditions they themselves have chosen.

This is why, taking into account all these elements and the results of a lengthy evolution, France, for its part, considers it is time to implement the provisions of Article 83 of the Charter and remove the trusteeship from the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I shall now call on those delegations which have requested to speak. I have no speakers on my list but I know that other delegations wish to speak this morning. May I take it from the silence that no other delegation wishes to participate in the general debate? I would remind members that we shall have no meeting this afternoon and that we shall meet twice tomorrow to continue consideration of the items on our agenda, but there will be no further general debate.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, your decisions surprise our delegation somewhat, because under "Organization of work", which we discussed at the outset, a different method was decided on. Could you please explain your decision?

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the attention of the representative of the Soviet Union to the following point. Normally we would have had our general debate last Thursday. After having consulted on Thursday morning with all the delegations of the member States of the Council, I noted that no delegation was ready at that time to speak in the general debate. With the agreement of all delegations, we continued the consideration of other items on the agenda of the Council. In our meeting on Friday morning, after consultations with all delegations, I submitted to the Council a timetable which provided that the general debate would take place this morning, Tuesday, 27 May, and that we would resume our work tomorrow morning, Wednesday, 28 May, moving on to the item on our agenda relating to the study and consideration of written petitions. Last Friday, I waited at length for delegations that wished to do so to comment on this timetable. There being no comments, I considered it adopted.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, in the consultations which did indeed take place last week, you clearly stated that two meetings would be planned for the general debate.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I regret to have to say that I did not, last week, envisage two meetings for the general debate. The summary record of the meeting - an official meeting - at which I made the proposal should confirm this, but there are also other delegations here who can recall what I said.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): My understanding was the same as yours, Mr. President, that we were, in fact, to speak this morning. The United Kingdom's problem is less one of being able to speak as of finding an ambassador or representative to give the statement at this time. As you know, we are - as we all are - very much tied up with the special session on Africa at the moment. I am sure, however, that Ambassador Peter Maxey could be here later on this morning. Meanwhile I should be happy to yield the floor to the representative of the Soviet Union.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to ask the representative of the Soviet Union whether his delegation is in a position to speak now in the general debate.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Like the British delegation, mine, too, would like its statement to be made at a high level. Therefore, we would like to make it tomorrow. But if the representative of the United Kingdom is ready to speak now, we are ready to listen.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Is the representative of the United Kingdom able to give us any precise information as to when a member of his delegation will be able to speak, or would he like to contact his delegation in order to have an answer?

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I cannot give a definite answer now as to when Ambassador Maxey will be ready. I must confess that our understanding was, indeed, that we would have one meeting devoted to the general debate. Clearly, my delegation would be only too happy to speak in this debate later on this morning.

(Mr. Mortimer, United Kingdom)

However, if the proposal is now that we go on to tomorrow and have a separate meeting in the general debate, then this, of course, opens up our entire proceedings. If that is the case, then I would prefer to reserve our position on when exactly we are going to speak. However, I repeat the point that I have made that our understanding was the same as yours, Mr. President, that the general debate would take place during this morning's meeting. As I have said, Ambassador Maxey is ready to speak later on in the morning. However, if, as a result of Ambassador Maxey's speaking, the representative of the Soviet Union will speak tomorrow in a separate debate, then I think we would have to reconsider our position.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In those circumstances, I would propose the following: I shall suspend the meeting for about 10 minutes in order to contact all delegations and to allow those delegations which need to do so to contact their authorities. We shall then resume the meeting and I shall inform the Council whether we shall be continuing the general debate, whether we are going to adjourn, or whether we shall continue consideration of another item on the agenda. If there is no objection, the meeting will be suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 11.25 a.m.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): From my consultations it would appear that no other delegation will speak this morning in the general debate. I should like to make it very clear that tomorrow morning's meeting, on Wednesday, 28 May, will be the last I intend to devote to the general debate. Hence delegations will not have the opportunity to speak in the general debate if they fail to do so tomorrow morning.

In order to take full advantage of this morning's meeting, and with the agreement of all delegations I have consulted, I propose that we now move on to agenda item 5.

EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS LISTED IN THE ANNEX TO THE AGENDA (T/1878/Add.1)  
(continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We shall now proceed to examine written petitions concerning the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands - at least those that have so far been distributed in the official languages. These written petitions are contained in documents T/PET.10/346, 359 to 392, 395 to 404, 406, 410 and 411. As I stated last week and contrary to practice in preceding years, consideration of petitions will be done one by one.

Members of the Council will recall that there are two kinds of petitions, namely, those requiring action by the Trusteeship Council and those requiring observation by the Administering Authority. There is one petition in the former category, contained in document T/PET.10/381, while the rest fall under the latter category. I propose that the Council begin consideration of petitions in the second category, beginning with T/PET.10/346. Are there any comments on this document?



Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): I believe that we studied at an earlier meeting last week all the petitions known as communications. Unless I am mistaken, we have come to the first petitions, beginning with T/PET.10/359.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If my information is correct, the first petition we shall consider is T/PET.10/346 and not T/PET.10/359.

Mr. BADER (United States of America): I propose that we discuss the bulk of the petitions in one statement towards the end of consideration of the petitions, rather than one by one, as we did with the communications. My delegation believes that that approach might be preferable because so many of the petitions address the same question, in many cases in virtually identical language. I think it would expedite the Council's work if my delegation addressed those that do so all at once, rather than one by one and say the same thing over and over again.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I have two proposals before me. One is to consider the petitions one by one and the other is to take them all together, and to proceed as we have done in previous years. I would propose a compromise.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It seems to me, Mr. President, that the Council has already decided on the proposal that you made at the beginning - that is, that we take the petitions one by one. Therefore, it seems to me that any change in that procedure would not be advisable. As we have already examined the communications one by one, and no major difference in principle is involved, we should continue to follow the procedure proposed at the beginning, so that members of the Council may take a relaxed look at the petitions one by one.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I would point out that at its meeting this morning the Council has already shown that it does not hesitate to change decisions that it has already made. However, I am not here to make the work more complicated or to criticize delegations. Rather, I am here to ensure the best conditions for the completion of our work. Therefore, I suggest a middle path which would in no way affect decisions we have already taken but would correspond to the desires expressed by two delegations.

(The President)

I shall mention the petitions one by one and then invite delegations with comments to make or questions to raise to do so when I mention the petition by number. We already know - because we were informed last week - that the United States delegation will not reply to questions after the consideration of each petition, but will answer such questions and make general comments once all the comments and questions have been put forward on all the petitions. That is how we proceeded with the agreement of all delegations at our meeting last week, and I intend to follow the same procedure this morning.

Therefore, I ask delegations with questions or comments on the first document, T/PET.10/346, to do so. I now turn to the second document, T/PET.10/359.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): What has happened to documents 347 and 348? The Soviet delegation does not have them and our attempts to obtain them in the documents distribution section were unsuccessful. How can we obtain them? How can we consider them at this time?

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The petitions numbered from 347 to 358 inclusive were considered and decided upon by the Council during its previous special session. Therefore, we are not considering them at this regular session. The first petitions we are to consider this morning have the following numbers: T/PET.10/346 and the series numbered from 359 to 392 and then 395 to 404. In addition, there are petitions 406, 410 and 411. Does any delegation not have all of those documents, or lack some of them?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation does not have petition 346.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I have document T/PET.10/346 before me. It was issued on 12 September 1985. Do I take it that it was not included in the set of documents available at the side of the Council?

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): Apparently the set of documents I have before me does not include that petition. I presume, then, that we shall be taking up petition 359.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): That is correct.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): In that case, Mr. President, my delegation has taken note of the comments of the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union and is open to all options. But we would point out that all but four or five of the petitions from 359 to 392 deal with the same subjects - Palau, its Constitution and nuclear arms, which we have discussed in the past two weeks. I suggest that we take up all those petitions together, and not one by one, because they all deal with the same subject.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I would point out to the representative of France that I intend to follow the procedure decided upon a few minutes ago.

Was any delegation here unable to obtain a copy of T/PET.10/346?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, obviously there is some problem with the interpretation: at the very beginning I asked you about this petition, pointing out that the Soviet delegation had received neither T/PET.10/346 nor T/PET.10/347. All attempts to obtain those documents from the documentation section have been unsuccessful.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The representative of the Soviet Union has answered my question with respect to document T/PET.10/346. However, I am afraid that with respect to document T/PET.10/347 he did not hear my earlier observation that documents T/PET.10/347 to T/PET.10/358 had already been considered and decided upon by the Trusteeship Council at its last special session. We will therefore not be considering T/PET.10/347 again. If he does not have document T/PET.10/346 - which, I understand, was not available at the documents desk - we will come back to this petition at a later stage and I would suggest that we start with T/PET.10/359. Does any delegation wish to speak on this petition?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The petition before us contained in T/PET.10/359 is, in our view, an important one. It was sent by the members of the European Parliament, who are deeply concerned at the Trusteeship Council's decision to recognize the Palau referendum. This petition draws attention to the fact that the text of the wording of the Compact is not in accord with the Palau Constitution: it permits the importation of nuclear weapons into Palau, in violation of the Constitution.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

The request is made that the referendum be postponed to allow an educational campaign to be carried out on the implications.

This petition, which contains a very serious message addressed to the President of the Trusteeship Council and its members, affects the interests of the Micronesian people and is therefore of concern also to the Trusteeship Council, to which it is addressed. It is our view that the Trusteeship Council should respond appropriately to that petition and take the necessary action. Moreover, if I am not mistaken, earlier in the session a representative of the European Parliament presented an oral petition. This shows that the Council had still not responded to the written petition sent to it on 7 February 1986 by a member of the European Parliament.

Furthermore, as can be seen from the Secretariat document containing a list of petitions and communications addressed to the Trusteeship Council, this petition calls for comment by the Administering Authority. We hope the Administering Authority will oblige. Similarly, we trust that the Trusteeship Council will respond appropriately to the petition, at least confirming to the petitioner that it was considered, and informing him of the opinions expressed at this session by the Trusteeship Council with respect to the points touched upon in the petition.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If no delegation wishes to make further observations with respect to T/PET.10/359, we shall now take up T/PET.10/360.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The petition contained in document T/PET.10/360, as was rightly pointed out here, deals also with the question of the holding of a plebiscite on Belau and expresses serious concern at the fact that the United States continues to try to circumvent the Constitution, whose provisions forbid the importation, location, storage or use of nuclear materials and nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

In connection with both the previous petition and this petition, a question arises which I feel should obviously have been decided at an earlier stage. But even in this case we should bear in mind the fact that in practice we start to consider petitions very late. In this connection the following question inevitably arises: What course of action could be taken by the President of the Trusteeship Council, to whom these petitions are addressed? Clearly, in considering the petitions now before us, we would need to have information at our disposal on what measures were taken by the President of the Trusteeship Council on the petitions he received, the extent to which he gave attention to these petitions between sessions of the Council, and what measures were taken upon their receipt.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I would draw the attention of the representative of the Soviet Union to the following observations.

Petitions sent to the Secretary-General or to the President of the Trusteeship Council are circulated upon receipt to members of the Council as official documents in the official languages. As far as I know, the President of the Trusteeship Council personally does not take a position with respect to these petitions. Once he has circulated them to the members of the Council, these petitions are examined under his presidency and discussed by Council members either in a special session, as happened with petitions T/PET.10/L.347 to L.358, or during a regular session, as

(The President)

is taking place at present with the petitions whose numbers I have already repeatedly read out at this meeting. Once, and only once, these petitions have been considered and discussed by members of the Council and the Council has either taken note of or decided on those petitions, is it then up to the President of the Council to inform the petitioners in writing by communicating to them the records of those meetings of the Council at which the petitions were discussed and decisions taken on them. That is what has been done every year in the past, subsequent to special sessions or regular sessions of the Council.

If there are no other comments, we shall move on to T/PET.10/361. Does anyone wish to comment on it?

We now take up T/PET.10/362. Are there any observations?

We now turn to T/PET.10/363.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I did not speak on the two previous petitions although I should point out that they are also both extremely important and, like the petition contained in document T/PET.10/363, are directly related to what took place in Belau. They deal with provisions in the Compact that are in conflict with the Constitution of Palau.



(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Document T/PET.10/363 raises the question of whether or not the holding of yet another referendum on Palau is just. It points out that five such referendums have been held already. The petition also stresses that, in practice, the sixth referendum is being forced upon the people of Palau, qualifies it as a "mockery of democracy", and says that those actions do not correspond to the concept of democracy.

In commenting on the aforementioned petitions, I wish to state that they confirm that the situation obtaining in the Trust Territory in general and on Palau in particular is not normal; that the situation has arisen as a result of actions taken there by the United States, the Administering Authority, which are in its interest - actions directed against the interests of the people of the Trust Territory and in violation of the United Nations Charter with respect to trusteeship and the Declaration on decolonization.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Since no other delegation wishes to speak on those three documents, we shall now turn our attention to document T/PET.10/364.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): With regard to T/PET.10/364, we consider it important that the Trusteeship Council draw attention to the fact that, as in others, it is pointed out that the democratic process seemed to have taken on a different meaning in Belau. It is also indicated that the United States is putting extreme pressure on the Belauan people through economic blackmail. Those points are of great significance to the Trusteeship Council, since they relate to the Administering Authority's actions in the Trust Territory.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Since no other delegation wishes to comment on that document, we shall now turn our attention to document T/PET.10/365.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): This petition is important in that it draws the Council's attention to the fact that the United States has placed the Micronesian people in general and the people of Palau in particular in a situation of economic dependence and thus forced the inhabitants of Palau to accept decisions favourable to the Administering Authority. In this connection, a legitimate question arises that requires the Trusteeship Council to see to it that the Administering Authority does not resort to economic blackmail to force the people of Palau to accept the Compact. It is indicated in the petition that Palau might be forced to accept the Compact - which, more or less, has in fact taken place - so as to receive funds from the United States to support its economy.

It seems to me that this petition gives an accurate assessment of the situation affecting the people of Palau - a situation of economic dependence which the United States uses to force the people of Palau to accept the Compact and vote in favour of it. That is what has in fact taken place.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We come now to T/PET.10/366. Does any delegation wish to make any comments?

Since that is not the case, we turn next to T/PET.10/367.

Since no delegation wishes to comment on that, we shall pass on to T/PET.10/368.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): This petition expresses obvious concern about the situation existing in the Trust Territory in general and Palau in particular with regard to the illegal actions of the Administering Authority designed to force the population of Palau to submit to its dictates. Similarly, echoing the theme of other petitions, this one expresses concern about the Trusteeship Council's role in this very unseemly history of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It asks the question: "Where is the Trusteeship Council in all this?" What is its role? It expresses disappointment that the Trusteeship Council is no match for the United States. That evaluation of the Trusteeship Council's role, it seems to me, should be of concern to the members of the Council, because the petition reflects an assessment of the Council.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We come next to T/PET.10/369.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): This petition raises a very important question: whether anyone, including the Trusteeship Council, can now say that the plebiscite held in Palau in February of this year confirmed the so-called Compact of Free Association, and in particular the statement of the President of Palau that a simple majority of votes is all that is required. As we have heard from international jurists, that plebiscite is not a sufficient basis to consider the Compact adopted. In this connection, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom of New South Wales quite rightly questions and raises doubts about the statement that only a simple majority is necessary to adopt the Compact.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): It is probably worth pointing out that this petition from Castlereagh Street in Sydney is actually wrong, since there are two errors in it: first, it says the "new compact ... omits all mention of nuclear substances". It does not; we have been discussing that over the past two weeks. Secondly, it refers to "an accompanying 'treaty'". Of course, there is no such treaty. I think in the interest of accuracy one might as well point out those facts.

The next point I should like to make is a general one about the petitions we have heard and those we are about to consider: they come from areas as wide as London, Vancouver, Maple Ridge, British Columbia, Sydney, Rotherham, Whitehaven, Sheffield, Cambridge, Leeds, Bristol, and even Wells-next-the-Sea in Norfolk. I have no reason to doubt that all those towns represent excellent and comprehensive repositories of information on Micronesia and the Pacific generally. But I think it is worth making the point that the picture we have had in this Council from the elected Palauan representatives is a rather different one from those contained in these petitions. One can of course decide whether to believe the good ladies of Wells-next-the-Sea or the President of the Republic of Palau; but I for one will put my money on the representative of Palau.

My third point is a rather more positive one, I think: though we may not agree with everything these petitions contain, they are a tribute to the workings of the democratic process and the exercise of free speech in democratic societies.

(Mr. Mortimer, United Kingdom)

I notice that the vast majority of the petitions come from Western societies, Western democratic countries. It would have been nice to see a few from the Soviet Union and indeed from Eastern European countries.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does any member wish to speak on petition 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375 or 376?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The representative of the United Kingdom recognizes the importance of petitions, the sending of which he regards as a display of democracy. But he seemed to be concerned that the geography of their origin, which includes his country, is not wide enough. However, it seems to me that it is sufficiently representative, and the fact that we do not have to hand petitions from any other countries than those mentioned by the representative of the United Kingdom in no way minimizes the importance of the information that the Council has received from the petitions and communications.

The fact that the petitions come from Western countries should make them more informative for the representative of the United Kingdom and more deserving of his confidence. If the geography were expanded a little we might hear something different from the representative of the United Kingdom.

We seem to be going through the petitions that you have just mentioned rather quickly, Mr. President. I do not object to such speedy consideration, but those petitions indicate the views of the broad community as regards the nature of the agreement imposed by the United States on the Micronesians, the situation of the Micronesian people and why they are obliged to obey the diktat of the Administering Authority. The petitions contain a strong expression of dissatisfaction with the United States policy towards the Micronesian population. Particular concern is

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

expressed about United States military plans, and the greatest concern is expressed about the nuclear-free provisions of the Constitution being circumvented, which would permit the United States, at its discretion, to introduce nuclear weapons into Palau.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The representative of the Soviet Union has said that we are examining the petitions rather quickly. We are in fact looking at them one by one, which we have not done in previous years, and we are doing so at the request of the delegation of the Soviet Union, although another delegation officially requested that we proceed as we had in previous years. After consultations, I know that the wish of two other delegations was that we should proceed as in previous years, but during consultations I asked that they meet the wishes of the Soviet Union. Therefore, I do not consider it appropriate to describe our examination as speedy.

Are there any comments on petition 377, 378 or 379?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am sorry, Mr. President, that I caused you to make further comments about the method of considering the petitions. What I said was not a matter of reproach to the President or anyone else that we were going through them quickly. I was merely observing that other delegations felt no need to express any view on the petitions. That is why I said we were moving rather quickly. I regret that you took that comment as an expression by the Soviet delegation of dissatisfaction over the way in which you are conducting the examination of the petitions. That is not the case, and if you have that impression, Sir, I ask you to change your view.

The petitions received by the Council are very important. They express the views of a large number of people in the international community. The Council should not rush through them; we do not have the right to do so.

Let us take, for example, petition 379, which is before us now. It is from an organization called "Women Working for a Nuclear-Free and Independent Pacific". It is both an expression of view and a protest, a protest about the so-called plebiscite held on Belau and the strong pressure put on Belau by the United States. It complains that the Compact of Free Association violates the

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

nuclear-free provisions of the Belau Constitution. The message, which is addressed to the Trusteeship Council, asks the Council to defend the Constitution of Belau. In the petition attention is drawn to the fact that "Free Association" will deny Micronesians sovereignty and independence.

This is a very important petition. In it views are expressed directly concerning the interests not only of the Micronesians, but of all peoples who are against nuclear weapon. The Council should take into account such a broad point of view as that contained in the petitions in assessing the situation that has arisen in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of the Soviet Union for having clarified his remarks about his assessment of our procedure.

Are there any comments on petition 380, 381 or 382?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to speak to petition 381. Its geographical origin is quite clear: it was sent by Mr. Balos, a Senator of the Marshall Islands.



(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

This is a serious petition, because it contains a request that a special Trusteeship Council visiting mission be sent to Kwajalein to investigate the current crisis there and to make it possible for the Trusteeship Council to prepare an objective report on the situation.

We do not fully understand what has happened regarding that petition. What was the response of the President of the Trusteeship Council and what action did he take? As we understand it, the situation was a complicated one. We all heard the statement made by Senator Balos before the Council. Very serious events took place on Kwajalein when the petition was submitted, so serious that the President of the Trusteeship Council ought to have reacted appropriately. In any event, I feel that the President might have held appropriate consultations with members of the Council and informed them of the situation which had arisen on Kwajalein. We should like some clarification with respect to that petition.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): With respect to the petition contained in document T/PET.10/381, I would recall that it was translated and circulated on 31 March 1986, upon receipt. If a member of the Council desires consultations on any petition, it is up to that member, should the President of the Council not take the initiative himself, to call for such consultations by advising the President of his wishes. If a member of the Council wishes to check on the follow-up activities of the President of the Council within his purview - a very rare occurrence - it is up to that member to ascertain from the President what his intentions are with respect to the petition in question.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I listened very carefully to the President's explanation, and I greatly regret that the role of the President of the Trusteeship Council is being, so to speak, minimized. I believe that the President must respond to requests made by

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

any member delegation; he should at least request the Administering Authority to explain what is happening on Kwajalein. We learned the details of the events there at the current session. We learned that violent measures had been taken against the legitimate owners of Kwajalein, and that inhabitants of Kwajalein had been arrested and punished.

When a representative of the Trust Territory inhabitants turned to the Trusteeship Council, the Council took no action. I think the President of the Trusteeship Council should play a far more active and meaningful role.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We shall now turn to the petition contained in document T/PET.10/383.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Petition T/PET.10/383, from West Yorkshire, England, is noteworthy. It states that inhabitants of Belau addressed a meeting at Bradford University, speaking of the unfair vote taking place on the island and the adoption of the Compact despite the requirement for a 75 per cent majority vote. This is the second petition that shows the attitude of the inhabitants of the Territory - not merely outsiders - regarding what is going on there.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

In connection with this petition and the preceding petition, I wonder if there is any information about how the approval of the Compact in Palau is viewed in the Palau Supreme Court. Is the question being considered by the Court? Perhaps the representative of the Administering Authority could respond to this.

Mr. BADER (United States of America): In due course, my delegation will speak on the petitions and will address some of the questions that have been raised this morning.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I merely wish to comment on the petition of Mr. Prendergast of Leeds (T/PET.10/383). Contrary to his assertion, the vote in Palau was not unfair, which is perfectly clear from the Visiting Mission's report, which we discussed earlier in this session. Secondly, with regard to his final paragraph, where he requests the Trusteeship Council's "support for the people's Constitution in a fair and open plebiscite", the assumption there is that the plebiscite was not fair and open. In fact, a reading of our report confirms that it was both those things.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has received a copy of a letter from a non-governmental organization stating that that organization had received a telegram informing it that the Supreme Court of Palau was considering the question of the legality of the last plebiscite's approval of the so-called Compact. We have been informed that this telegram was sent to the President of the Trusteeship Council on 20 May this year.

Mr. BADER (United States of America): We have covered a fair sampling of the petitions, and I feel it might be appropriate for my delegation to comment on them at this stage.

(Mr. Bader, United States)

My delegation does not propose to offer a detailed commentary on the written petitions the Trusteeship Council has received: during earlier statements in the Council we have answered the questions and accusations contained in them. I would simply wish to note, as the representative of the United Kingdom has already done this morning, that almost all the petitions discuss the same subject - namely the Palau plebiscite - with virtually identical wording. Almost all the letters come from non-Palauans, and mostly from a handful of locations. I did a quick count of the origins of these petitions and came up with the following figures, which may not be fully accurate but which give an indication of the facts: there were 13 from Canada, nine from Australia, one from New Zealand, two from the United States and 20 from the United Kingdom. In addition, there is one from the Marshall Islands; there is none from Palau and none from the Federated States of Micronesia.

I surmise that many - indeed most - of these letters are the product of an organized letter-writing campaign on this subject among non-Palauans.

I should add that non-Micronesians can make a valuable contribution to our work and our understanding. For example, attorney for the Bikini Islanders, Mr. Jonathan Weisgall, who has been involved in litigation against the United States, has certainly added to the tone and depth of our discussions here. Still, with regard to certain other petitions and would-be petitions, I would note the eloquent, impassioned words delivered before this Council on 21 May by the Ambassador of Fiji, words which should not be ignored. He said that

"It would be a travesty of justice and of fair play, and it would make a mockery of the role of this Organization, if the influence of a few vocal, interfering outsiders were to frustrate the will of the people, so consistently and so overwhelmingly expressed.

" ... Surely the time for such paternalism is over." (T/PV.1612, p. 12)

(Mr. Bader, United States)

Just looking quickly at these petitions, we see the origins are distinctly non-Micronesian. Starting from the beginning, the origins are as follows: Vancouver, British Columbia; Vancouver, British Columbia; Maple Ridge, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Australia; Victoria, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Auckland, New Zealand; Victoria, British Columbia; San Francisco, California - a United States petition; South Yorkshire, England; Australia; Australia; Australia; Cumbria, England; Sheffield, England; Marshall Islands - the one Marshall Islands petition; Cambridge, England; Leeds, England; Bristol, England; New York; Bristol, England; Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, England; Norfolk, United Kingdom; Sheffield, England; Nanaimo, British Columbia; Leeds, England; Bristol, England; Sheffield, England; Essex, England; Leeds, England; Sheffield, England; Sheffield, England.

Perhaps there is a sister city relationship between Sheffield and Victoria and Koror. It is hard to understand why there are so many petitions from those locations.

As for the content of the petitions, I would note that my delegation has already addressed the substance, repeatedly. The President of Palau, Mr. Salii, addressed the substance. The report of the Visiting Mission addressed the substance. All the points raised in these petitions in virtually identical language have been addressed in previous statements.

Just to comment briefly, petition T/PET.10/363 refers to five referendums having rejected a United States base on the island. There were, of course, no such referendums on that subject, and the United States has no present plans to

(Mr. Bader, United States)

construct a base in Palau. Petition T/PET.10/364 makes the same point. Petition T/PET.10/365 says that the United Nations is considering not sending official observers to Palau, and the petition is obviously wrong in that respect since a Mission was sent to Palau. It says that the United States wants to use some of Palau's land for military bases, including nuclear bases. That is not true. It says that five referendums have already confirmed the desire for a nuclear-free Constitution. The referendums, as has been repeatedly pointed out, were on different subjects. The Palau Constitution is not a nuclear-free Constitution, as many of these petitions assert; it is a Constitution which provides for certain prohibitions on the introduction of nuclear materials and certain procedures to waive such introduction.

(Mr. Bader, United States)

Petition T/PET.10/370 encourages the Trusteeship Council to "censor the United States for its failure to live up to its obligations under the trusteeship". As is clear from the lengthy statements made this morning, there has been no censorship in the Trusteeship Council.

Petition T/PET.10/373 calls upon the Council to free the Palauans "from a tyrant". I presume that is a reference to the United States. The United States is not accustomed to being referred to as a tyrant. That is obviously an inaccurate phrasing in this case, as in any case. Petition T/PET.10/374 says that there was no independence option on the 1986 ballot. Of course, there was in 1983 - and the Palauans rejected independence at that time.

Many of the petitions refer to the necessity of a 75 per cent vote to approve the Compact. As has been explained by the President of Palau and by the Attorney General of Palau, as my delegation said during the special session, and as Ambassador Byrne has said at this session, we regard 50 per cent as sufficient, as do the President of Palau and the Attorney General of Palau. Enough on the content of these petitions.

There is nothing wrong with organized letter writing campaigns such as we have here. They have an honourable place in the democratic process. I would question, however, if such letters have a place in our proceedings as petitions. My delegation can see no justification in these times of financial crisis at the United Nations to publish in the original language and in translation every letter from a non-Micronesian offering opinions about conditions in Micronesia, particularly since so many of the letters use identical language in making inaccurate - I repeat, inaccurate - allegations.

The Council's rules of procedure make it clear that the Council is under no obligation to publish all such letters as United Nations documents. Rule 85 (4) states:

(Mr. Bader, United States)

"The Secretary-General shall not circulate petitions which are manifestly inconsequential, a list of which, with a summary of their contents, shall be communicated to the members of the Trusteeship Council."

I submit that many of the letters circulated in these documents precisely fit the definition "manifestly inconsequential".

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I do not wish to deprive any delegation which would like to speak of its right to do so. However, given the time, I should like to make the following observations. This morning we started consideration of petitions starting with T/PET.10/359, and we considered document T/PET.10/383. I would suggest that we continue our discussion of these petitions at the meeting tomorrow afternoon. Also with respect to consideration of the petitions, I should like, at the request of the Secretary, to make the following recommendation to the Council, which is slightly different from the first indications I was given.

The petitions which were considered and decided upon at the last special session of the Council are numbered T/PET.10/348 to 358, inclusive. Consequently, petitions T/PET.10/346 and 347 are to be considered at this session of the Council. I have asked for those petitions to be made available to delegations. Hence, we still have to consider documents T/PET.10/346 and 347, and tomorrow afternoon we will resume consideration of petition T/PET.10/383.

The Secretariat has requested me to inform the delegations of the member States of the Council that a draft resolution dealing with agenda items 4 and 14 has been submitted during this morning's meeting. This draft resolution has been issued in the official languages as document T/L.1252. I would ask delegations to obtain a copy of this document.



(The President)

Finally, I would remind the Council that the next meeting of the Trusteeship Council will be held tomorrow morning at 10.30. It will be the last meeting at this session of the Council to be devoted to the general debate. I would therefore invite those delegations which have not yet participated in the general debate to be in a position to do so at our meeting tomorrow morning. It is not my intention to devote further meetings of the Council to the general debate.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.