

Opening remarks of Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr., on the occasion of the Washington discussion with the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

January 30, 1964

Ambassador Corner, Dr. Brooks, Mr. Kiang, Mr. King, members of the Mission staff, and my colleagues concerned with Trust Territory affairs:

It is my pleasure, personally and on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, to welcome you to Washington for these discussions prior to your mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Since all of you are familiar with the Trust Territory from your work with the Trusteeship Council, I shall omit the customary discussion of its size, population, etc. However, we do have several brochures on the area which you may wish to have and we have put several maps on the table.

I met briefly with the last United Nations Mission in early 1961 shortly after assuming my duties as Assistant Secretary of the Interior. The report of that Mission was competently and carefully done. Although it was critical of some aspects of administration in the Trust Territory, we found its recommendations and suggestions generally useful to us in reassessing and, I hope, improving our efforts in the Trust Territory. I have every confidence that your visit will also be of assistance to us in carrying out our obligations to the people of Micronesia.

This administration clearly has demonstrated its great interest in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It is our goal to bring

the people of the Trust Territory into the 20th century world.

The President is aware of the problems of the Trust Territory, and this Department has been directed to intensify the programs for economic, social and political development. Secretary of the Interior Udall visited the Trust Territory in July 1962. As the Assistant Secretary of the Interior with direct responsibility for supervision of the Trust Territory Government, I have traveled there three times in the year 1963, as has Director Taitano of the Office of Territories. The Deputy High Commissioner of the Trust Territory is in Washington supporting our efforts. Members of two Congressional committees returned this week from a trip to all the districts in the Trust Territory.

I have been told that Mr. Kiang and at least one member of the Mission staff, Mr. Chu, have previously served with a mission visiting the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. They will, I am certain, note the changes resulting from our efforts to promote the development of Micronesia. The last Visiting Mission was in the territory three years ago, and the report of that Mission will be a starting point to measure the changes which have taken place since. The High Commissioner has made periodic reports to the Trusteeship Council, but let me briefly summarize some of the major accomplishments before we begin our discussion of the prescribed agenda.

First, as of July 1, 1962, when Navy jurisdiction was transferred to Interior by Executive Order, administration of the Trust Territory

was consolidated for the first time since November 1952. This was recommended by the last Visiting Mission.

Simultaneously with the transfer of the Northern Marianas District to the administration of the Department of the Interior, the headquarters of the High Commissioner were moved to Saipan, thereby locating the seat of government for the first time in the Trust Territory, and conforming to another repeated recommendation.

On July 19, 1962, the late President Kennedy approved an authorization act more than doubling appropriations for the Trust Territory. For fiscal year 1963 and the current fiscal year we have appropriations of \$15,000,000 each. President Johnson has asked for \$17,500,000 for fiscal year 1965, the fiscal year beginning next July 1.

We have acquired and put into service a DC-4 aircraft and a new inter-district surface vessel, both of which have materially improved our transportation services, the backbone of development.

We have completed a new airstrip at Yap, are building one in Palau, and plan soon to begin another at Ponape.

We have launched a massive effort aimed at providing universal education for all children throughout the Trust Territory, education fitting them to live in the modern world.

We have begun a program to improve health standards. Micronesian medical personnel have served long and well but we are recruiting fully qualified medical personnel to bring the staff in each district to a

higher professional level.

The area was opened to economic development through outside investment in August 1962. Trade has expanded and we are pleased to see Micronesian firms participate actively and directly in the activity engendered by our programs in the area.

You will, of course, want to look into these programs and projects more fully. For our part, we wish to have your frank assessment of them.

The first item on the agenda this morning is Political and Economic Development. A brief summary document of economic development since 1962 is being circulated. We all know that the total natural resources of Micronesia are limited and economic viability is not foreseeable. We believe, however, that greater use can be made of such resources as are available. Our agricultural programs can improve not only the subsistence base for the people but some agricultural products can be exported, especially to Guam, as a cash crop. Cacao and pepper can join an increased production of copra for the world markets. The fisheries plant at Palau will add substantially to employment opportunities, both onshore and in fishing employment.

Political development is the next item. During the past year district legislative charters have been overhauled in Palau, Ponape, and Truk and a district legislative body created for the Mariana Islands District. Legislatures are maturing in each of these districts. In the Trust Territory you will meet with most or all of the district

legislative bodies.

We continue to train Micronesians in political and administrative work and to place them in responsible positions, both district and at headquarters. Micronesians Takeo Yano and Leo Falcam are serving capably as Assistant District Administrators in Palau and Ponape.

A Micronesian from the Palau district graduated from George Washington University law school last spring. Kaleb Udui is now working as an assistant in the Attorney General's office at Trust Territory headquarters. He was also named Legislative Counsel to the Council of Micronesia for its meeting last November.

It was my pleasure to address the Council at its opening last November 12. This extremely important meeting gave us the opportunity to consult with the Council about the various proposals which had been suggested in connection with the establishment of a territorial legislature.

The Council painstakingly and thoroughly compared and analyzed the proposals as they related to representation, powers, procedures, and all the other essentials of a legislature.

As a result, we feel that we have now a sense of Micronesian desires with respect to a territorial legislature. At the present time we have under review an order which we expect to promulgate in the near future establishing a territorial legislative body well in advance of the promised date of 1965.

In discussing political development this morning, I do not believe we should anticipate the political items on tomorrow's agenda. However, in view of the petitions which the Trusteeship Council has received from the Saipan Municipal Legislature, I feel we should stress now that we do not favor fragmentation of the Trust Territory. This is a point which we made in 1961 following the first Saipan referendum and it remains our policy. At such time as it is appropriate for the Micronesians to exercise their right of self-determination, we shall propose that United Nations observers be present at any referendum or plebiscite and we shall insist that "Independence" be one of the options.