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Fifty-sixth Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 17 May 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. GAUSSOT (France) (Vice-President)

- Examination of petitions (T/INF/37 and Add.1) (continued)
- Dissemination of information on the United Nations and the international trusteeship system in Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General (Trusteeship Council resolution 36 (III) and General Assembly resolution 754 (VIII)) (T/1936)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS (T/INF/37 and Add.1) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As agreed at our meeting yesterday, I suggest that the Council hear today the following petitioners: Mr. James Orak and Ms. Maria Burns on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee; Ms. Isabella Sumang, on behalf of the women elders and Otil A Beluad; Mr. Antonio M. Camacho, on behalf of the Northern Mariana House of Representatives; Mr. Paul A. Manglona, on behalf of the Northern Mariana Islands Senate, and Mrs. Valentina Tmoderang, on behalf of the organization of Palauans living in the United States.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Orak, Ms. Burns, Ms. Sumang, Mr. Camacho, Mr. Manglona and Mrs. Tmoderang took places at the petitioners' table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I call first on Mr. James Orak of the American Friends Service Committee, whose request for a hearing is contained in document T/PET.10/736.

Mr. ORAK: I am a citizen of Belau and now reside in Portland, Oregon. I appear before you today to express my pride, love and concern for my country and its people. On many different occasions we, the Belauans and other Micronesians, have brought our concerns before you as we do today. I believe that the United Nations is a body of world diplomacy which is concerned about justice and decolonization for my country.

In speaking today, I represent "Eltel Belau", a community organization of Belauans in Portland, Oregon. We and other Belauans living on the United States mainland share many of the concerns expressed in this testimony. For your information I will read from my prepared text, but I will be happy to answer any questions you have after my petition.

(Mr. Orak)

In the last few months we, the Belauans, have experienced more peace and unity than we have in the recent past. There was violence and corruption during the last Administration. The atmosphere is now calmer: Belauans are fully aware that the climate created by the efforts to amend our Constitution and Administration threatened Belau's future. With the new atmosphere, some in the Belau Government, the traditional chiefs and the people at the grassroots have shown a willingness to solve the problems of our troubled country. The emerging consensus in Belau to present the Compact of Free Association to the Belauan people in a way that truly reflects the wishes of the nation is reflected in recent legislation to create a status commission. The Commission on Future Palau/United States Relations has been formed to study the Compact of Free Association more thoroughly and to hold public hearings so that we can all understand the Compact, which has not yet been approved by Belauans. The Commission is required to make recommendations on the Compact by 30 September 1989. We need all of this time and perhaps still more to finish this process.

In the legislation that created the Status Commission it was also agreed that any differences should be resolved between the United States and Belau and not by tampering with Belau's Constitution. It is important for the United Nations and the Trusteeship Council to allow us adequate time and to support our efforts to make a truly democratic choice. We urge the Administering Authority not to sponsor another vote on the Compact unless the Trusteeship Council can satisfy itself that all Belauans feel the discussion process agreed upon has been adequately completed.

In addition, we would like to point out that even with this discussion process in place the people of Belau continue to be deprived of the option of choosing from among other status options, owing to the Administering Authority's emphasis on the

(Mr. Orak)

Compact. We specifically request that the Trusteeship Council make available to the Commission information on the full range of options for future status that have been chosen by former Trust Territories.

I have two separate issues that I would like to address today: the Trusteeship Agreement and the Compact. First of all, I urge the Trusteeship Council not to move towards termination of the Trusteeship for Belau. The Trusteeship Agreement, under Article 6, paragraph 1, provides that

"In discharging its obligations under Article 76 (b) of the Charter, the Administering Authority ... shall promote the development of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Trust Territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned".

(Mr. Orak)

Instead, the United States has created a total welfare State within the Republic of Belau. There are insufficient schools and health facilities, an unreliable power plant and faulty water and sewer systems. The schools do not have sufficient supplies, and classroom space and facilities are inadequate to accommodate the number of students we have in Belau. Books are outdated and many have pages missing. There are not enough hospital rooms nor are there sufficient hospital supplies and staff. Many of the medicines on hospital shelves are outdated. In addition, the Government does not have enough resources to provide for the water and electrical needs of the people.

Our country has not been developed towards self-sufficiency. We have been trained to dependence, and when we vote on the Compact, money is used as bait to hook us deeper. That is contrary to the promise of the Trusteeship Agreement.

Many of the issues that should have been addressed under the Trusteeship Agreement are now being negotiated as part of the Compact. Subsidiary agreements are being negotiated which would add funds for a number of programmes, including a new hospital, as well as a special auditor and prosecutor to assist Belau in straightening out its affairs. Belau should not have to accept the Compact in order to receive assistance with its economic development, its infrastructure and other necessities such as the auditor and special prosecutor. Belau needs those programmes, but our country should not be held hostage by the Compact to receive aid that was promised under the Trusteeship Agreement. That is economic and political blackmail by the United States to make us accept its terms.

We realize we cannot remain under trusteeship for ever. However, we urge the United Nations not to terminate the trusteeship status of Belau until we are ready, and to see to it that the Administering Authority fulfils its trusteeship responsibilities, separate from the Compact of Free Association.

(Mr. Orak)

We strongly argue that if the Administering Authority's report does not discuss the horrible state of Belau's economic infrastructure and the utter lack of economic development, that report is incomplete and must not be accepted by this body. If the Administering Authority ignores these most fundamental problems in Belau, it has failed to meet its responsibilities under the Trusteeship Agreement.

Furthermore, the report of the Visiting Mission the Council recently sent to Belau must also discuss the dire lack of economic infrastructure and economic development in Belau. If the report does not include such a discussion, it too is incomplete. The Council's responsibility as overseer of the Trusteeship Agreement will not be fulfilled if it ignores Belau's economic underdevelopment.

I should like to talk more specifically about the Compact. That document allows the United States at least 50 years of military rights to our land and water. That is unacceptable to many Belauans. We have been forced to vote six times on the Compact, and each time it has been defeated because of the controversies over the military use and nuclear deployment allowed by the agreement. The General Assembly has stated that military activities can pose a threat to full and free self-determination. Therefore, we Belauans should not have to accept the United States military on our islands, for that would be a threat to our self-determination. The United Nations must support us when we act consistently with United Nations principles. The Compact, with its military provisions, should not be acceptable to the United Nations as an adequate replacement for the trusteeship.

Our concern as Belauans living in the United States is that we will be deprived of our birthright to our homeland. Also, we have an obligation to protect our land and identity for future generations. Our children are our most important resource, and we want to secure a peaceful and democratic Belau for them.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I call next on Miss Isabella Sumang of the Otil a Beluad movement, whose request for a hearing appears in document T/PET.10/738.

Miss SUMANG: We thank the Council for the opportunity to present our concerns this morning. I am Isabella Sumang. I represent Otil a Beluad, which translated means "The Anchor of Our Country". The group is made up of conscientious citizens, mostly women, who are concerned with the best interests of our people.

We believe in maintaining our traditional values and keeping our identity as a people. We welcome progress and development. We are open to and adapt to beneficial changes brought to us by more developed countries. We are appreciative of the generosity of the people of the United States. We are thankful for the assistance they have brought to our country. We ask them to be patient with us as we strive to achieve national maturity.

We are here today to appeal to the Council not to terminate the trusteeship until we are truly ready to assume self-government and independence.

We need improvements in our educational system: educational buildings and facilities, learning materials and equipment all need upgrading. Most of our teachers do not possess a college education qualifying them to teach. We still import student missionaries, United States volunteer teachers and Filipino teachers for our classrooms in the sciences, mathematics and English. Our schools do not meet the demands of our society. We still import technical assistance for our development.

The islands' health care is inadequate, and is far below the standard of medical care in the United States. Our physicians are actually medical officers who are trained and licensed to practice only in the Trust Territory. The few who

(Miss Sumang)

have proper medical degrees are imported. Most of our registered nurses are also licensed to practice only in the Trust Territory.

We need a stable economy. The import-export balance weighs heavily on the import side. Limited fish and trochus exports do not support a fragile economy. If today the United States were to withdraw its financial assistance the institutions of democracy would fall apart. Our schools, our hospital and all government offices would close. We need a working economy to support the system that has been developed under the trusteeship.

We need to have a road that connects all the villages, to provide more space for small industry and to relieve the congestion in Koror City. The water system needs upgrading: we have been on "water hours" - rationing of the public water supply - for the past 41 years. The IPSECO power plant serves only Imeliik, Irrai and Koror; we need to extend the services to the rest of the islands.

These fundamental pieces of our economic infrastructure have been neglected by the Administering Authority. Attached to written copies of my statement is a copy of a letter from Senator J. Bennett Johnston of the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which shows the financial problems that have developed for Belau because the Administering Authority keeps hoping that this year Belauans will ratify the Compact of Free Association. We ask the Trusteeship Council to remind the Administering Authority of its responsibility under the Trusteeship Agreement to foster the sound economic development of our country and not to hold out the promise of future development as a way to get us to ratify the Compact.

(Miss Sumang)

We have a national debt we have no way of our own to pay. We have drug problems we do not know how to solve. We have political crimes which need to be investigated and which are beyond our capacity to deal with. We have land claims and disputes still to be settled.

As a group we are thankful to our American friends who have faithfully come each year to petition on our behalf. We are thankful to the United States Congress House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and its Sub-Committee on Insular and International Affairs for their support on the Constitution-Compact lawsuit - Fritz v. Salii - which our group undertook last year. We are thankful to the Center for Constitutional Rights for its active participation in the case. We also thank all the people whose financial contributions made the lawsuit possible.

We note that the report made by our Honourable Vice-President Kuniwo Nakamura has covered many of our concerns. We support our elected leaders when they actually represent our interests. We also express our concern that in the past the good intentions of members of our government have gone to waste under pressure to seek ratification of the Compact.

Our group has always opposed the Compact of Free Association with the United States. We see the Compact as a limitation to our land and sea; an inadequate funding for the 50-year agreement; a possible defence site for the United States; United States dominance in our country; and nuclear pollution. We do not want to defy the United States Government. We only feel for our people and try to safeguard the welfare of our country. We do not ignore the 73 per cent vote of our people in the sixth, most recent Compact ratification. We believe that it was a coerced vote motivated by economic coercion, threats of physical violence and intimidation, bribery and a biased "education" programme which pushed for ratification of the Compact.

(Miss Sumang)

We wish to remain under trusteeship until we are stable in the democratic system the Administering Authority has introduced to us. Our wish is that their goal for our nation will be the same as ours; that the standard for measurement of development will be mutual, not a double standard whereby our own standards would be least considered.

A legend is told of a fisherman who went fishing. He was canoeing when he saw a prized turtle - the promise of a feast. He immediately jumped after it, not anchoring the canoe, for fear he would miss the turtle. The canoe drifted away from him. He turned away from the turtle to the canoe. The turtle was swimming away; he went after it. So went the chase back and forth. Finally both were lost - the man lost the turtle and his canoe.

Our concern is: In our haste to enter into the Compact agreement we may miss the canoe. We want to be sure the canoe is anchored securely; then shall we have both the turtle and the canoe.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on Mr. Antonio Camacho of the Northern Mariana Islands House of Representatives, whose request for hearing appears in document T/PET.10/740.

Mr. CAMACHO: My colleague from the House of Representatives Congressman Gabriel Baubata is here with me to witness this testimony.

My name is Antonio Muna Camacho, a member of the House of Representatives of the Sixth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature. I thank the Council for allowing me to speak once again before this honourable body. On 11 May last year I presented some accounts of negative experience involving the people of the Northern Marianas and the Administering Authority which all revealed the Administering Authority's condescending attitude towards the people of the Northern Marianas.

(Mr. Camacho)

These problems continue to this day. Most of them exist because the Administering Authority fails to concede that the Covenant is an agreement between two sovereign peoples. For example, one of the matters now being discussed in the "902" talks - as provided by article IX, section 902, of the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America - between the special representatives from the Commonwealth and the Administering Authority's representative is the jurisdiction over the lands under the waters surrounding the Commonwealth. While this issue is being discussed at the "902" talks, a confidential report from the Minerals Management Service, Department of the Interior, indicates that, while the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands states that the submerged lands off the coast of the Commonwealth are matters under the jurisdiction of Commonwealth law, under the Administering Authority's legal system it is the Administering Authority that has jurisdiction over the management and disposition of the submerged lands. This is, according to the report, because of the constitutional authorization to Congress "to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States".

That kind of statement should have no place in an official government publication of the very Cabinet Department which is representing the Administering Authority in the "902" talks. The language indicates a propitiatory attitude towards the Commonwealth rather than an attitude of mutuality. It suggests a continuation of the neo-colonialist attitude which predates the signing of the Covenant.

In the eyes of the bureaucratic establishment of the United States, the Covenant is a law of the Administering Authority rather than a document tantamount to a treaty agreed upon by two sovereign peoples. In furtherance of this

(Mr. Camacho)

proposition, the Congress of the Administering Authority in 1984 amended sections 402 (a), (c) and section 403 (a) of article IV of the Covenant, relating to judicial authority. We have never recognized their amendments, and I dare them to to put them to the test. Incidentally, the said amendments have not yet been tested by the Administering Authority's courts. That unilateral action, along with references by appellate courts of the Administering Authority to the Commonwealth as a Territory, is offensive and threatening to my people's sovereignty. With this in mind, the Sixth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature recently adopted, and the Governor signed it into law, legislation creating the Supreme Court of the Northern Mariana Islands. I supported that legislation because I and many other lawmakers are sceptical of the good faith intentions of the Administering Authority in respecting our right to self-government.

(Mr. Camacho)

Mr. President, we need your help. We, the people of the Northern Marianas, are small in number but big on sovereignty. We want a clear and unequivocal statement from the Trusteeship Council directed to us and the Administering Authority that our people are sovereign. We also want a clear acknowledgement by the Council that our trusteeship has not yet been terminated by the full body of the Assembly and therefore we want the Council to admonish the Administering Authority for its incursions into our cherished domain of self-government.

Permit me to reiterate the position of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Covenant is an agreement similar to a treaty. The Northern Mariana Islands is not a Territory or dependent possession of the Administering Authority; any agreement reached between the Northern Marianas and the United States must be between two sovereigns. We will be conducting a referendum in the very near future regarding this issue, to recall, reaffirm or renegotiate the Covenant.

Finally, if the Council will not assist us in this manner, we would ask that it assist us in bringing this sovereignty issue before the World Court at The Hague.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on Mr. Paul Manglona, for the Northern Mariana Islands Senate, on whose behalf a request for a hearing appears in document T/PET.10/741.

Mr. Paul MANGLONA: My name is Paul A. Manglona. I serve as Chairman of the Sixth Northern Marianas Senate Committee on Federal Relations and Independent Agencies. I am honoured to appear before the Trusteeship Council on behalf of the House of Senate and the Senate President, who is unable to attend this morning's meeting.

Please allow me now to present the Senate President's prepared remarks to the Council, as follows:

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"My name is Benjamin T. Manglona. I serve as President of the Senate of the Sixth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

"I first appeared before the Council in 1969 as a member of the Congress of Micronesia's Committee on Future Political Status. I appeared then in the fervent belief that our hopes for self-government would some day materialize.

"I appeared before the Council several years later as a member of the Marianas Political Status Commission. Again, I appeared then in anticipation that the Commonwealth's Covenant with the United States would finally fulfill our hopes and dreams of internal self-government.

"Why are we here today? The quest goes on. Self-government still has not been realized. We are here to seek the Council's help.

"We ask the Trusteeship Council to lend its moral weight to our effort to negotiate with the United States for our right to internal self-government. If fruitful negotiations are not concluded by July this year, the Northern Marianas may vote to end its relationship with the United States.

"In our relationship with the United States, we are like a David facing a Goliath. We find ourselves with limited means to gain the attention and respect of the American colossus. We ask for the Council's assistance.

"Specifically, we ask the United Nations to do two things. The first is never to recommend termination of the Trust until the United States makes good on its obligation to provide our Commonwealth with meaningful self-government. We must have control over our internal affairs. In our view, we do not have it yet.

"Secondly, we ask the Council, if need be, to be present in the Marianas to observe a proposed election to determine our continued political affiliation with the United States. This election is tentatively set for November of this year. We will say more about this election shortly.

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"How did the people of the Marianas get to the point where they even have to consider terminating their political relationship with the United States? Why do we continue to appear before the Council?

"In summary, we are here because the United States refuses to conduct meaningful negotiations with the Marianas over the limits of federal power in the Commonwealth. Such discussions are guaranteed by section 902 of our Covenant.

"Yet, despite Covenant guarantees, the United States will not discuss conflict of federal laws with the exercise of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands internal self-government.

"On top of this, the United States, through its many actions, continues to reach for control of our internal affairs.

"Where does federal legislative power end and similar Commonwealth power begin? We cannot get the United States to talk to us about this problem. It prefers, as far as we can gather, that the issues be settled in the United States Federal Courts. The bias of those United States Federal Courts towards the United States federal position is obvious.

"Almost without exception, the Northern Marianas' claims to sovereignty have been rejected by the United States Federal Courts.

"Call it 'foot dragging'. Call it 'a conspiracy of silence'. Call it 'bureaucratic ineptitude'. But the United States will not negotiate with us about our claims of interference with local self-government.

"Maybe the United States has taken to heart the observation of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger about Micronesia to the effect 'Who gives a damn about a few people in the middle of nowhere?'

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"Refused negotiations, blocked in the courts, the Northern Marianas finds itself backed into a corner, where it must consider drastic action. The people of the Northern Marianas have reached the point where they have asked for the right to vote on whether or not to terminate the political relationship with the United States. The tentative date for that election is November 1989.

"As directed by the people, we either get the United States to conclude meaningful section 902 discussions with us by 1 July of this year or we are mandated to hold such an election. If we do not go ahead with the election, we defy the voters, we abandon lawful claims to self-government and we betray the expectations of our future generations. We shall not betray those expectations nor ignore the dictates of our citizen voters.

"We seek the Council's help. We seek to avoid drastic solutions to resolve our political differences with the United States. For that reason, we stand before the Trusteeship Council today asking for its help. Perhaps it can do something to bring the United States to meaningful bargaining. Nothing we have done so far seems to get Uncle Sam's attention.

"Our problems with claims to self-government do not end with the Executive Branch of the United States Government. The United States Congress, for which we do not vote, has on several occasions treated our Covenant like a United States statute. The Congress unilaterally amends our sacred Covenant without prior consultations with us. It makes laws for us without our participation.

"It is very much like taxation without representation, the very phenomenon that ignited the American Revolution.

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"The United States, despite guarantees in the Covenant, fails to give adequate consideration to the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands views on international matters and trade agreements.

"The United States entered into a trade agreement with Canada, but never sought our views, and though it did so for other 'insular possessions' the United States neglected to provide for tariff-free entry of our goods into Canada.

"The United States negotiated the Compacts of Free Association with the other Micronesian entities and guaranteed free access of their citizens to our soil. The United States did that without consultation with us or without securing our prior agreement. The United States also did it while ignoring the promise in the Covenant to let us control our own immigration policy.

"We are now staggering under the burden of providing infrastructure and government services to those 'lawful immigrants' forced upon us by the United States. Though directed to do so by United States law, the United States President has yet to report to the Congress regarding the impact of the freely associated States on immigration into the Commonwealth.

"The United States entered into a bilateral aviation agreement with Japan that will result in the doubling of air carriers to our airports. Again, we were never consulted about that bilateral agreement nor were our views sought.

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"In this connection the United States has added insult to injury by ignoring our request to avail ourselves of third-country assistance offered by Japan to build a control tower to guarantee the safety of this added air traffic. Over 80 per cent of our tourists come from Japan.

"The United States refuses to acknowledge the sovereign claims of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to control over our fisheries and sea-bed resources. The United States proposes a national sea-bed hard minerals act that would deny the Northern Marianas local control over 240,000 square miles of our ocean floor. That is an area the size of Afghanistan that we would hold in trust as an economic resource for our future generations. The United States wants to exploit that resource now.

"As one of his last acts in office, President Ronald Reagan extended United States claims over the ocean to 200 miles from our shores. We were never consulted about this claim. They are not federal waters in the first place. They are our own sovereign territorial waters.

"Despite the enactment of our own Marine Sovereignty Act in 1980, the United States continues to insist that the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation Act denies the Northern Marianas the right to license and control foreign fishing boats in our own waters. The United States Federal Courts have variously stripped us of our sovereign immunity to federal suits, declared us to be a territory of the United States, refused to acknowledge our unique political status, frustrated our attempts to control immigration, and imposed federal statutes upon the Commonwealth that invade areas of purely local concern.

"The United States Federal Bureau of Investigation operates in the Commonwealth without our consent.

"United States federal auditors want to audit our local programmes. They

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

demand access to the records of our governmental departments that operate with solely local funds.

"Despite the Covenant's guarantee that our government bonds shall be tax free, the United States has so far refused to officially recognize that fact.

"Unlike the respect afforded similar missions in the nation's capital, the District of Columbia treats the Washington DC office of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as a part of the United States for purposes of local property taxes.

"The United States has appointed federal officials for service in the Commonwealth without consultation with our Government.

"The President of the United States violated the Covenant by appointing the United States Department of the Interior to supervise United States relations with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands without prior consultation with the Northern Marianas.

"The list of grievances grows longer each year we appear before the Trusteeship Council.

"Let us review the history of the relationship with the United States. In this way it will become clear why we continue to speak here and why we feel it necessary that this honoured Council guarantee the integrity of any election on our future political status with the United States.

"In a United Nations-observed plebiscite, in 1975 the people of the Northern Marianas voted to join the American political family. We chose to associate with the United States as a unique commonwealth.

"As a free people, we expressed only one major reservation about putting ourselves under the sovereignty of the United States. After suffering 400 years of military colonial rule, we wanted finally to exercise self-government over our own internal affairs.

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"Please do not think we rely exclusively upon the United Nations to help us with this self-government issue. Please know that we have taken affirmative action ourselves to establish control over our own affairs. Since we last appeared before the Council, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has founded its own Supreme Court. We are no longer dependent upon the federal judiciary to provide appellate services for our people.

"And please do not think we find no advantage to our present Commonwealth status with the United States. We can point to many benefits flowing from our association with the United States.

"For one thing, if we had not chosen to join with the United States, we might not be standing here today. Under the democratic system, we enjoy the blessings of freedom of speech and full political expression. Freedom of expression and a democratic system of government may be the finest legacy we have inherited from the United States.

"We have also enjoyed many material benefits from our association with the United States. Our gross island product is up 100 per cent over the last decade. Our local internal revenues over that same period are up from \$5 million to \$72.4 million. A stable investment climate has spurred development in our islands. We see the possibility of economic self-sufficiency on the horizon.

"But under the cover of an unprecedented economic boom, the United States has been deliberately stripping away Commonwealth internal sovereignty. Our present economic health masks a failure in political strength. Our right to self-determination in local affairs is in grave danger.

"Future generations of our citizens will suffer if today's leaders do not take a stand for internal sovereignty.

"Over the years since 1978 the political relationship between the

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

United States and the Northern Marianas has experienced a decline. The honeymoon period has long been over. Frustration over the unfulfilled promise of local self-government now marks our relationship.

"The United States, in the eyes of many, looks intent upon treating our people as territorial subjects. In fact, as far as we can tell, it is still the official position of the United States Department of the Interior and the United States Justice Department that the territorial clause of the United States Constitution applies to the Northern Marianas. If that is true, the United States Congress can make our local laws; our legislature might as well pack up and go home.

"The United States is insensitive to its guarantees to us for local self-government.

"In fact, at the Asian Pacific Parliamentarians Union, at the twenty-third General Assembly, held in Taipei last October, the General Assembly adopted a resolution expressing

'concern over the apparent insensitivity of the United States to concerns of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas for its internal sovereignty'.

"Full exercise of internal self-government remains the central issue for our people in their relationship with the United States.

"A Commonwealth-wide initiative approved on 7 November 1987, nine years after the people opted for affiliation with the United States, documents a clear expression of this concern. In that 1987 initiative, the results of which were presented to this body last year, our people overwhelmingly reaffirmed their desire for control over local affairs. In the Commonwealth-wide initiative of 1987 the people said:

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

'Should the Covenant's section 902 discussions leave any substantial matters regarding self-government or financial assistance unresolved as of 1 July 1989, the people of the Commonwealth by initiative shall have the right to reaffirm, reject or renegotiate the Covenant.'

"As of today, all matters regarding self-government stand unresolved.

"After great pressure to get the United States to commence 902 discussions, pressure generated in part by our 1988 Trusteeship Council appearance, the Reagan Administration finally appointed a United States representative to the 902 chair vacated in July 1987.

"Discussions pursuant to section 902 of the Covenant took place in August and October of 1988 and also in January of 1989. But not one single substantive agreement has come out of these discussions. The self-government issue is as far from resolution as it has ever been; 902 discussions have proven to be all form and no substance.

"We have trusted the United States to live up to its commitments in the Covenant, but in practice the United States has breached the Covenant.

"The approved mechanism for the parties to address matters affecting our relationship and to address problems in implementing the Covenant - that is, 902 discussions - have proven so meaningless and so frustrating that we have been forced to come to the Trusteeship Council. More seriously, we have been forced to consider the people's demand for a vote to possibly end the political relationship with the United States.

"We are sure the United States does not approve of, or certainly enjoy, presentations of this type to the United Nations. Yet we are here because the United States leaves us no choice. It will not talk to us about internal sovereignty. Instead, it leaves it to the United States Courts and the United States Congress to destroy our claims.

(Mr. Paul Manglona)

"We ask for the Council's help; we ask it to lend its prestige and moral weight to our efforts for a reasoned, negotiated settlement of the self-government issue. We must conclude agreements with regard to our guarantee of local sovereignty by 1 July of this year. If agreements are not concluded by that date, we ask the United Nations to come to the Commonwealth in November and act as an observer for the election that may lead to the termination of our political association with the United States."

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call upon Mrs. Valentina Tmoderang, whose petition for hearing is contained in document T/PET.10/742.

Mrs. TMODERANG (spoke in Palauan; English text furnished by the petitioner): Again, I should like to thank the United States of America for accepting the challenge of administering the Pacific islands known as the United States Trust Territory. The Republic of Palau has been working towards achieving self-government under the leadership of the United States of America. Therefore, the United States Government has been teaching and helping the Republic of Palau to attain self-rule. Our thanks go to the President of the United States, to the United States Congress, to the United States Government and to its citizens.

As you have taught us and given us guidance for the past 40 years, we ask that you continue to do the same with patience, since you have the expertise and the material blessings. We also request that you rethink matters seriously, since you have much knowledge, power and material blessings to help us reach or achieve our democratic potentials.

We may be a small country and we may be few, but we are determined to achieve self-rule like any other emerging nation. We also know what is right and what is wrong, and we know what works best for us as a people. Let us remember that we

(Mrs. Tmoderang)

are all created by the same God and that we all breathe the same air, even though we are separated by a large expanse of water.

On the Moon there is no air for any human being to breathe. There are no plants and no water to sustain life. When you come to our land, we have food, water and fresh air available to sustain you. Our people welcome, treat and entertain you like the members of a royal family until the time comes to bid you farewell. Should you not then reconsider the wishes and desires of the people of the new Republic of Palau?

We would again plead that the United States of America will heed and give a better response to the people of Palau, for Palau cannot be bought or sold through misrepresentations of truth, arm-twisting or coercion.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now invite any member of the Council who wishes to do so to put questions to the petitioners.

Mr. GRIGUTIS (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I express my gratitude to the petitioners who have spoken here. They have given us some interesting data about the situation in the Trust Territory. We hope that this material will be used in the future work of the session.

Since we have a meeting scheduled for this afternoon, I hope that some petitioners will attend so that we may have the opportunity to put questions to them at that time.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In the light of the remarks by the representative of the Soviet Union, I would ask the petitioners to be good enough to attend this afternoon's meeting of the Council. For the moment, I would like to thank them for their statements and invite them to withdraw from the petitioners' table.

The petitioners withdrew.

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL TRUSTEESHIP SYSTEM IN TRUST TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (Trusteeship Council resolution 36 (III) and General Assembly resolution 754 (VIII)) (T/1936).

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call upon

Mr. Joe Sills, representative of the Secretariat Department of Public Information, who will introduce the report of the Secretary-General contained in document T/1936. Mr. Sills will make a statement on United Nations activities with regard to the dissemination of information in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Mr. SILLS (Department of Public Information): It is a pleasure to be here today to introduce the Secretary-General's report on dissemination of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System in Trust Territories (T/1936), dated 12 May, which covers the period 1 May 1988 to 30 April 1989.

The report is a brief summary of the informational activities conducted by the Department of Public Information and other parts of the Secretariat in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during the period covered. It is a reasonably self-explanatory document, which describes the materials and products that were distributed, including printed products and radio, television and other visual products such as cassettes, work in the schools and transmission of the messages of the Secretary-General and the President of the Trusteeship Council, articles in the Chronicle and so on.

However, there are several comments I would like to make on the report and on the general situation regarding the distribution of information and the programme of the Department of Public Information. As many of you who have followed this know, the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo is the focus for our work in the Trust Territory and has the responsibility for coverage of the Trust Territory.

(Mr. Sills)

In the report for the previous year we were able to report that the Director of the Information Centre in Tokyo, Mr. Ignatieff, had made a trip to the Territory. That was a very valuable trip. We have not been able to replicate it this year; it is something we cannot do on an annual basis because of funding limitations, particularly on travel. However, the visit that he made in January of last year proved to have some very important ramifications. In particular, he spent a lot of time meeting with educators and with librarians and in discussing the information about the United Nations that is disseminated in the Territory. We feel that that trip has already led to some significant strengthening of our media contacts and that there will be some additional developments in the future.

The second point I would like to make is an apology. The annex to the previous year's report to the Council, in addition to a list of the material distributed, included the precise number of copies of each of the items distributed. This year's report does not have that information, simply because I could not get it from the Information Centre in Tokyo. The staff member who handled this item for us is no longer in the employ of the United Nations, and the Centre is attempting to put those numbers together for me. However, I did not have them in time to make them available for this report. We will have those numbers for you as soon as possible.

(Mr. Sills)

Thirdly, we feel that the major - and a very significant - increase in informational activities is in the radio and visual area. Members will note in the annex to the report a reference to the 70 different UN In Action programmes which were sent to the Territory. Some examples are given of the subject-matter dealt with. UN In Action is a new product of the Department of Public Information. It is a weekly three-minute summary of the major events that have taken place during the past week. It is carried extensively around the world. It is building up an audience. We feel that the introduction of this new information product into the Territory, as elsewhere throughout the world, has been a major step forward in increasing understanding of and information about the United Nations. As may be seen from the report, a significant number of radio programmes have also gone into the Territory and been distributed.

As a result of Mr. Ignatieff's visit, several areas have been identified to be stressed in information going into the Territory.

First, we continue to need to improve our distribution capabilities. As the report notes, and as my colleague Mr. El-Said pointed out when he met with the Trusteeship Council last year, the Department of Public Information is reorganizing its dissemination effort. We are trying to make it more electronically sophisticated, in order to depend less on actual physical transmission of materials. We still are not where we want to be in the area of dissemination, but there too we shall be making a major effort in regard to the Trust Territory as well as the rest of the world.

Secondly, Mr. Ignatieff identified the need to do more work with the schools. We are moving into the development of video-cassettes, along with teaching units, as a major educational mechanism of the Department. In his visit to the area,

(Mr. Sills)

Mr. Ignatieff identified several uses for video-cassettes. I think that within the next two or three years we shall be able to do a great deal in this respect in the Trust Territory.

Finally, Mr. Ignatieff identified work with libraries, and the need to build up a resource base of United Nations documentation. That is another area which we are working on now and will be working on in the future.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does any member of the Trusteeship Council wish to put questions to Mr. Sills or make comments on the Secretary-General's report?

Mr. RUSSEL (United States of America): I should like to ask you, Mr. President, to give my colleague Mr. Sam McPhetres, the Director of the Office of Archives and International Organizations of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands an opportunity to supplement the information that was just provided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I call on Mr. McPhetres.

Mr. McPHETRES (Adviser): I just wish to add to what the representative of the Department of Public Information has said that, besides the information that comes from United Nations Headquarters here and from Tokyo, the Trust Territory receives a considerable amount of documentation from many specialized agencies, including the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the various regional agencies that cover the area of the Trust Territory.

I would note also that in many cases this information, particularly the radio programmes, has been extremely well received throughout the Trust Territory and constitutes a very important part of the broadcast day at most of the radio stations.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Are there any other questions or comments on this item?

Mr. GRIGUTIS (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We hope that, after having read the report on information, we may be given the opportunity of putting questions - if any arise - to the representative of the Secretary-General at our meeting on 18 May.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I understand that the Soviet representative wishes to have an opportunity of reverting at a later meeting to the report of the Secretary-General under agenda item 8. I am sure that there is no objection to that request.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.