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STATEMENT BY THE U. S. DELEGATION

This statement is in response to the second statement of the Micronesian Delegation on 7 May 1970.

The United States Delegation does not wish to quibble over the definition of free association. We certainly understand and appreciate the Micronesian Delegation's definition of that term. Since your delegation has, however, challenged the United States proposal, at least in part, for its failure to meet a so-called "UN definition" of free association, we believe that some further comments are desirable regarding the points made on this subject.

First you state that both Great Britain and New Zealand made their agreements with the West Indies Associated States and the Cook Islands, respectively, unilaterally terminable because they believed such a provision was a pre-requisite to UN agreement that those territories were no longer "non-self-governing". Without getting into the question of the motives of Great Britain and New Zealand, it is pertinent to note that despite the inclusion of this provision, the UN has not accepted the British contention that the West Indies Associated States are no longer non-self-governing. Moreover, the UN has accepted the United States contention that the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is now self-governing, despite the fact that the Federal Relations Act for Puerto Rico does not provide for unilateral termination. Thus the UN record does not substantiate the view that unilateral terminability is either a

necessary or sufficient condition for the transition from non-self-government to free association, and consequently we would again argue that there is no agreed "UN definition" of free association. We are therefore faced with two different definitions formulated by our respective delegations, rather than any failure to meet a fixed standard or generally agreed common usage.

I would now like to turn to your contention that United States history has shown a distinct trend toward closer integration, but does not lend equal credence to the proposition that Micronesia would be permitted to establish a looser association or to attain complete independence. We feel this is a distinctly inaccurate reading of United States history. Puerto Rico, a United States territory which we had acknowledged to be non-self-governing, has certainly moved to a status of much looser association in its current position as a Commonwealth. As for the possibility of independence, we need only look to the case of the Philippines, for over forty years a United States territory and now an independent state. Thus not only is our history contrary to your description, but the trend in recent years has been toward greater flexibility on this question of evolution.

We believe that the statements on defense contained in our paper of 6 May are realistic and need not be restated. We recognize that the experiences of World War II have left an indelible impression in Micronesia. However, under the United States proposal the foundation of Micronesian security and defense would rest on the commitment and the obligation of the United States to defend Micronesia and not primarily on United States forces

within the islands. Such a United States commitment and obligation has been a highly effective deterrent to would-be aggressors in many parts of the world, including Micronesia for the last quarter century. It is clear that the duty to defend Micronesia contained in the United States proposal would effectively deter aggressions of the kind experienced by Micronesia in World War II. It should always be remembered that an all-out shooting war is only one kind of aggression, usually the end result of a course of action involving many lesser forms, such as outside commercial invasion by exploitation of an area's resources. Even the effective defense of Micronesian territorial waters and fishing rights might prove to be more than Micronesia could afford. It is for these reasons that it is the sincere belief of the United States Delegation that in defense matters, our proposal is in the best interests of both Micronesia and the United States.

In your statement, you take the position that legal residency does not provide adequate safeguards for the protection of Micronesian land use or land transfer. We would be happy to entertain alternative proposals which you feel would provide the proper safeguards. Similarly, if the provision concerning the establishment of commissions to oversee and pass upon proposed land transfers is not satisfactory, or you think the powers too limited, we will be pleased to hear alternatives.

On the more general question of control of land, we wish to point out that while the United States offer does not provide everything which you have requested, it goes far in that direction. Under our proposal, Micronesian

land owners have much greater control and protection than at present. The United States in recent years has not added materially to its land holdings, has returned substantial land holdings, and under our proposal would be far less free to make new acquisitions. Under the United States proposal, the practice of retaining but not using land for public purposes would cease. Further, the United States is reducing its overseas defense posture and expenditures, rendering the acquisition of additional lands less likely. As a final point on this issue, we wish to assure you that the United States seeks, worldwide, to build its bases in places where we are welcomed by the local population. It triesto avoid base construction in places where we are not welcome.

In conclusion, I would like to restate our sincere belief that our proposal was formulated in an attempt to be as responsive as possible, within the limits imposed by practicality, to Micronesian desires as we understood them. As I stated on May 4, we believe that these discussions have provided the first clear expression of views by both delegations. We remain convinced that free association, as defined in the United States proposal will serve the interests of both parties.