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Opening Statement by Ambassador S. Harry Wright, United States
Representative on the Trusteeship Council, on the Trust Territory
of the Pacific Islands, June 3, 1970.

The United States is once again pleased to report on our
administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during
the last twelve months. It is indeed a personal privilege for me to
be able to do so for the first time.

I should like first to express on behalf of the United States
Government our great appreciation to the members of the Visiting
Mission for their extensive, searching and yet sympathetic consider-
ation of the conditions and problems of the Trust Territory. I
should like particularly to express to Mr. Rogers, as Chairman of
the Mission, our appreciation for having agreed to assume this task
and for bringing to the Mission the benefit of his extensive
knowledge of the Territory and his experience as a member of the 1967
Visiting Mission. We are also most grateful to the other members of
the mission and also to the members of the Secretariat who, at no
small inconvenience and with the need for considerable endurance and
fortitude, in view of the busy schedule, brought their knowledge and
judgment to bear on the achievements and shortcomings of our
administration of the Territory.

Having just returned from several weeks in Micronesia myself, I
know that your visit was not without its hardships and problems. But
I feel quite confident in my belief that you must have also found
your stay to be a most rewarding one as well. Certainly the beauty
of the islands, the warmth of the people and, I believe, the progress

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being made must have provided compensation for the arduousness of your duties. We are only sorry that the Mission did not have more time in the Territory, not just to see more things, but also to have been able to rest and enjoy the beauty of Micronesia. We do, however, greatly appreciate the energetic and conscientious manner in which the Mission pursued its tasks.

The United States Government certainly welcomes constructive criticism and fresh insights such as are embodied in the Visiting Mission's report. We have already begun and will continue to study the findings set forth in the report, and I am sure we will gain new ideas and perspectives from it. The Council may be assured that the Mission's report, together with the deliberations of the Council itself will be of great assistance to my Government, both in Washington and in Micronesia in pursuing its goals of advancement in all areas for the Trust Territory and its people.

The United States certainly takes most seriously its obligation to promote the political, economic, educational and social development of the Territory. We fully realize the problems involved in meeting these obligations and the fact that much remains to be done. But we believe -- and I saw the evidence as I believe did the members of the Mission -- that progress is being made, and that particularly in the past year, under the leadership of High Commissioner Johnston and with the goals of Secretary Hickel's Action Program, significant steps have been initiated which promise even greater advancement in the next several years.

The US Special Representative will describe in some detail the developments in the Trust Territory since the 36th session of the Trusteeship Council and will discuss some of the plans for the future. I should like, however, to mention several of the major events of the past year.

The Congress of Micronesia held its Second Session of its Third Congress in July and then had a further special session in January. In addition to its normal business, the Congress confirmed its desire to retain its present bicameral structure -- a decision made at the time of its establishment which it had agreed to review in the light of experience.

The efforts to rehabilitate Bikini have continued, highlighted by the official return of the atoll by the US Government to the Trust Territory in March -- an act witnessed by the Visiting Mission. Later full legal title will be formally transferred back to the people of Bikini. In the meantime the Bikinians are not only actively involved in planning for the various rehabilitation programs, but are actually taking turns working on the atoll on various projects. Intensive planting of coconuts and other subsistence plants has been

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under way since late 1969. Within the next two or three years, public buildings and homes will be completed and with the development of the subsistence crops the people of Bikini will be returned permanently to their atoll.

In January Assistant Secretary of the Interior Harrison Loesch in the opening address to the Congress of Micronesia highlighted two major points of emphasis of our administration -- Micronesian involvement in the budget process and decentralization -- both of which the Special Representative will discuss in greater detail. Mr. Loesch also inaugurated the critically important land cadaster program through which it is hoped that many of the longstanding land problems of the Territory can finally be resolved.

The Council will, I am sure, be interested to know that legislation has been introduced in the Congress to create a Micronesian War Claims Commission, working under the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, which would receive, adjudicate and authorize payment of Micronesian war claims up to the amount of \$10 million resulting from the agreement reached last year with Japan. The Commission would consist of five members, at least two of them to be Micronesians selected from nominees submitted by the Congress of Micronesia. Committee hearings on this legislation are scheduled in both Houses of the US Congress later this month. As soon as this legislation is enacted the preliminary work of the Commission will begin and actual appropriations will be sought.

Turning to the matter of the future of the Territory, the Council will recall that at its last session the US Delegation pointed out the considerable advances in Micronesian thinking -- particularly that of their Status Commission -- on the problems and possibilities of Micronesia's future. And will also recall that we expressed our belief that the time had now come for direct talks between the Micronesian leaders and US Government representatives.

During the intervening year there have been a number of significant developments. The Micronesian Status Commission has issued its report recommending a status providing for Micronesian self-government in free association with the United States. The report was considered by the Congress of Micronesia at its July-August 1969 session, but it was not officially endorsed. The Congress did, however, authorize a ten member delegation -- including all six members of the Status Commission -- to come to Washington for preliminary discussions as suggested by President Nixon and Secretary Hickel.

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These discussions took place for two and a half weeks in October 1969 and provided the opportunity for a useful exchange of views and position papers. Both delegations agreed to reassess their positions and in January 1970 Assistant Secretary Loesch, the Chairman of the US Delegation used the occasion of his trip to the Territory to convey some additional views and proposals to the Micronesian Delegation. This was followed by agreement to hold a second discussion session, this time in Saipan. This meeting took place in early May and lasted for a week. The Delegation exchanged statements and during the remainder of the week the various views and issues raised in the statements were explored. The two Delegations agreed that, in a matter of such vital interest to the people of Micronesia, the first public report of the results of the discussions should be that which the Micronesian Delegation will be making to the Congress of Micronesia this July. I am sure that the Council will appreciate this decision and will, as a result understand my inability to discuss the results of either the October or May meetings on the status question in any detail. I can say, however, that the discussions were most useful in increasing the understanding of the various views on both sides, and I can assure the Council that as soon as the status delegation's report to the Congress of Micronesia is released, copies will be provided to the Council.

I can also assure the Council that the United States is still dedicated, under the provisions of the UN Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, to providing the people of Micronesia with the opportunity to exercise their right of self-determination without undue delay. While we believe that the wishes of the people must be given great importance in deciding the exact timing of the transition to any new status, we would certainly agree with the view of the Visiting Mission that this change should take place sooner rather than later -- and that it is incumbent on the United States and Administering Authority to work with the people of Micronesia so that they will be ready for that day.

I should like at this point to introduce the US Special Representative and the two Special Advisers selected by the Congress of Micronesia, and the other members of the US Delegation.

Mr. Edward E. Johnston is undoubtedly known to most if not all members of the Council. Not only did he serve last year as Special Representative, but he has, of course just hosted the Visiting Mission during its stay in Micronesia. Unlike last year when he had only just assumed his position, Mr. Johnston appears before the Council this year after a full year as High Commissioner of the Trust Territory -- a year which, in no small part due to Mr. Johnston's efforts, has been marked by much activity in the Territory.

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Accompanying Mr. Johnston are Mr. Leo Falcam, the Executive Officer of the Trust Territory, and Mr. N. Neiman Craley, Jr., the Director of Public Affairs. Both Mr. Falcam and Mr. Craley are well known to the members of the Council, both having been members of the US Delegation to the 36th session, and in Mr. Craley's case several previous sessions as well.

As I stated, the Congress of Micronesia has designated two of its members to serve as Special Advisers to the US Delegation. The Honorable Ambilos Iehsi, Senator from Ponape, has been a member of the Senate since January 1969, having won a special election to fill the remainder of the term of the incumbent who resigned. Senator Iehsi serves on the Senate's Committees on Resources and Development, and on Judiciary and Governmental Affairs. Prior to his election to the Senate, Senator Iehsi had served from 1967 to 1968 in the House of Representatives, acting as floor leader.

Aside from his service in the Congress of Micronesia, Senator Iehsi was a teacher for several years, and was Dean of Students at the Pacific Islands Central School. Subsequently he was Political Affairs Officer for the Ponape District.

The Honorable Benjamin T. Manglona, a representative from Rota in the Mariana Islands District, is a member of the Marianas Territorial Party and has served in the House of Representatives since its inception in 1965. Representative Manglona is Chairman of the House Committee on Resources and Development and a member of the Committee on Appropriations. He is also a member of the Standing Committee on Government Organization and has served for the past year as a member of the Micronesian Political Status Delegation, participating in the meetings and discussions described earlier.

In addition to his activities in the Congress of Micronesia, Representative Manglona has served in the Mariana Islands District Legislature and was a delegate from the Trust Territory to the South Pacific Conference in 1967.

Last, but certainly not least, Mr. Kaleb Udui, the Legislative Counsel of the Congress of Micronesia, has this year officially joined the US Delegation. The Council will recall that Mr. Udui was an observer at last year's session, and thus is known to most members. Mr. Udui, who received his law degree from George Washington University Law School in Washington, D. C., has held his position since 1966, most of the life of the Congress of Micronesia. He has previous service as assistant attorney general in the Trust Territory Government.

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I know that I speak for all the members of the US Delegation in saying that I welcome the opportunity to be here and that I look forward to participating in the Council's thorough and constructive discussion of the United States administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

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