

486

UNITED NATIONS
TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

T/PV.1637
26 May 1987

ENGLISH

Fifty-fourth Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 22 May 1987 at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. BIRCH

(United Kingdom)

- Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1986: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. (continued)
- Appointment of a Drafting Committee
- Letter dated 4 May 1987 from the acting Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the Secretary-General (T/1910), containing a request for the dispatch of a visiting mission of the Trusteeship Council to observe a plebiscite in Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- Programme of work

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent, within one week of the date of this document, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1986: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (continued)

The PRESIDENT: Today the Council will continue the examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority and begin the general debate.

Mr. SMITH (United Kingdom): Since this is the first formal opportunity we have had to do so, I should like to begin by thanking the representatives from Palau and the representatives of the Administering Authority who have come from Micronesia to participate in this session of the Trusteeship Council. That they have done so is, I believe, a sign of their continuing interest in and regard for the work of the Council.

I should also like formally to thank the many petitioners who were heard by the Council. Although this year we have asked very few questions, I should like to reassure them that we have listened to their words carefully. Their interventions, particularly those of the Micronesian petitioners, are an important contribution to the Council's work.

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

Last year, when the Trusteeship Council met in this Chamber for its fifty-third session, a good many speakers, members of the Council as well as representatives from Micronesia and from their South Pacific neighbours, referred to that session as a momentous and historic occasion. They did so, I believe, in the expectation that the fifty-third session would be the occasion on which the Trusteeship Council completed its consideration of the last remaining Trust Territory, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The fact that the Trusteeship Council is meeting now in its fifty-fourth session does not in any way diminish the importance of what took place here last year.

At its fifty-third session, the Trusteeship Council adopted resolution 2183 (LIII) of 28 May 1986. My delegation was pleased to co-sponsor that resolution. We did so because we believed that the Trusteeship Council should recognize the progress made in the Territory towards the development of free political institutions and the establishment of self-government and should acknowledge the requests made to the Council by their elected representatives for early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. Most importantly, we did so because we were convinced - and remain convinced - that in adopting its resolution 2183 (LIII) the Council was acting in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the people of Micronesia.

Resolution 2183 (LIII) was the culmination of a lengthy process which began in 1969 when political status negotiations were opened between the United States and representatives of the peoples of Micronesia. In participating in this process, the United States was acting in fulfilment of its obligations under Article 76 (b) of the United Nations Charter and under the Trusteeship Agreement to promote the political advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory and their progressive development towards self-government. This process continued over a number of years as the inhabitants of the Territory, exercising their right of

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

self-determination, decided through a number of plebiscites, of which the majority were observed by United Nations Visiting Missions, to establish four separate entities within the Territory, each with its own Constitution, and each freely choosing its own particular status. The details of those plebiscites are well known; I do not need to elaborate them again. Suffice it to say that, in its resolution 2183 (LIII), the Trusteeship Council recognized that this process had been successfully completed. As I have said, it had been a lengthy process and one which had not been without setbacks. Yet, under a democratic system in which all the inhabitants of the Territory were able freely to express their wishes and their differing views, it would have been most surprising if the movement towards self-government had gone forward without a hitch.

In the same resolution, the Trusteeship Council acknowledged further that the United States, as Administering Authority, had satisfactorily discharged its obligations under the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement and that it was appropriate for the Agreement to be terminated. It remained, in the view of this Council, for the Government of the United States, in consultation with the four Governments of the Trust Territory, to reach agreement on a date for entry into force of their respective new status arrangements.

The Soviet Union has alleged that the people of Palau have been coerced into accepting political arrangements against their wishes. This is clearly not true. The Palauan people have had many opportunities over the years to make clear their views in plebiscites observed by this body. In making their choices, they have shown the freedom of thought and independence of mind that one would expect from the people of a democracy. That we are sitting here today is evidence that they have not been coerced. Moreover, the fact that we received an invitation at our opening meeting from the democratically elected representative of the Palauan people, President Salii, to observe a further plebiscite in Palau on the Compact of

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

of Free Association, is eloquent testimony that the people of Palau are free to determine their own political future. As representative of a country which has participated in each of the United Nations Visiting Missions to the Trust Territory, I believe I can speak with particular authority on this point.

The delegation of the Soviet Union, and a number of petitioners mainly from outside the Territory, have stated or have implied that the decision which the Council took in its resolution 2183 (LIII) was in need of clarification in the light of subsequent events. My delegation has noted these suggestions, but sees no reason why such clarification is necessary.

We note the assurances given to the Council last week by the representative of the United States that the Trusteeship Agreement remains in force and that the United States will continue to fulfil its obligations towards the Trust Territory, under the Charter and under the Trusteeship Agreement. We note, too, the assurance she gave that the United States will continue to provide an annual report to the Council on the Trust Territory. This will, I am sure, assist the Council in carrying out its work.

We hope that, as recommended by the Trusteeship Council at its fifty-third session, the internal process of approval for the Compact of Free Association for Palau can be completed by the Administering Authority as soon as possible, so that the wish expressed so eloquently last year by the representatives of the four Micronesian Governments for early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement may be fulfilled.

The Soviet Union has sought to show through its questioning of the Administering Authority that the United States has failed in its obligations to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory. This is a familiar theme which members of the Trusteeship Council have heard from the Soviet delegation many times.

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

The people of the Trust Territory made the choice themselves to form four separate political entities within the Territory. Each chose for itself its new status. In doing so the people chose to enter into relationships with the Administering Authority that seem to my delegation entirely appropriate for small Territories such as these: they are free to govern their own internal affairs and their relations with their neighbours, yet they are able at the same time to rely on the assistance and protection of a major Power in the important area of security and defence, an area in which small nations cannot have the necessary resources to provide totally for themselves.

As regards the other areas of economic, social and educational advancement, we spent five of our meetings considering the substantial report of the Administering Authority. From the numerous detailed questions they have asked, it is clear that the members of the Soviet delegation have read the report most carefully. Yet it is indicative of the perspective from which they have done so that they refuse to recognize all that the United States has done and continues to do for the Trust Territory.

My delegation acknowledges that the Trust Territory still has a number of economic problems. The fact that the peoples of Micronesia remain to an extent dependent on the Administering Authority is one of these. Yet it is clear from its answers to our questions that the Administering Authority has put a great deal into reducing that dependency. We have heard, for example, of the considerable progress made in the field of commercial development and private-sector investment. The High Commissioner told us of her efforts to promote the Trust Territory as a place of opportunity for the private investor. We have heard too of the considerable sums the Administering Authority has spent on capital improvements within the Territory to provide the basic infrastructure - transportation, communications and

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

other facilities - which forms the foundation for economic development and which will allow the Territory increasingly to stand on its own feet. We have heard how most of that work has been completed and how control has been progressively handed over to the local Governments. We have also been told of major steps forward in the field of health care and hospital construction, and we have listened to an explanation of the educational assistance, through scholarships and overseas study, which is helping to ensure that the people of Micronesia have the necessary skills to govern themselves effectively and to manage their own affairs. In addition, under their respective new status arrangements, the four Micronesian entities will continue to receive generous funding from the United States Government to allow them to continue the progress begun under the trusteeship. If the United States is to be faulted for its efforts in these areas, it is on the grounds of excess rather than neglect.

In our deliberations in this Chamber, there is a danger that we may become overly involved in political and ideological abstractions which have little to do with the real situation. This is particularly true for those of us like myself who have not yet had the privilege of visiting the Territory and of seeing for ourselves. The representative of the Soviet Union has on several occasions used words to the effect that we must find out "what is actually happening now" in the Territory. Naturally, my delegation agrees with that sentiment. We in the Trusteeship Council must keep our feet firmly planted in the realities of the situation; to do so we must start by listening to the Micronesians themselves. Unless we do so, we fail to see the true situation. The people of Micronesia, by a clear majority achieved in several votes, have chosen a new status: a status which suits them; a status which brings with it the benefits and responsibilities of self-government; a status which, at the same time, allows them to maintain a close

(Mr. Smith, United Kingdom)

relationship with the nation which has acted as their Administering Authority for the past 40 years and which over that time has given them generous assistance. The Soviet Union takes a condescending attitude when it suggests that the clear majority of the people of Micronesia do not know what is best for them. How can that be? My delegation is convinced that the peoples of Micronesia have freely taken their respective decisions, aware of the alternatives and fully understanding the pros and cons. We in this body should not seek to deny them the new status they have chosen.

Mr. GAUSSOT (France) (interpretation from French): I wish first of all, on behalf of my delegation, to thank the representatives of the Micronesian Trust Territory authorities, whose personal contribution to the work of the Council we appreciate and who have traveled so far to be with us, as they do every year at this time. I thank them for being with us and ask them to be kind enough to convey to their peoples the respect and friendship of my country and my Government.

My delegation also listened with constant attention to the statements made before the Council and studied the written communications addressed to the Council by petitioners, whose number and geographic diversity testify to the international interest in the inhabitants of the Trust Territory. I acknowledge the efforts made by petitioners; even though my delegation does not always share the ideas they have expressed, I thank them for their contribution to our work.

As my country's Ambassador to the United Nations stated a year ago in the Trusteeship Council, Micronesia has seen great political, economic and social change since the entry into force of the Trusteeship Agreement in 1947. Our examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1986 has again brought us up to date concerning that change and has

(Mr. Gaussot, France)

enabled us to analyse the benefits enjoyed by the various Trust Territory entities and the obstacles they must still overcome to ensure harmonious development for their inhabitants.

It is a pleasure for me to repeat today that the major achievements, often well documented in the report of the Administering Authority, since the last regular session of the Trusteeship Council lead my delegation to agree with the Administering Authority and with High Commissioner McCoy that it has indeed been a good year for the Trust Territory.

We need only cite the new interest shown by foreign investors, who have carried out various economic projects, whose benefits for the peoples of Micronesia are clear. Everywhere, existing infrastructure has been improved and developed: in public health, especially in the area of hospitals; in communications - I think especially of airports, since these islands are far apart from one another; in the hotel field; in fisheries; and in the service sector.

It was clear that during the past year the Administering Authority continued actively to carry out its obligations in an impressive number of spheres of activity. Naturally, the Micronesians have played a growing role in managing their economy; we can only welcome that development, which is in keeping with the goals of the trusteeship.

(Mr. Gaussoot, France)

However, the report submitted to us does show that components of Micronesia remain, to varying degrees, very dependant on economic assistance from the Administering Authority. This is especially true of Palau, which suffers from a lack of real industries and which, in so far as it can, will have to develop activities geared towards export.

Moreover, still in the case of Palau, it appears that the local authorities have on occasion committed errors in the use of the archipelago's financial resources. In this connection I would mention only the excessive costs related to the construction of the Ipseco power plant. Such errors, however, which are not unusual in States that have long been independent, are a fortiori understandable when we are dealing with entities that are going through a period of apprenticeship in management within the framework of an evolving process towards greater autonomy.

Indeed, with regard to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands the Administering Authority has chosen the path that will lead to respect for democracy and the principles of international law by enabling the peoples of Micronesia effectively to exercise their right to self-determination, under the supervision of the United Nations.

In 1975 the population of the Northern Mariana Islands freely chose to establish a commonwealth in political union with the United States over any other political status. In 1983 Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, in turn, chose the status of free association with the United States by responding to a series of options that included independence. After having made its choice, the people of Palau were then on several occasions called upon to take a position, by plebiscite, on changes made by the two parties to the Compact of Free Association with the United States. The majority required by the Supreme Court of Palau in July 1986 was not, however, achieved in the plebiscite held on 2 December of last year. The archipelago authorities therefore decided

(Mr. Gausso, France)

to hold another plebiscite on 23 June 1986. In keeping with the wishes expressed by the authorities of the archipelago as well as by the Administering Authority, and despite, once again, the very short notice the Council was given to reach a decision, France is in favour of the plebiscite's being held, as were earlier plebiscites, in the presence of a United Nations visiting mission to guarantee that the voting is carried out normally.

The Micronesians have thus exercised their right to self-determination and have freely chosen their constitutional future. On that basis the authorities of the Territory have expressed their desire to see an end to the Trusteeship. My country understands that wish, and, at its fifty-third session, the Trusteeship Council itself decided to consider the question. On 28 May 1986 the Council adopted resolution 2183 (LIII), in which it considered

"that the Government of the United States, as the Administering Authority, has satisfactorily discharged its obligations under the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement and that it is appropriate for that Agreement to be terminated".

(T/RES/2183 (LIII))

France hopes that that prompt follow-up action will be taken by the Trusteeship Council, in keeping with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, so that the four entities of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands may finally be able fully to benefit from the constitutional status they have freely chosen.

Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like first to read out the text of a statement issued by TASS which, in a succinct way, gives the Soviet Union's assessment of the activities and policies of the United States as Administering Authority of the strategic United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The TASS statement reads as follows:

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

"The United States has committed yet another act of international tyranny. In full view of the entire world it is carrying out an annexation of Micronesia, a United Nations Trust Territory. On 3 November 1986 the President of the United States, Mr. Reagan, announced that three parts of this Territory - the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia - are to be accorded the status of 'commonwealth' and 'association' with the United States of America. Thus the United States Administration is imposing a neo-colonial régime on the people of Micronesia and depriving them of the possibility of expressing their wishes completely freely and achieving true independence. All this is being done in circumvention of the Security Council, which is responsible for this Territory, and constitutes a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations, of the Trusteeship Agreement of 1947, and of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Through gross economic and political pressure, the United States has imposed enslaving agreements on the Micronesians and is turning Micronesia into a military and strategic springboard in the western part of the Pacific Ocean, posing a threat to the security of the entire Asian and Pacific Ocean region.

"The United States is not hesitating to take extreme steps to compel the people of Palau - the remaining part of fragmented Micronesia - to submit to American diktat and transform this Territory into a base for the deployment and storage of nuclear weapons. All this is being done despite the repeatedly expressed desire of the people of Palau not to allow nuclear death on their soil.

"These actions are not an isolated phenomenon in the policy of the United States. They represent part of an overall policy of undermining international

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

agreements and law and order in the world. This policy of the United States has been clearly manifested in recent years in hostile actions against international organizations, gross pressure on the United Nations, blackmail against the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and disregard for decisions of the International Court of Justice. The United States is trying to turn the world into its private preserve, to impose the 'law of the jungle' in inter-State relations and to suppress by force the desire of the peoples for freedom and national independence. This is also demonstrated by the recent steps taken by the United States in relation to Micronesia.

"The peoples of the world cannot remain indifferent in the face of these flagrant violations of international law and of the generally accepted norms of conduct of States which must be complied with by all States without exception, including the United States of America.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

"TASS is authorized to state that the actions taken by the United States against the United Nations Trust Territory of Micronesia are unilateral, arbitrary and without legal foundation. Only the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, is entitled to take a decision on terminating the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement. It is the duty of the United Nations and of the entire international community to reject outright the illegal pretensions of the United States to act as arbiter of the destinies of the peoples. The United Nations continues to bear responsibility for this Territory until its people acquires true independence." (A/41/822, p. 2)

The text of that TASS statement has been sent to the United Nations Secretary-General, and it has been published as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The discussion of the question of the situation in the Trust Territory over the last two weeks at this session of the Council, the statements of numerous petitioners, in particular those who came from Micronesia especially for the purpose, the analysis and consideration of written petitions and other material received by Council members - all have once again, and with new force, reaffirmed the following.

Having received a mandate from the Security Council for the temporary administration of the strategic Trust Territory as the Administering Authority, the United States has ignored the lofty purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the conditions of the Trusteeship Agreement reaffirmed by the United Nations Security Council. First and foremost the United States has ignored the genuine interests of the indigenous population of Micronesia.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The protection of United States global military strategic interest is the corner-stone of its policy and activity in the Trust Territory. As the Administering Authority, in the first place the United States did not fulfil its direct obligations under Article 76 (a) of the United Nations Charter, which states that one of the basic objectives of the international Trusteeship System is "to further international peace and security". Nor did the United States fulfil its obligations under Article 84 of the Charter, which states that "It shall be the duty of the Administering Authority to ensure that the Trust Territory shall play its part in the maintenance of international peace and security".

The United States used the United Nations Trust Territory as a testing-ground. It held dozens of nuclear-weapons tests there, leading to an outburst of indignation on the part of world public opinion and vigorous protests in the United Nations, particularly by members of the Trusteeship Council, and by Member States including the Soviet Union, India, Burma, the United Arab Republic, Haiti and a number of others. Members of the Trusteeship Council noted that the carrying out by Washington of nuclear and thermonuclear tests in the United Nations Trust Territory contravened the Trusteeship Agreement and the sacred principles of trusteeship that such tests do not serve the cause of ensuring peace and progress for the inhabitants of Micronesia, that the Administering Authority does not have sovereignty over the Territory, that it cannot, as Administering Authority, use the Territory by any kind of sovereign right or claim that any of its actions in the Territory are not under the control of the United Nations. They demanded that the Administering Authority immediately cease carrying out nuclear tests.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

As is known, the Territory of Micronesia was also used for the aggressive objectives of the United States, as a base for the waging of war against the heroic people of Viet Nam. In the mid-1960s, the United States army began to use the lagoon of the Kwajalein Atoll as a target for intercontinental ballistic missiles launched from the West Coast of the United States. Following the Minute Man missiles, MX missiles were launched there. Eight thousand local inhabitants of Kwajalein were exiled to the barren island of Ebeye. Together with the inhabitants of the atolls of Bikini and Enewetak, they are even now languishing in a miserable existence in that "Pacific Ocean ghetto", to which nearly a third of the population of the Marshall Islands has also been driven.

What has in recent times been imposed by Washington, side-stepping the United Nations - namely neo-colonialist agreements with Trust Territory entities - has but one goal: the transformation of the United Nations Trust Territory of Micronesia into a strategic bulwark of the United States. The fundamental aim of these enslaving so-called Compacts, Covenants and other supplementary agreements is the militarization of the Territory and the enshrining in those agreements of the nuclear colonization of Micronesia by the United States.

With the assistance of such agreements the Pentagon is guaranteeing itself the possibility to create, expand and preserve on those Pacific islands, in perpetuity, its military, naval and air bases and other military facilities and installations. Making use of every coercive method and means, Washington has been able to obtain the right of transit for nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass destruction through the waters and territory of Micronesia and the stopping in ports and airports of United States vessels carrying nuclear devices and nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

Through such agreements, on the first demand of the Pentagon, the local Micronesian authorities are obliged to allocate Micronesian land for use by the United States for military purposes.

The real plans of the United States for Micronesia were stated, explicitly and unambiguously, by Philip Barringer, Director of one of the sections of the United States Department of Defense, on 8 May 1986 in the United States Congress during its consideration of the Compact with Palau. He stated, inter alia,

"The strategic interests of the United States would be threatened were Palau to choose independence. And if Palau were to receive independence then it would be significantly more difficult for us to ensure, indefinitely, the right to refuse other States access to Palau and also to ensure our highest military priorities in Micronesia as a whole. Therefore we are satisfied by the fact that, after nearly 40 years of relations with the United States, the Palauan voters have freely voted for the granting to the United States of full rights in the area of defence for half a century."

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

Washington's arbitrary, unlawful actions and plans designed to transform the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands into a forward nuclear bastion of the Pentagon in the Pacific Ocean are diametrically opposed to the aspirations of the Micronesian people itself. They are in direct contradiction with the interests of preserving peace and security in the Pacific Ocean countries which are aspiring to create in that region nuclear-weapon-free zones, in particular those countries which are members of the South Pacific Forum that recently concluded the Rarotonga Treaty on that issue. I should like to inform the members of the Council that the Soviet Union has signed the relevant protocols to the Rarotonga Treaty regarding the creation of such zones in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean.

Recently, in talks with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnadze, stated that the Asian-Pacific region is a significant part of our planet and that, guaranteeing peace and security in that area of the world, will to a great extent ensure the security of mankind. The Soviet Minister said that nuclear-free zones in various regions of the Pacific and Indian Oceans are important steps towards a world free from nuclear weapons. The reduction of military confrontation in that region and the elimination there of any foreign military presence are steps towards the consolidation of a comprehensive system of international security. During those talks, Comrade Shevardnadze emphasized in particular that the course and logic of the development of events compellingly reaffirms the vital relevance of the programme put forward by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, in his statements in Vladivostok and the Indian Parliament - those principles which are set forth in the well-known New Delhi Declaration.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The Administering Authority's militaristic actions in the United Nations Trust Territory of Micronesia have been carried out in violation of the United Nations Charter and the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which clearly and accurately states:

"Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), para. 6)

As is well known, the Security Council has entrusted the United States with the administration of the strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands as one whole. Having met with resistance from Micronesian political forces which are trying to preserve the unity of the Territory and the people, Washington has deliberately embarked upon a policy of fragmenting the Trust Territory and sowing disunity among its inhabitants. For trying to preserve the Territory's unity and to create a single independent Micronesian State, the united Congress of Micronesia has been disbanded by the Administering Authority. At the same time, it is precisely the united Congress which in the past had rejected that form of association imposed on Micronesia by Washington along the Puerto Rico model. It unambiguously took a stand favouring the preservation of the unity of the entire Territory of the Marshall, Caroline and Mariana Islands.

In negotiations with the Administering Authority, the delegation of the united Congress of Micronesia insistently wished to achieve the immediate cessation of trusteeship and the transformation of the country into a self-governed State in which the Micronesians would have full power in all spheres of the country's life and the inalienable right to enter into treaty relations with any State of the world. During the course of those negotiations the delegation of the united

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

Congress of Micronesia put forward several important principles that reflected, first and foremost, the aspirations of the islanders for sovereignty, the right to free self-determination, independence or self-government, and the right freely to adopt - and, if necessary, to change - its own constitution.

However, those just demands of the Micronesians were rejected by the United States. As a result of the Administering Authority's policy and practices, the Territory of Micronesia has been divided into four island entities. All that was done by the United States with the very definite objective of weakening the resistance of the indigenous population of Micronesia to the Administering Authority's neo-colonialist policy, with the assistance of a carefully thought out and purposeful policy. It is now clear that the scheme, which was thought out 25 years ago and stated in the secret Solomon report to the United States President, was designed to enslave the Micronesian people and is the fundamental policy which has been followed by all succeeding United States Administrations, including the current one.

The negotiations imposed on the Micronesians by Washington regarding the future of the Trust Territory are illegal in so far as they are taking place in conditions in which the parties are not equal: on one side there is a great Power which is administering the Territory according to a United Nations decision, and on the other there is the small, weak Territory of Micronesia - weak in the economic and all other spheres and fully dependent on the former. The so-called negotiations took place with Washington's overt political and economic pressure and complete flouting of the Micronesians' vital interests. These negotiations took place without the participation, let alone control over them, of the United Nations and its relevant organs - the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council and the United Nations Special Committee on decolonization.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The Administering Authority's objective was the preparation of such agreements under which the people of the Trust Territory would be unable to work its way out of the neo-colonialist yoke and embark upon the path of independent development, the path of independence.

One of the clearest examples of the conditions in which those negotiations took place - of course, described by the Administering Authority as between "equal partners" - is eloquently attested to in the recent statement in United States courts of Mr. Tony DeBrum, the former Minister for Foreign Affairs and now Minister of Health of part of the Trust Territory, namely the Marshall Islands. For a period of 17 years he was a direct participant as a member of the Micronesian delegation in negotiations on the so-called Compact. He, more than anyone else, is well aware of the conditions and atmosphere in which those so-called negotiations between "equal partners" took place.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

This is what we find in his statement:

"The United States at all times... controlled the entire economy of the Marshall Islands. It could and did, during this period, provide or withhold funds for public purposes in order to pressure the public officials of the Marshall Islands into political positions desired by the United States.

"... The United States Government began to use that debt burden to put pressure on us to include the nuclear claims" (T/PV.1634, p. 59) in the Compact of the United States and to reject our rights to the land. These demands were conditions for the allocation of those needed financial resources which had previously been promised to us.

Mr. DeBrum continues:

"The Government of the Marshall Islands held out as long as it could against this pressure. Eventually, however, an ultimatum was issued by the Government of the United States. We either had to include the claims"

and renounce our right to independence in the draft Compact proposed to us

"or forgo the Compact of Free Association and remain as wards of the United States Government under the Trusteeship of the United Nations". (ibid.)

The Micronesian Minister also dwelt on the question as to how, in the Marshall Islands, the so-called plebiscite took place. I shall quote once again from his statement. Here is what he said:

"Certain inducements were made to the Government of the Marshall Islands to cause it to support the Compact of Free Association during the plebiscite of the people of the Marshall Islands. ... After the plebiscite was completed the Government of the United States unilaterally changed the provisions of the Compact through its internal legislative process by withdrawing from the Compact these provisions which had induced some of us to support the Compact in the plebiscite, thereby making a mockery of the Marshallese people's act of

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

self-determination. Following the passage of the Compact of Free Association by the United States Congress, the changed Compact was not presented to the people of the Marshall Islands for a new plebiscite." (ibid.)

That is how the so-called free negotiations took place on the plebiscites regarding the future of the Trust Territory. That, in fact, is how the Administering Authority carried out that act of free choice regarding approval of the Compact in Micronesia.

Extremely indicative also is the fact that at the present session of the Trusteeship Council the representative of another part of the Trust Territory - namely, the Northern Mariana Islands - requested assistance from the Council, stating frankly that the Administering Authority had deceived the people of the Northern Marianas and that even that very limited self-government promised by Washington at the negotiations and written into the so-called Compact had not been received. Thus they began to understand that the Administering Authority is less and less taking into account the interests of the population of that part of the Trust Territory and is most crudely trampling them underfoot.

The same fate as was reserved for other parts of the Trust Territory has been prepared by the Administering Authority for the Federated States of Micronesia: full economic and financial dependence on the Administering Authority and totally unlimited freedom for Washington to use military, strategic and economic leverage to coerce the Micronesians.

The Compact of Free Association, as is clear in the example of Palau now, will be reviewed not by the Micronesians but only by the United States with its own interpretation. In such conditions, a statement to the effect that the neo-colonialist status now imposed by Washington can serve as a transition to greater self-determination and even possible independence is, in our view, self-deception on the part of those Micronesians who want to believe in this and in

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

the deliberate attempts of the United States to mislead both the Micronesians and the peoples of the world.

We spoke of the seventh plebiscite that took place in Palau last December. Our statement contained references to the presence of a group of independent multinational observers from a number of Western countries during the holding of that plebiscite in Palau. We spoke briefly of the conclusions drawn by the members of that group. I should like to recall here that in the statement to the press - which, incidentally, was also sent by the Trusteeship Council Visiting Mission that was present along with the other mission in Palau - the group noted that all the non-governmental organizations which they represented were extremely interested in ensuring that the plebiscite, which was of such great importance for the people of Palau, took place in conditions of objectivity free of external pressure so that its results would reflect the sovereign will of the people of Palau freely expressed in accordance with Palauan law and international norms for the holding of free and impartial elections.

After observing the way the campaign on political education for the plebiscite was held, this group came to the following conclusions, which it sent also to the local authorities at Palau, to the press and to the United Nations. Here are their observations regarding the plebiscite:

The authorities of Palaua had exerted inappropriate pressure on State employees;

There had been improper use of State funds in order to create a biased view of the question of the Compact;

Schools had been closed and instructions given to the teachers to disseminate propaganda so as to induce the Palauan population to vote for approval of the Compact;

Ballot boxes had disappeared from the Central Voting Commission building;

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The security system had been turned off in the central building where the ballot boxes were stored;

There had been changes in alleged agreements regarding the procedure for tallying votes;

Palaun laws regarding the procedure for the beginning of the voting had been violated.

Unsatisfactory preparations had been made in some of the buildings in which the voting took place; and, lastly,

Inadequate measures had been taken to ensure security in transportation of the boxes containing the ballots cast by Palauans who had voted outside Palau.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The Soviet delegation wishes to draw attention to the fact that there were other manifestations of the unsavoury note of the Administering Authority, in addition to the aforementioned serious irregularities aimed at imposing the Compact on the people of Palau, in contravention of its anti-nuclear Constitution. The Administering Authority which resorted to overt pressure on the Palauans. Examples of this have already been cited in statements of the petitioners during the course of the present session of the Trusteeship Council. In our view, they should be reflected in the records of the Council showing how the Palauan plebiscite was carried out and the conditions in which it took place. However, we should like to note that despite these crude violations of conditions for holding the plebiscite, and the pressure exerted by the Administering Authority, the population of Palau once again this time rejected the Compact.

Further, if we analyse the activities of the Administering Authority in the Trust Territory, we cannot fail to emphasize that the United States has not fulfilled the provision of Article 76 of the Charter, whose basic objectives are to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories. Throughout the entire administration of the Trust Territory, the United States - which has available to it everything needed to create conditions to promote the rapid economic development of Micronesia and its formation as an independent State - has not taken the necessary steps in this direction. Quite the contrary: It has deliberately slowed the development of the Trust Territory. The Administering Authority has failed to promote an economically viable agricultural sector that would fulfil the needs of the Territory's indigenous population.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

As is well known, Micronesia used to export food products. Now, however, as a result of the collapse of its agricultural economy, Micronesia must import most of its foodstuffs.

In our view, the Administering Authority has deliberately delayed the Territory's development in order to make Micronesia fully dependent on the United States and thus prevent the Micronesians from making an independent political choice.

Everything we have stated here reaffirms once again the unlawful nature of the one-sided actions of the United States towards Micronesia. The Micronesian people, like the peoples of other yet dependent colonial Territories, has the inalienable right to genuine self-determination and independence and to the creation of its own united sovereign State, in accordance with the Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and other important decisions of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, and other international forums.

The question of Micronesia's future is an integral part of the decolonization problem; it falls within the context of the right of all countries and peoples to the speedy granting of genuine self-determination and independence.

Despite the unilateral, arbitrary and anti-Charter actions of the United States towards Micronesia, the United Nations continues to bear responsibility for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and for the fate of the Micronesian people, until such time as it receives genuine independence. Hence, the representatives of the Micronesian people can continue to turn to the United Nations for protection of the Micronesians' legitimate rights and interests.

(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

The Soviet delegation emphasizes once again that, under the Charter, the Security Council alone - not even the Trusteeship Council - is empowered to take the decision to change the status of the strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands or to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement, which was reaffirmed by the Security Council.

The United States, as Administering Authority, must continue to submit information on the situation in Micronesia for timely consideration by the United Nations until such time as the Micronesian people achieves genuine independence and the Security Council takes a specific decision in that respect.

I conclude with a few words about the statement just read out by the representative of the United Kingdom. My delegation is profoundly disappointed by his attempted refutation of statements made by the Soviet delegation at this session of the Council. His arguments were not based on the information available to the Council and indeed ignored the facts cited by petitioners in their oral presentations here. Nor were his arguments consonant with the written statements contained in the report of the multinational independent observer group - which included representatives of non-governmental organizations - or with the report of the Trusteeship Council Visiting Mission which observed the plebiscite last December. Therefore, it is not surprising that the rejection of our statements, which were based on that solid, factual material, proved to be nothing more than unfounded assertions.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the Council's timetable, and as announced at our meeting yesterday, I believe the representative of the United States; Mrs. Janet McCoy, High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, and Mr. Victor Ucherbelau, will make closing statements. May I ask if that is correct?

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): Yes, Mr. President, we would like to make closing statements at this point and I would ask you please to call first on the representative of Palau.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Palau.

Mr. UCHERBELAU (Special Adviser): Since May 1981, I have had the privilege of shouldering my Government's responsibility to remain behind for the duration of the Council's annual sessions and to give Palau's closing remarks. Having done it so often, I must admit I have almost run out of things to say by way of good-bye, farewell or bon voyage. For one thing, it is not altogether clear whether this will be good-bye for good, or good-bye till we meet again around this time next year. And for another, it feels rather lonely in this corner to be a single Micronesian voice bidding all members farewell.

I thank the Administering Authority for proposing a new agenda item, at President Salii's request, inviting the Council to dispatch yet another visiting mission to observe the fifth Compact plebiscite scheduled to be held in Palau on 23 June. I also wish to thank the representatives of France and the United Kingdom for sponsoring a draft resolution to this effect and I am grateful to the representative of France for his support of document T/L.1258.

Many have questioned the necessity for Palau to hold another vote on the Compact when less than a year ago virtually the same document had been voted on and approved by a 66 per cent vote, but still short of the 75 per cent mandated by the Palau Constitution. On 13 January this year, President Salii established a Presidential Task Force, consisting of cabinet ministers and four each from the Senate and House of Delegates of the Second Olbiil Era Kelulau. The Task Force was charged with dual responsibility to explore ways and means to resolve the political status impasse as well as to seek a solution to the current fiscal crisis faced by the Republic.

(Mr. Ucherbelau, Special Adviser)

After examining all conceivable alternative solutions, the Task Force concluded and recommended to the President and the Palau National Congress that the answer to both problems lies in the ratification and eventual implementation of the Compact of Free Association. That meant another popular vote on the Compact of Free Association. The Task Force thereafter conducted numerous public discussions and meetings with the national Government employees: the governors and residents of the several states in Babeldaob, Peleliu and Angaur; as well as with various religious organizations throughout Palau. The purpose of this was to ascertain the reaction of the Palauan political leadership and the general public and to seek their views on alternative routes.

Except for a small minority who thought we should consider amending our Constitution first, a vast majority of the people agreed with the Task Force. It took some time for the House of Delegates to come around and it too is convinced that another Compact plebiscite ought to be held - thus the enactment of RPPL No. 2-27 authorizing the President to designate a plebiscite date. President Salii, as members are aware, has designated 23 June as such date.

Last week, Thursday, during the examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority and again yesterday on the examination of written petitions, questions were asked whether the upcoming election is to be the seventh or the eighth vote on the Compact. Coupled with this is the confusion relating to amending the Palau Constitution.

At the expense of belabouring the point, I should like briefly to set the record straight in this regard.

There have indeed been three referendums held in Palau on the Palau Constitution with the following results:

(Mr. Ucherbelau, Special Adviser)

The first was held on 9 July 1979, with a 92 per cent favourable vote on the original Constitution; the second on 23 September 1979 on the so-called revised Constitution, with only a 37 per cent favourable vote; and the third on 9 July 1980 on virtually the original Constitution, with a 78 per cent "yes" vote. Consequently, the Palau Constitution took effect on 1 January 1981 with the installation of the first popularly elected President and a bicameral Olbiil Era Kelulau.

With respect to the Compact of Free Association, there have been a total of four plebiscites as follows:

The first was held on 10 February 1983, with the following results:

(a) 62 per cent in favour of the Compact; (b) 53 per cent in favour of nuclear agreement - which required 75 per cent approval vote; (c) a 31 per cent favourable vote for closer association with the United States; and (d) a 29 per cent favourable vote for independence.

The second was held on 4 September 1984, with the following results:

(a) 67 per cent in favour of the Compact of Free Association; (b) 33 per cent in favour of closer association with the United States; and (c) a 14 per cent favourable vote for independence.

The third was held on 21 February 1986, with a 72 per cent favourable vote on the Compact.

The fourth was held on 2 December 1986, with a 66 per cent approval vote on the Compact.

(Mr. Ucherbelau, Special Adviser)

Thus, while there has in fact been a total of seven referendums or plebiscites held in Palau since the summer of 1979, three were votes on the Palau Constitution, and the other four - soon to be five - were on the Compact of Free Association. How can a reasonable person confuse the Constitution with the Compact, and say that a vote on one document is a vote on the other?

It should also be pointed out that all our elections, referendums, plebiscites and even elections of local government officials are authorized and their conduct regulated and provided for by law. And, no, we have not been economically or politically coerced or pressured in the conduct of our elections.

Many respectable lawyers and law professors confuse the 75 per cent voter approval mandated by the Palau Constitution on nuclear issues with a vote to override the nuclear control provisions of the Palau Constitution. Other observers and petitioners claim that the Compact has been disapproved or rejected at the polls four times in Palau. I submit that the Compact of Free Association has indeed been approved by the Palauan voters by margins of not less than 62 per cent and as high as 72 per cent. But because the Compact authorizes the United States to operate nuclear-capable vessels or aircraft within Palau's territorial jurisdiction, the Palau Supreme Court has ruled that for the Compact to take effect it must be approved by a vote of at least three fourths of the people.

If at the 23 June election there is, as I sincerely hope there will be, a 75 per cent or greater vote to ratify the Palau Compact, constitutional nuclear control provisions will have been complied with, not overridden. That would mean that the Compact of Free Association between Palau and the United States can and will be implemented and that the United States can exercise its defence and security authority and responsibility as set forth in the Compact for the protection of the Republic of Palau and, in our opinion, for the maintenance of international peace and security as well.

(Mr. Ucherbelau, Special Adviser)

Finally, I cannot but note the ever increasing list of organizations claiming an interest in or concern about Palau, its elections and its Constitution. There has been for some time now a church organization calling itself the Micronesian Coalition; to be sure, that group has been on a "collision" course with the policies of my Government. Then there are the so-called Minority Rights Group, the International League for Human Rights, the European Parliament, Women Working for a Nuclear-Free and Independent Pacific, and the Centre for Constitutional Rights; just the other day, the Prisoners' Rights Group was added to that long list. Nowhere else, and under no other Constitution, are the rights of minorities better protected than in Palau and under the Palauan Constitution. To put it differently, and echoing the eloquence of my President, the will of the majority has been suppressed on the issue of Palau's future political status. But our future destiny is our decision and no one else's to make in accordance with our laws and our constitutional process.

We ask members of the Council to come and observe once again our election: our fifth trip to the polls.

Mrs. McCOY (Special Representative): It has, once more, come to that point in our deliberations when it is time to say farewell. I know that I spent some time on that subject last year and that there may be some skepticism concerning my remarks at the present time. However, this time I am able to give the fullest assurance that this is the last Trusteeship Council meeting I shall be attending in New York. In fact, I shall be leaving the Trust Territory as High Commissioner in a matter of weeks.

This is the sixth session of the Council's deliberations that I have attended; my sixth year as High Commissioner of the Trust Territory. I should like to share the pride and sense of accomplishment that I feel regarding what has happened in

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

those six years. I have witnessed tremendous progress in the development of infrastructure of all kinds. While there have been low points in areas such as health, I have seen new hospitals constructed and put to work and public health programmes instituted to attack those weak areas still with us. Foreign investment in the islands has escalated enormously, demonstrating the confidence in the new Governments held by neighbouring countries such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand and by several European countries.

I could go on, but I would only be repeating what I have said on other occasions. Many petitioners and one Council delegation notwithstanding, I can say with pride and confidence that the Trust Territory has come a long way. I do not say that as if I were solely responsible; I have had the benefit of a dedicated staff and this Council's observations. Most important, however, I have had the pleasure of working with the Micronesians themselves and their constitutionally elected leaders. I do not believe one will find a more able and dedicated group of leaders anywhere. Let there be no mistake: these Governments, formed in processes observed by this Council itself, are ready to take over all responsibilities of governing. I would also note for the record that I feel that those petitioners who recommend continued Trusteeship Council oversight of the islands are missing the point of self-government altogether. I do indeed tire easily of listening to non-Micronesians telling the Micronesians what is good for them.

That brings me to my next point. One of the results of my six years of participation in this Council's annual proceedings is an increased tolerance for points of view which do not necessarily correspond with mine. I say "tolerance", because the amount of time we spend considering well-meaning but ill-informed commentaries on the Trust Territory would soon otherwise be sheer torture. It has been a challenge of the first order to sit still for such long periods.

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

I also want to underscore a further consequence of my coming here for six years. I have certainly made some very good friends among the members and the Secretariat. In particular, I would like to say how much I will miss coming next year. The personal relations that have developed into real friendship with Mr. Berezovsky and Mr. Levchenko of the Soviet delegation, in particular, are a most pleasant contrast with our greatly differing official views. To Mr. Abebe, who has been a staunch friend in New York and a veritable whirlwind of energy on the many Visiting Missions to the Territory, and who, I hear, is retiring in the near future, I offer my best wishes. It will not be so bad not coming back next year if Mr. Abebe is not sitting up there on the podium.

I will not take up any more time in our busy schedule. I do wish to assure the Council that the Administering Authority will continue to exercise its responsibilities for the Trust Territory as required or needed. I will continue to be with it in spirit.

Mr. President, all members of the Council and the Secretariat, I wish you well and perhaps will see some of you if you come to Palau with the visiting mission. I hope that you will be able to stop by Saipan as part of that trip.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): My Government greatly values the thorough examination of issues and events in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands that has taken place during this session of the Trusteeship Council. The United States, as Administering Authority, wishes to thank the members of the Council for their contributions to our discussion of events and developments during the reporting period.

I might add here that this morning the representative of the Soviet Union made some baseless accusations during his statement in the general debate, but we have responded to these in previous remarks, and I shall not repeat our responses or rebuttals at this time.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

Several conclusions have emerged from our discussion here. First, it is clear from the annual report, from President Salii's statement on 11 May and from the report of the Visiting Mission which observed the December 1986 plebiscite in Palau that constitutional self-government has taken firm root throughout Micronesia. Democratic institutions are in place and the people of the region are enjoying the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a free society.

Secondly, there has been great economic progress in Micronesia. More than 85 per cent of the \$390 million capital-improvement programme has been disbursed to build the ports, airfields, electric-generating plants, water systems and other infrastructure projects that will lead to a high, sustainable standard of living for the people of Micronesia.

Thirdly, the period under review has seen a substantial growth in educational opportunities for the citizens of Micronesia, including the emergence and development of local institutions of higher education. Citizens of the islands took advantage of opportunities to advance their education at institutions of their choice, both in Micronesia and elsewhere.

Fourthly, the people of Micronesia have access to more and better health care than at any time in their history. Major hospitals opened in Majuro and Saipan.

Fifthly, the Visiting Mission sent by the Council to observe the plebiscite in Palau last December documented the care that is taken to ensure that self-determination takes place in Micronesia. My delegation, on behalf of the Administering Authority, wishes to thank all who took part in that Mission for the conscientious, dedicated and industrious way in which they carried out their task.

Finally, Micronesia continues to be a peaceful and stable place. This, in turn, fosters stability in the Pacific region, which contributes to global peace and security. In sum, during the reporting period Micronesia substantially

(Miss Byrne, United States)

achieved the security, political, economic, social and educational goals set forth in the Trusteeship Agreement.

The PRESIDENT: Does any member have any further comments to make in the general debate? Since this is not the case, we have thus ended the general debate this year. I should particularly like to thank the representatives of the Administering Authority, especially those who have come all the way from the Trust Territory to be with us, for the very useful contribution to our work:

Mr. Victorio Ucherbelau and Mr. Sam McPhetres. I would like to say a special word of thanks to High Commissioner McCoy, who has just told us that this is the last time she will be with us. I know that all members of the Council will join me in wishing her the very best for the future and our sadness that she will not be with us against next year. To all of you, our best wishes for a safe trip home.

APPOINTMENT OF A DRAFTING COMMITTEE

The PRESIDENT: At this point, I should like to suggest that the Council appoint a drafting committee whose terms of reference will be to prepare draft recommendations to be included in the forthcoming report of the Trusteeship Council to the Security Council. I propose that the drafting committee be composed of representatives of France and the United Kingdom. May I take it that the Council agrees with my proposal?

It was so decided.

LETTER DATED 4 MAY 1987 FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (T/1910), CONTAINING A REQUEST FOR THE DISPATCH OF A VISITING MISSION OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL TO OBSERVE A PLEBISCITE IN PALAU, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (continued)

The PRESIDENT: The Council will now take up the new item on its agenda with regard to the dispatch of a visiting mission of the Trusteeship Council to observe a plebiscite in Palau. In this connection I should like to draw members'

(The President)

attention to draft resolution T/L.1258, which was circulated this morning. I call upon the representative of France to introduce the draft resolution.

Mr. GAUSSOT (France) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation and the delegation of the United Kingdom I have the honour of submitting to the Council draft resolution T/L.1258, which deals with the arrangements for the dispatch of a visiting mission to observe the plebiscite that is to take place in Palau on 23 June.

(Mr. Gausso, France)

The Administering Authority has expressed the wish that our Council send representatives to the islands on the occasion of these new consultations, and the French and British delegations believe that there should be a positive response to that request.

Like that which visited Palau in December last, the mission would be composed of four members: a representative of France, a representative of the United Kingdom and representatives of two countries of the Pacific region.

My delegation and that of the United Kingdom suggest that the President be authorized to inform the Secretary-General of the names of those two countries after consultations with the Administering Authority and other members of the Trusteeship Council.

The PRESIDENT: Does any member wish to comment on this agenda item?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have many questions regarding the draft resolution that has just been presented.

As is well known, and as has already been said in the Council, in recent years four plebiscites have been held in Palau with the objective of forcing the people of that part of the Trust Territory to vote in favour of the Compact of Free Association imposed on them by the United States. Two plebiscites took place last year, in 1986, and their results are known: the people of Palau rejected this neo-colonialist agreement, which would have had far-ranging negative consequences for the population of Palau and for the interests of international peace and security.

The question arises: what events since the holding in December 1986 of the plebiscite would justify or call for the holding of another plebiscite? Does the holding of yet another plebiscite imply that the position of the United States on the text of the Compact has changed in some way? If so, then what changes have

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

been made in the Compact? If not, then what is the point of holding a new plebiscite, when the population of Palau has already, on numerous occasions, expressed its negative attitude towards the Compact?

We should like to have a clear answer from the Administering Authority as to what has occurred, especially since it has been said here that the Administering Authority respects the Constitution of Palau and is interested in seeing to it that the democratic institutions of Palau are developed and operated in accordance with the laws of the Palau Constitution.

Mr. GAUSSOT (France) (interpretation from French): I should like briefly to comment on what has just been said by the representative of the Soviet Union. In particular, he stated that four plebiscites had been held to force the Trust Territory to vote in favour of the Compact "imposed on them by the United States". The term "force" seems quite improper to me. What in fact is a plebiscite by definition? It is a kind of consultation that allows the population freely to take a stand.

The Visiting Missions that observed previous plebiscites of this type in Palau made it possible to determine that they had been held in a perfectly regular manner.

The representative of the Soviet Union also said that the population had rejected the Compact of Free Association with the United States on numerous occasions. I think that that is not exactly true. It cannot be said that the population rejected the Compact because in fact it approved it by a majority of at least 62 per cent. It approved it but not by a sufficient majority; it did not attain the required 75 per cent.

(Mr. Gausso, France)

Finally, it is not up to us to judge the timeliness of a June referendum. That is not for the Council to decide; it is up to the authorities in Palau. What we can decide on, however, is the sending of a Visiting Mission, and I believe we should.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am very grateful to the representative of France for his attempts to find a way out of the situation he and the representative of the United Kingdom have created regarding the sending of another mission to Palau. However, I asked the question not of the representative of France but of the Administering Authority, which should be better placed to know the situation regarding the Compact and why yet another plebiscite is to be held.

Regarding the comments of the representative of France, I must once again stress that talk of democratic processes and claims that the plebiscite is a kind of consultation and that the Compact is not being imposed on the people of Palau are invalid. If the Compact is not being imposed on the people of Palau, then why hold yet another plebiscite on the very same text? What kind of a democracy is it? The people say "no" and they are told to vote once again. Again they say "no", and again they are told that that is not enough, that they must vote yet once more. And then it is stated that the Compact is not going to be reviewed by the Administering Authority. There is democracy for you.

As for the statement that the Compact has already been approved, we have already had an opportunity to comment on that, and the views we expressed have been shared by others here. Mr. Salii and his representatives may agree with France, but the people of Palau do not, and nor does the Supreme Court of Palau. Micronesians from Palau who have come here also do not agree with that.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

To engage in wishful thinking does not mean that everybody should believe in this and that it should be perceived as a fait accompli.

We should like once again to hear from the United States whether or not it has changed the Compact. If so, how? If it has not changed it, then why, for what purpose - if not that of coercion of the Palauan population - is this new plebiscite being organized?

Mr. BLATHERWICK (United Kingdom): I have listened very carefully to the remarks of the representative of the Soviet Union and those by our colleague from France and must say that I find the Soviet remarks rather unconvincing and beside the point. I should like to associate my delegation with what has been said by the representative of France.

The issue in this draft resolution is an important one, and the fact that this is not the first time that the citizens of Palau have been asked to vote on the Compact in no way diminishes the importance of the proposed plebiscite to the people of Palau. In my delegation's view, the plebiscite is not an element in some scheme of the Administering Authority, but the result of a decision taken by the Palauan authorities - in consultation with the Palauan Legislature; in other words, it is a decision taken on behalf of the people of Palau by their democratically elected representatives, in a proper, correct, democratic fashion. It is not for us in this Council to judge whether another plebiscite should be held at this time in accordance with this request. The representatives of the people of Palau have made that choice on their behalf, and the decision they have taken is to offer to the people of Palau a further opportunity to pronounce on their political future. It represents another stage in, as Article 76 of the Charter has it, "their progressive development towards self-government".

It seems to my delegation significant that, although the invitation to observe the plebiscite has been passed to us in accordance with the normal procedures by

(Mr. Blatherwick, United Kingdom)

the Administering Authority, President Salii of Palau came in person to invite this Council to send an observer mission.

In my delegation's view, therefore, we owe it to the people of Palau to send a visiting mission to the Territory, as we have done in the past, to observe the plebiscite and to ensure that the people of Palau are able to vote freely and in accordance with their wishes in fulfilment of their right to self-determination.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): If the argument that one and the same people is being forced for the fifth time to vote on the very same question seems unconvincing to the representative of the United Kingdom, then perhaps we will not be able to convince him of anything except what he is already sure of - and that does not mean a correct understanding.

Further, in connection with the draft resolution which has been submitted, it has been stated by the representatives of France and the United Kingdom - and it has been noted on several occasions - that, allegedly, all the plebiscites were held under United Nations observation. With all due responsibility, I wish to emphasize that those statements are misleading - they mislead the entire world community - because they were not plebiscites held with United Nations observation. Those plebiscites were held in the Territory during the course of which Trusteeship Council Missions were present - Trusteeship Council Missions, as we noted here at the last meeting, which were purely technical in nature and which they themselves recognize and speak of. What kind of United Nations observation is that? To see how many ballots were cast and how? Is that "United Nations observation"? That is not observation by the United Nations. That is not "control" by the United Nations, as the word is often used here. No, that is merely making use of the United Nations.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Further, I have still not received an answer from the Administering Authority to the question we have raised.

Moreover, the representative of the United Kingdom, with great respect, said that the constitutionally elected representatives of the people of Micronesia have come here and reported on the holding of the plebiscites. But recently we received a resolution from the administrative bodies of Palau, a resolution sent to the Trusteeship Council by the House of Delegates of Palau. Apparently, they are also democratically elected representatives of the Micronesian people. Their opinion about the plebiscites that have been held and what is now going on between the Administering Authority and the people of Palau is totally different from that expressed here by the representatives of the United Kingdom and France and the representative of Mr. Salii.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): First, I should like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Council for agreeing to consider this agenda item concerning the dispatch of a United Nations mission to observe the 23 June plebiscite in Palau on the Compact of Free Association with the United States. My delegation believes that this matter, of great importance to the people of Palau, is worthy of this Council's attention.

On 1 May, following months of intense discussion among Palauans, Palau's National Legislature passed legislation authorizing a plebiscite on the Compact of Free Association with the United States. President Salii subsequently chose 23 June as the date for the plebiscite.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

He also asked the United States, as the Administering Authority, to convey to the Trusteeship Council an invitation to send representatives to observe the conduct of the plebiscite in order to assure this Council and concerned international observers that the people of Palau were, as in the past, able to vote freely and have their votes counted fairly.

President Salii did not make this request casually. The Republic of Palau so values the presence of Trusteeship Council observers that the legislation authorizing the plebiscite requires their presence for the results of the plebiscite to be legally valid. The Administering Authority enthusiastically endorses the invitation to the Trusteeship Council from the Government of Palau.

In asking the Council to dispatch a visiting mission, the United States is fully aware that Palau conducted a plebiscite on the Compact in December 1986. In that plebiscite 66 per cent of those voting favoured the Compact. Although two thirds of Palau's voters voted to approve the Compact, this total fell below the 75-per-cent majority Palau's Supreme Court has determined is needed to bring the Compact into force.

Now, as Mr. Ucherbelau has explained here this morning, the elected leaders of Palau have determined that the situation requires that the people of Palau again be consulted directly concerning the future of their nation.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the participation of United Nations visiting missions as observers at previous plebiscites in Palau and elsewhere in Micronesia. My delegation therefore urges that this Council authorize the organization and dispatch of a visiting mission to observe the plebiscite in Palau on 23 June. My delegation notes also that in the past the Council has sought the participation in missions of representatives of other States, especially those from the region. My delegation and the Government of Palau would welcome the continuation of this practice in the case of this mission.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I was expecting to hear from the representative of the Administering Authority an answer to the two questions we had raised a short time ago. We did not hear the answers to those questions.

Perhaps the representative of the Administering Authority would answer another question. We should like clarification as to what concrete questions will be put in the proposed plebiscite. How will the voting ballot look? What will its contents be? Will it include a concrete provision allowing the Palauan population in fact to choose its future political status, namely, independence? Or will it be the same question as to whether the Paluan population approves the Compact of Free Association with those nuclear provisions that are in contradiction to the Constitution? That is what we should like to know.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): Would the representative of the Soviet Union repeat the two questions he asked previously? I heard the one he just asked, but I do not know what the two previous ones were.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In the light of the fact that I have already repeated those two question twice, it is quite easy for me to repeat them a third time.

My first question was: What events followed the holding of the plebiscite in December 1986 which would justify or call for the holding of a new plebiscite?

My second question was: Does the holding of one more plebiscite imply that the United States position regarding the text of the Compact has somehow changed? If it has, then what changes have been made in the Compact? If it has not, then what is the objective of holding this plebiscite, bearing in mind that the population of Palau already has several times, including the last time, expressed its negative attitude towards the Compact?

Those were my two questions.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: In view of the lateness of the hour, I propose very shortly to adjourn the meeting, unless a member of the Council wishes to add a further comment at this moment.

We shall return to this agenda item at our next meeting for one reason: we are unable to take a decision on an item of this kind because it involves financial expenditure, and under rule 65 of the Trusteeship Council's rules of procedure we need a report on the financial implications, and I am told that this will not be ready until next week. I propose therefore that our next meeting be on Tuesday, 26 May, at 3 p.m., when the Council will continue the consideration of, and take a decision on, draft resolution T/L.1258 on a mission to Palau.

Further, the Council will consider and take decisions on agenda item 2, "Report of the Secretary-General on credentials"; on agenda item 11, "Attainment of self-government or independence by the Trust Territories"; and on agenda item 12, "Co-operation with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

If there are no comments, I propose to adjourn the meeting now.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.