

STATEMENT BY THE MICRONESIAN
DELEGATION

May 7, 1970

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The designation of Micronesia as a "strategic area" in Article II of the Trusteeship Agreement affects the procedure to be followed in relation to the "approval of the terms of (the Agreement) ... and of their alteration or amendment", and the agreement also includes a special provision regarding termination. It does not, however, affect the obligations of the Administering Authority towards the people of Micronesia. Like other Trusteeship Agreements, that for Micronesia contains in Article 6 the following words:

"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 towards 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 peoples concerned..."

The United States thus accepted the same obligations in respect of the political development of Micronesia as did other Powers that were constituted Administering Authorities under the International Trusteeship System. And, consequentially, the people of Micronesia received the same rights to political advancement "towards self-government or independence" as did those of other Trust Territories.

Recognizing these facts, the Congress of Micronesia directed the Political Status Delegation to examine, and report on, the questions that would need to be decided if Micronesia should choose either self-government in free association with the United States or independence. Out of all the

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possible alternatives theoretically open to Micronesia, these were the ones which commended themselves to the representatives of the people of Micronesia. In other words, they were the forms of "self-government or independence" considered most "appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Trust Territory and its peoples" and those embodying "the freely expressed wishes of the people", as reflected in the opinion of their elected representatives.

It should perhaps be noted that the criteria set out in Article 6 of the Trusteeship Agreement as determining the ultimate political status of the Trust Territory were those which have already been mentioned; the circumstances of the Territory; and the freely expressed wishes of its people. Neither the circumstances nor the wishes of the Administering Authority were here deemed to be relevant.

Since the Political Status Delegation has been directed to examine questions relating to independence, as well those relating to free association, it wishes to discuss these questions with the United States Delegation. It is conscious, too, that, in relation both to existing administrative responsibilities and formal obligations accepted in the Trusteeship Agreement, the United States would wish to be consulted on these questions.

The Political Status Delegation therefore requests that, before our discussions are resumed on the status of free association with the United States, the United States Delegation provide us with the official position of the Executive Branch of the United States Government on the following questions or issues relating to independence, so that we may include discussions of them in our report to the Congress of Micronesia.

First, in view of the strategic interests of the United States in the

Trust Territory, what is the attitude or the position of the United States Government toward the Trusteeship Agreement being terminated by Micronesia becoming an independent state?

Second, even if Micronesia were to become an independent state, we assume that a close relationship could exist between Micronesia and the United States which could be accommodative to the interests of both parties. It would require a transitional period, however, of a continuation of the Trusteeship Status, further preparation for independence, and discussions concerning the association or relationship that would exist between the two countries after independence. Our delegation therefore would like to know whether the United States Government is willing to begin to establish a timetable for a transition to independence, to redirect its assistance and action programs in Micronesia toward this end, and to begin discussions with Micronesian leaders on the future relationship which would exist between the two countries after Micronesia became independent?

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