

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Political Status.

Almost from the moment of the signing in 1947 of the Trusteeship Agreement between the United States and the Security Council of the United Nations, regarding the administration of the former Japanese mandated islands by the United States, the Executive Branch gave attention to the political future of the islands. Interested Departments recognized from the outset that trusteeship status was intended to be transitory only, and that in due course the United States and the people of Micronesia would be required to decide the permanent status of the area.

For most of the years until the mid 1960's, departmental concerns took the form of unofficial, informal, speculative, and rather desultory discussions. But beginning in about 1964, more serious attention was devoted to the issue by the Departments of the Interior, State, and Defense. The termination of most of the eleven trusteeships created under the United Nations system, together with indications that the people of Micronesia were increasingly interested in turning to the question, caused heightened interest within the Executive Branch. The receipt of House Joint Resolution No. 47, from the Second Regular Session of the Congress of Micronesia, brought definitive and public action by the Executive Branch. Following discussions over a period of many months, the

Secretary of the Interior, on July 26, 1967, presented to the House Interior Committee, in executive session, in outline form a proposal for a commission to study the political future of the Trust Territory. By letter dated August 21, 1967, the President transmitted to both houses of Congress a legislative proposal, in the form of a joint resolution "regarding the status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands," and calling for such a study commission. The resolution was introduced by the Chairmen of the Interior Committees and became H. J. Res. 805 and S. J. Res. 106.

A brief public hearing before the Senate Interior Committee was conducted on H. J. Res. 805 on May 8, 1968, followed by an Executive Session. With the receipt of a favorable report of the Committee, recommending limited and wholly acceptable amendments, the Senate passed an amended version on May 29, 1968. Hearings in executive session were conducted by the House Interior Committee's Subcommittee on Territories and Insular Affairs on July 16, 1968. No further action has been taken to date.

Creation of Congress of Micronesia.

On August 6-11, 1956, a Trust Territory Inter-District Conference, called by the High Commissioner, was held at Trust Territory Government headquarters on Guam. This was the first conference of this nature held under Department of the Interior auspices and was the first all-Micronesian leader conference where the Micronesians were given the opportunity to choose their own delegates. Two delegates chosen by their respective elected political bodies attended from the Marshalls, Ponape, Truk, Rota, Yap and Palau Districts. One observer from the Navy-administered Saipan District was also present.* Conferences were to be held annually at the call of the High Commissioner.

During the second conference which met in Guam from September 30 to October 5, 1957, the delegates approved the formation of the annual conference into a formally-organized Inter-District Advisory Committee to the High Commissioner.

During the sixth conference, held in 1961, the delegates changed the name of the body to the "Council of Micronesia." They elected the chairman from their membership, the first time a Micronesian had presided at the annual conference, which until

* The membership increased to 14 during the sixth conference held in September 1961, when Saipan for the first time was represented by two delegates in lieu of the one observer representative. By the following year, however, the membership was again set at 12 as a result of the transfer of administration of Saipan District from Navy to Interior and the organization of the Mariana Islands District to include the former Rota and Saipan Districts.

then had been chaired by the High Commissioner or a member of his staff. During this 1961 conference the delegates also elected a Subcommittee for Political Development.

At the meeting of the Council of Micronesia held in September-October 1962, the Council, by Declaration Number 1 adopted October 1, 1962, called for creation of a territory-wide legislature. A special session of the Council was subsequently called by the High Commissioner to meet March 19-26, 1963, to consider primarily the structure and nature of the proposed territorial legislature and to submit recommendations to the High Commissioner.

Recommendation 3-1963, adopted by the Council of Micronesia on March 22, 1963, recommended establishment of the Congress of Micronesia, a bicameral body to be composed of a House of Delegates and an Assembly whose members would be elected. The Recommendation provided for study at the end of the first year of whether the body would be bicameral or unicameral. The Recommendation provided that persons in staff positions with the Administering Authority on Territorial and District levels as well as the Judiciary may not hold office in the Congress.

Following the consideration of the recommendations submitted by the Council of Micronesia and the High Commissioner's staff, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, on September 28, 1964, issued Order No. 2882, Legislative Authority for the Congress of Micronesia, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Secretarial Order 2882 followed closely the recommendations of the Council of

Micronesia. It provided for a two-house Congress of Micronesia, to be composed of a 12-member House of Delegates and a 21-member General Assembly, to be elected by secret ballot in general elections to be held biennially. Regular sessions of the Congress were to be held in each year for not to exceed 30 consecutive calendar days. The Order granted wide legislative authority, gave the Congress power to levy taxes, and provided for participation of the Congress in the preparation of the annual budget prior to submission to the U.S. Congress. Unlike the original recommendation of the Council of Micronesia, however, Order 2882 provided that during the first four formative years, membership of the Congress was to be fully open to persons holding major jobs with the executive branch or the judiciary of the Trust Territory Government. This particular section would permit the Congress to draw on experienced men during its first important, formative years.

On January 19, 1965, the first elections for the Congress of Micronesia were held throughout the Trust Territory, with approximately 70 percent of the registered voters exercising their suffrage. The Congress of Micronesia convened for the first time on July 12, 1965, with Under Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr., attending as guest speaker. A message from President Lyndon B. Johnson extending congratulations and best wishes to the members was read at the opening session.

Order No. 2882 has undergone several amendments.

Amendment No. 1, approved June 10, 1965, clarified certain minor budgetary and other problems which had developed after issuance of Order 2882.

Amendment No. 2 was approved June 28, 1966, in pursuance of a resolution adopted by the Congress of Micronesia. By this Amendment, the House of Delegates was redesignated the "Senate" and the General Assembly was redesignated the "House of Representatives" beginning July 1, 1966. Amendment No. 2 also made a minor amendment in Section 23 of Order 2882 relating to the Legislative Counsel.

Amendment No. 3 was approved July 29, 1967. This Amendment revised Section 17(b) of Order 2882 to require the passage of bills by the majority votes of all members of each House. The Amendment also revised Section 9 of Order 2882 to allow for postponement of elections in the event of a natural disaster or other Act of God. It also clarified the authority of the Congress of Micronesia under Section 5 of Order 2882 relating to the budget.

Amendment No. 4, approved July 26, 1968, puts into effect, beginning January 1, 1969, Section 11 of Order 2882 disqualifying government officers and employees from serving as a member of the Congress while holding such office. Amendment 4 also provides for annual salaries of \$3500 to each member of the Congress, with \$500 additional compensation to the presiding officers of each house, payable from funds appropriated by the United States Congress, this provision to become effective July 1, 1969, and end

June 30, 1973. The Amendment also amends Section 12 of Order 2882 relating to legislative sessions, extending the 30-day session each year to 45 days and introducing a new 15-day session in each odd numbered year. Amendment 4 deletes language in the second paragraph of Section 4 which authorizes the High Commissioner himself to promulgate legislation. The Amendment also modifies language in Section 5 of Order 2882 to deal more effectively with the type of revenues available to the Congress of Micronesia to appropriate.

Peace Corps.

The Peace Corps program in the Trust Territory is unique in that it is the only Peace Corps program operating with a host country government which is United States-administered.

In 1961-62 the Peace Corps had considered the possibility of undertaking some small programs in the Trust Territory. A program did not, however, materialize at that time because of reasons which included the competitive demands of Volunteers in other countries. In early 1966 a number of recommendations were made for reconsideration of a potential program in the Trust Territory. A series of meetings were held between representatives of the Trust Territory, Interior, State and the Peace Corps, the outcome of which was to establish clearly that Peace Corps Volunteers were needed in the Trust Territory and would be well received there. On May 3, 1966, the High Commissioner forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior a request for Peace Corps Volunteers for the Trust Territory, a request that had the endorsement of members of the Congress of Micronesia and of the District Legislatures. This request was submitted to the White House, and on May 5, 1966, by letter to the Director of the Peace Corps, President Johnson requested "the greatest possible involvement on the part of the Peace Corps" in assisting the people of Micronesia "as they seek to establish themselves in the world community." On May 6 a formal announcement of Peace Corps participation in the Trust Territory was made jointly by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, Ambassador to the United Nations Arthur Goldberg, and Director of the Peace Corps Jack Vaughn.

Following this announcement, a Peace Corps programming team visited the Trust Territory for about three weeks. After consulting with the High Commissioner and his staff in Saipan and visiting district centers for consultation with district officials, a program for approximately 600 Volunteers was scheduled. Concurrently with the programming mission, a special recruiting effort was conducted in the United States for Volunteers to serve in the Trust Territory. In a two-week period, more than 3,000 young Americans from 65 major colleges and universities volunteered for service in the Territory.

The first 500 Volunteers were divided into two phases: Phase I, consisting of approximately 350 Volunteers, and Phase II, consisting of approximately 150 Volunteers. Phase I was scheduled for training August through October 1966; Phase II for training November 1966 through January 1967. Phase I was further subdivided into two groups. Group A comprised 206 Volunteers, mostly teachers also trained in community development. Group B, numbering 148, consisted of medical and health workers, public works Volunteers, and community development supervisors. The Peace Corps signed a contract with Westinghouse Corporation to train Group A, and this training took place in the Key West, Florida, area from August 1 to October 22, 1966. Group B trained on Molokai Island in Hawaii under the auspices of the University of Hawaii School of Public Health.

Phase II was a repeat of the programs followed in Phase I, training for both groups beginning in November 1966. Phase III of the Micronesia program provided an additional 300 Volunteers and

focused on problems of economic development and communications, but also provided additional teachers for the Trust Territory schools. A unique feature of Phase III was that the group trained for the first time in Micronesia, at a training center located at Udot in the Truk lagoon.

The first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in the Trust Territory in November 1966 and by February of 1967 numbered 460, living and working on some 87 islands in 124 different communities. Because of the number of languages and dialects spoken in the Trust Territory and the need to provide a common language base for developing communications, the Peace Corps chose at the outset "Teaching of English as a Second Language" (TESL) as the main thrust of its efforts. By September 1967, over 400 Volunteers were teaching English at the elementary and secondary levels. They were also teaching a variety of other subjects ranging from health and hygiene to trigonometry. The number of Volunteers in the Territory now numbers 625.

Micronesia had the usual health problems found in developing nations, but many of the problem areas were compounded by the vast distances between islands and by a shortage of health personnel. Communicable diseases of childhood such as whooping cough and diphtheria afflicted large numbers of island children because of their isolation and low resistance. Epidemics of measles, polio and other viral diseases had left their scars. Tuberculosis, leprosy and filariasis were thought to affect a significant portion of the

population in the productive age group. Because of the need for reliable statistics to serve as a base for launching a program of eradication and control, Peace Corps Volunteers, working with the Trust Territory Department of Public Health and the University of Hawaii, conducted a public health census of all Trust Territory districts in March 1967, the data from which is being used as a guide to an improved health program.

The Peace Corps' next major objective in the Trust Territory was one of public health improvement, concentrating on rural villages and outer islands in developing vital statistics and case-finding techniques, in community health and sanitation projects, and in teaching health education and promoting environmental sanitation.

Peace Corps Volunteers in Micronesia have in addition made major contributions in practically every phase of community life and development. They have engaged in road building, mapping, agriculture, fisheries development, cooperatives and credit union development, mass-media development, and construction of various kinds. Peace Corps lawyers have provided legal assistance in the district. Volunteers have been of immense help in the typhoon-devastated areas. Their help during and following these disasters has alone established a bond of friendship between the Volunteers and the Micronesian people.

Disaster Aid.

Following a request submitted to the Congress by the Department of the Interior, the Congress enacted Public Law 87-502, approved by President Kennedy on June 27, 1962 (76 Stat. 111), extending to Guam, American Samoa and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands the provisions of the Federal Disaster Act (Public Law 875 of the 81st Congress). In a letter to Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall dated March 20, 1963, outlining the procedures to be followed in providing disaster assistance to these three territories, the Director of the Office of Emergency Planning stipulated, among other things, that "No minimum State and local expenditure requirement in order to qualify for Federal disaster assistance under Public Law 875, such as that in effect in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and all of the States, will be imposed on the Trust Territory, Guam, or American Samoa at this time. However, further consideration will be given to this matter when their economies become more self-sustaining." To meet a special problem which subsequently arose, the Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Planning, on February 18, 1966, amended OEP regulations to provide that in "remote areas" a Federal financial contribution toward the permanent replacement of housing after a disaster may be made in an amount no greater than that estimated to be required for temporary shelter.

The action of the Congress in providing disaster assistance to the three territories soon and again proved a most fortuitous action

Typhoon Emma hit Yap and part of Palau on November 1, 1967, and caused damages estimated at \$1,635,000. Typhoon Gilda followed on November 13, 1967, bringing damages of about \$505,000 to the Rota District. OEP determined that the damage resulting from these typhoons was not sufficient to warrant a disaster declaration. However, in February 1968 the Congress approved a proposal to reprogram funds to meet the disaster needs of Rota and Yap, and as a result a total of \$453,000 was made available from the 1968 appropriation for rehabilitation needs--\$257,000 for Rota and \$196,000 for Yap.

Typhoon Jean, one of the worst to hit the area, struck the Northern Marianas and Northern Truk islands on April 11, 1968. The damage was so severe that President Johnson's declaration on April 18, 1968, of major disaster authorized an initial allocation of \$2,500,000 for relief and recovery work. This was followed on May 13, 1968, by an additional allocation by the Office of Emergency Planning of \$6 million, making a total of \$8,500,000 made available for assistance to the typhoon-damaged areas. OEP also provided emergency housing assistance, approving funds not to exceed \$800,000 for emergency housing construction and repair. Finally, the Congress, in the Second Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1968 (P.L. 90-392) approved an Administration request for supplemental disaster relief and has provided an additional \$6,200,000 for essential and urgently needed facilities for Saipan. Of this amount, a \$1,000,000 loan fund will be used for loans to the people in the stricken areas for the purpose

of constructing houses of basic design but with typhoon-resistant structural characteristics. Nearly \$5,000,000 will be used for a water and sewage system in Saipan which would, for the first time in the island's history, adequately serve the entire community. The balance of the funds will be devoted to a new high school facility, administrative buildings, and other destroyed or damaged facilities.

Ceiling Legislation.

The Act of June 30, 1954 (68 Stat. 330) providing for a continuance of civil government for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, placed a statutory ceiling of \$7,500,000 annually on Congressional appropriations for the Trust Territory. Under this ceiling only minimal basic services could be provided to the people of the Trust Territory. In 1961, a reassessment of needs in the Trust Territory led to basic policy changes involving a major acceleration of education and other programs. It was found necessary to increase the ceiling limitation if the United States was to meet its commitments under the trusteeship agreement to promote the economic, social and political development of the Micronesian people. At the request of the President, the Congress enacted Public Law 87-541 (76 Stat. 171), approved July 19, 1962, which amended the Act of June 30, 1954, by increasing the appropriation authorization for the Trust Territory from \$7,500,000 to \$15,000,000 for the fiscal year 1963 and \$17,500,000 thereafter. The funds appropriated and expended under the new authorization made possible an appreciable start toward bringing the physical facilities and the level of services to a minimum standard acceptable in an American community. In addition, there were some beginnings in the development of Micronesian resources. In spite of the start which the new authorization made possible, however, it was soon evident

that an enormous amount still remained to be accomplished if the United States was to discharge adequately its responsibilities in this area. The Administration again, therefore, requested a further authorization from the Congress, and on May 10, 1967, by Public Law 90-16 (81 Stat. 15) the Congress increased the ceiling on Trust Territory appropriations to \$25,000,000 for Fiscal Year 1967 and \$35,000,000 for Fiscal 1968 and 1969.

While the appropriations approved by the Congress have fallen somewhat short of the authorizations, the increases in funds made available as a result of the above enactments have made possible vast improvements in the U. S. administration of the Trust Territory. An accelerated education program was launched with over 500 new classrooms alone added since 1963 and more than 150 stateside teachers recruited for the accelerated education program. In 1963 enrollment in the public elementary and junior high schools was slightly under 15,000. The current enrollment is some 22,000. In 1963 about 300 students attended public high school compared to a current enrollment of 3,000. A vocational school is being established in Koror. Under the government's program for higher education outside of the Trust Territory, full or partial scholarships are provided a limited number of qualified students from the six Trust Territory districts, and in addition transportation grants are provided private scholarship holders or sponsored students. In 1963, 161 students were enrolled in institutions of higher learning in Guam, the United States and abroad. Today the enrollment is some 340, more than double that of 1963.

Major improvements have also been made in the field of health. In 1963 the only immunization programs carried out were those for infants, preschool and school children, and travelers. In 1964, a mass immunization project was instituted for smallpox, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough and poliomyelitis. This program is virtually complete. Follow-up programs on immunizations will be conducted periodically throughout the territory. The general level of health is good and a census made in early 1968 indicates a mortality rate lower than that of the United States, 7.2 versus 9.4 in the United States. An overall hospital construction plan has been developed, and final working drawings for new hospitals in the Truk and Ponape Districts are nearing completion. The facility at Ponape will be a central referral-teaching hospital to serve as a center for specialized or intensive care for three districts. An arrangement with the Guam Memorial Hospital will provide the same quality of medical care for the three other districts. The School of Nursing, now in Saipan, will be moved to Ponape and upgraded in its association with the new Ponape referral-teaching hospital.

Progress in the field of economic development has also been achieved since 1963. The Trust Territory's first major commercial fishing venture was established in Palau in August 1964. An engineering survey of possible plant sites for a second commercial fishery operation has been conducted. An economic development study conducted recently by a well-known mainland research firm is offering

helpful guidelines to the territorial government for economic development projects, and the report of the study has generated numerous proposals, some of which are currently under active consideration. A new commercial jet air service, involving Micronesian participation in investment and management, promises to provide a major step in economic development. Related to air service improvements, the airline is committed to develop tourism through construction of hotels in each of the six districts. A new sea transportation agreement was signed in August 1968 which will provide improved service to and within the territory. Essential features of the agreement include formation of a Micronesian corporation, six of whose twelve directors will be Micronesians. The agreement also provides for stock offerings to Micronesians and for training of Micronesian personnel in both ship and shore employment.

Despite the substantial advances since 1963, secondary schools still cannot accept all potential qualified students; replacement of inadequate sub-hospitals is needed, diseases traceable to unsanitary water supplies and sewage disposal systems are all too common; roads are inadequate; and the use of the territory's natural resources is handicapped by the lack of trained manpower and insufficient public infrastructure. To overcome these deficiencies, the Administration has again asked the Congress for a further increase in the ceiling to permit closing of the development gap by the early 1970's. On May 27, 1968, the U. S. Senate passed S. 3207, to amend the act of June 30, 1954, as amended, providing for the continuance of civil government

for the Trust Territory. As passed by the Senate, the legislation would provide a ceiling on appropriations of \$35,000,000 for each of the Fiscal Years 1968 and 1969, and \$120,000,000 for the three Fiscal Years 1970, 1971 and 1972. The legislation would provide in addition an authorization of up to \$10,000,000 for any single disaster in the future--this is a consequence of Typhoon Jean which devastated Saipan and other islands in April of 1968. The disaster funds would be in addition to those available under the Federal Disaster Relief Act or other special appropriations. The proposed legislation is pending action by the House of Representatives.

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Memo; Bill Moyers to the President, 12/22/64, Elmo Roper Name File, Box 263, WHCF, LBJ Library.

Memo, Donald Hornig to the President, 5/13/65, Ex ED 2, WHCF, Box 5, LBJ Library.

Memo, Marvin Watson to John Connor, 11/25/67, C.F. FI 4, WHCF, Box 15, LBJ Library.

Memo, Manatos to McPherson, 3/5/65, "State of the Union," Office Files of Bill Moyers, Box 42, LBJ Library.

Embtel 3069 (Saigon) Lodge to Rusk, 12/30/63, "Vietnam, Volume 1," Vietnam Country File, NSF. LBJ Library.

Letter, Lyndon Johnson to Ramsey Clark, 9/13/67, "President's Correspondence," Papers of Ramsey Clark, Box 34, LBJ Library.

D 0914-22, 7/5/68, Photo by Frank Wolfe, Presidential Collection, LBJ Library.

Transcript, Dean Rusk Oral History Interview, 9/26/69, by Paige E. Mulhollan, tape 1, page 5, LBJ Library.