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STATEMENT BY N. NEIMAN CRALEY, JR., DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, RELATING TO S.J.R. NO. 26, SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, MONDAY, 19 APRIL, 1971.

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations:

We appreciate the opportunity of appearing before your committee to testify on S.J.R. No. 26, "requesting the Secretary of the Interior to consider the formation of an executive council to govern the executive branch of the Trust Territory Government as suggested in the report of the Political Status Delegation to the Congress of Micronesia."

The executive branch would like to present for your consideration a possible substitute for the above resolution and a copy of this proposed substitute is attached to this statement.

Our proposal would create a Joint Advisory Council consisting of members of the Congress of Micronesia. This Council would meet with the High Commissioner on a monthly basis to discuss and review matters relating to the governing of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

As we propose, the Council would consist of not more than six members appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The High Commissioner would willingly support such a proposal and he would welcome the opportunity of meeting and working with such a Council. This indeed would give the High Commissioner and his staff the opportunity to review and discuss with selected members of the Congress, matters of mutual interest that relate to the governing of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

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Naturally, many such discussions now take place, for the High Commissioner is in direct communication with the Speaker, the President and other members of the Congress on a day to day basis. However, the creation of this committee and the formalizing of their activities on a regular and continuous basis would be an additional point of contact between the executive branch and the Congress of Micronesia.

We sincerely feel that the above is a reasonable substitute for S.J.R. No. 26. The latter provides for the formation of "an executive council to govern the executive branch of the Trust Territory Government ..." Under our present system of government, this conflicts with our concept of separation of powers. We recognize that many Micronesians feel that the present system is unsatisfactory for the Trust Territory and we further recognize that the people of Micronesia will determine their future form of government when they also determine their future political status. In the interim we oppose modifying the present system to the degree suggested by S.J.R. No. 26, and we propose the creation of a Joint Advisory Council as an interim substitute.

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