

REMARKS OF SENATOR EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN
72 UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL HEARINGS - TIPI

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Mr. President and distinguished members of the United Nations
Trusteeship Council:

I appear before you today as a petitioner, an elected representative of all of the people of the Mariana Islands District of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and a special delegate of those people. I have come here today to speak on but one issue, yet perhaps it is this issue which concerns all of us in Micronesia most. It is the issue of our future political status.

The people of the Marianas District desire a close political relationship with the United States of America, much closer than that presently being considered by the Congress of Micronesia and its Joint Committee on Future Status. For this reason, it is the position of the Mariana Islands Delegation to the Congress that a separate Statement of Position on the issue of future political status is necessary.

Consequently, we have prepared this separate Statement of Position on the issue of future political status because, in our opinion, the actions of the Congress of Micronesia and, by its mandate, the Joint Committee on Future Political Status, have moved further and further away from a position of close political affiliation with the Government of the United States of America. The majority of the people of the Mariana Islands District, as expressed through our representatives in Congress, and through them, the District

Representatives on the Joint Committee, feel that the direction endorsed by the Joint Committee is not in the best interests^e of the people of the Mariana Islands District.

It must be stated at the outset that mere separation for separation's sake is not and has not been our aim. We advocate our present position for the sole reason that we desire a close political union with the United States of America -- a membership in the United States political family, and a future political status which the Joint Committee, its predecessors, and the Congress of Micronesia as a whole has rejected.

More than any other nation with which we have had contact, the United States has brought to Micronesia the values which we cherish and the economic goals which we desire. A close political affiliation with the United States -- closer than that of "Free Association" -- holds a promise for our future of preserving those values and implementing those goals.

We have traveled extensively throughout our District with other members of our Delegation. We have visited Rota, Tinian and the northern islands, and have met with the people of Saipan, and we find that the vast majority of our people share the views presented to you in this Statement.

What, then, are these values and goals? The values are human rights. Micronesia has for too long been dominated by autocratic powers, with little regard for the rights of their own subjects, let alone of Micronesians. The coming of the United States, on the other hand, changed all this. The spirit of two hundred years

of democracy, of a society which practiced the theory that a government should be "of the people, by the people, and for the people," of the Bill of Rights, ensuring that every man is created equal under the law and guaranteeing his human rights, of a country which has historically been a refuge for the oppressed and a land of opportunity for all people, was brought to Micronesia by the United States. Thanks to this great country, Micronesians now live as free men for the first time in four and a half centuries.

Political union with the United States will ensure that we keep this freedom so long denied us. With this freedom, of course, comes obligations. We recognize the United States position that political stability in Micronesia is key to the effort to maintain peace and security in the Pacific. As members of the Pacific Community, as a people which have been ravaged by war within the memory of every single member of this Council, we cannot say too strongly that peace must reign in the Pacific, and that war must never again destroy our islands. For this reason, we desire to make our contribution to the United States, which promises to keep the peace, as our share in the maintenance of peace and security in the Pacific.

The goal is economic development. Simply stated, we are of the opinion that the United States has more to offer Micronesia in this area than any other nation. It seems to be the general conclusion in Micronesia that some form of association is necessary to ensure the continuation of the process of economic development. A thorough study of the possessions, territories, and other members of the

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United States political family makes it clear that a close political relationship can ensure that degree of economic development which our people desire. American Samoa, an unincorporated U. S. territory, as compared with independent Western Samoa, is one example. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, with by far the highest per capita income and standard of living in the Caribbean, is another. And, closer to home, one has only to compare economic development on Guam, an unincorporated U. S. territory, with that of her sister islands of Micronesia.

Further, a brief examination of world political and economic conditions shows a high correlation between political stability and economic development. We remain uncertain about a future for Micronesia when the relationship under which that future will take place is itself intentionally and specifically made uncertain. We are prepared to become a permanent member of the United States political family for the sake of political stability, without which there can be no economic stability.

We are not afraid of possible abuse under such an arrangement with the United States. We know that the United States is not a perfect country; in today's world, we doubt whether any country so large and complex could be. But, we are satisfied that the United States Constitution offers us enough latitude to be able to protect our people from loss of their lands or wholesale economic domination by outsiders, and also to control the rate and nature of this development at a satisfactory level. Neither do we abrogate our rights to negotiate with the United States toward the most favorable resolution of our own position on such specific issues as may arise.

It has been noted that close affiliation with the United

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States will have the effect of assimilation of our culture into that of the United States. We recognize this. Our culture in the Marianas, however, has been already considerably affected by foreign cultures, Spanish/^{German} and Japanese as well as American. We view this phenomenon as a necessary adjunct to the process of economic development. Further, we find that this amalgamation has worked toward the strengthening of our people, and has reinforced our desire for social advancement.

In short, we believe that close political ties with the United States, such as were embodied in the 1970 Commonwealth Offer, represent the ideal goal for the people of the Marianas. The Congress of Micronesia, and through it the Joint Committee, has rejected this proposal. We believe further that the concept of Free Association, as mandated by the Congress and interpreted by the Joint Committee, does not and cannot meet the needs or satisfy the desires and aspirations of the people of the Marianas District.

The recent Third Round of Negotiations, held at Hana, Maui, and the Fourth Round of Negotiations held at Koror, Palau, has indicated to us that the Congress, through the Joint Committee, seeks goals other than those which we of the Marianas desire. While we respect and defend the right of all of the people of Micronesia to the free choice of political status, we are of the opinion that the direction taken within the past two years toward free association or independence differs so considerably from our own desired direction that we feel we cannot be parties to the

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achievement of that choice. Accordingly, at the close of the Fourth Round of Negotiations in Koror, the Mariana Islands District Representatives on the Joint Committee transmitted a request to the United States Delegation asking whether the United States would be willing to consider separate negotiations with a Mariana Islands District Future Political Status Commission. The United States Delegation responded affirmatively to this proposal. The only choice open to us is a separate political destiny.

I am, therefore, privileged to report to you today that legislation has been introduced in the Mariana Islands District Legislature authorizing the creation of a separate Future Political Status Commission for the Marianas District, empowered to enter into and conduct separate negotiations with the United States regarding a future political status for the Mariana Islands.

Members of the Council should be assured, however, that the Marianas Delegation pledges its full, complete and unequivocal support/ of the right of the Congress of Micronesia and of the Joint Committee to seek the attainment of whatever future political status they aspire to, and respectfully requests that other delegations reciprocate with regard to the position of the people of the Marianas.

The people of the Mariana Islands District have asked me to express their hope to this Council today that the Council will look favorably upon the political aspirations of the people of the District, and upon separate negotiations with the United States devoted toward the achievement of that status. We believe that we, like all of the

People of Micronesia and of the world, have the right to choose our own political destiny; and in making such choice, to assure for ourselves the freedoms guaranteed to us by the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement.

Thank you very much.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL:

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I BRING YOU GREETINGS FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT, AND BEST WISHES FOR SUCCESSFUL DELIBERATIONS IN YOUR CURRENT SESSION.

I AM INDEED VERY GRATEFUL FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU TO PRESENT AN ISSUE WHICH IS VERY CLOSE AND MOST IMPORTANT TO OUR PEOPLE: THE FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS.

THE MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER FIVE DISTRICTS WHICH COMPRISE THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, WERE PLACED UNDER THE LEGAL JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS. SINCE THE DATE OF THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED NATIONS, JULY 18, 1947, THE UNITED STATES HAS EXERCISED DIRECT SUPERVISION OVER THE TRUST TERRITORY, AS THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY. UNDER THE TERMS OF THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT, THE UNITED STATES IS OBLIGATED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO PROMOTE THE INHABITANTS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY TOWARD SELF-GOVERNMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREELY-EXPRESSED WISHES OF THE PEOPLE CONCERNED. THIS PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION, IS, I FEEL, THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE ENTIRE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT, AND IT IS THAT SUBJECT UPON WHICH I HAVE COME TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AS RECOGNIZED BY THE UNITED NATIONS, AND

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MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT, IT IS MY SOLEMN OBLIGATION TO ADVISE THIS COUNCIL OF THE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE, AND OF THE LONG QUEST FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF THOSE ASPIRATIONS.

OVER THE COURSE OF 451 YEARS, OUR PEOPLE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE DOMINANCE OF FOUR FOREIGN POWERS IN MICRONESIA. BY VIRTUE OF ANNEXATION OR CONQUEST, AND WITHOUT OUR CONSULTATION OR CONSIDERATION, OUR HOMES AND LIVES WERE ABRUPTLY CHANGED.

THE FIRST WESTERN VISITOR TO MICRONESIA, FERDINAND MAGELLAN, CLAIMED THE ISLANDS IN THE NAME OF SPAIN IN 1521. SPAIN RULED MICRONESIA FOR ALMOST 380 YEARS. AT THE END OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR IN 1899, MOST OF ETHNIC MICRONESIA, AND ALL THE ISLANDS WHICH NOW COMPRISE THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, WERE SOLD TO GERMANY. OUR NEIGHBORING ISLAND OF GUAM, INHABITED BY OUR CHAMORRO COUSINS, WAS CEDED BY SPAIN TO THE UNITED STATES. THE GERMANS, TOO, WERE UNABLE TO HOLD MICRONESIA DUE TO INCREASING MILITARY PRESSURES AND DEMANDS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. AS GERMANY MOVED OUT, JAPAN MOVED IN. SHE LATER LEGITIMATIZED HER CLAIM TO MICRONESIA THROUGH A MANDATE GRANTED BY THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. MICRONESIA REMAINED AS A JAPANESE MANDATE UNTIL THE CLOSING DAYS OF WORLD WAR II, WHEN THESE ISLANDS WERE WRESTED, INCH BY INCH, AT TREMENDOUS COST, FROM THE JAPANESE BY THE FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES. WITHIN THREE YEARS THEREAFTER, THE UNITED STATES HAD CONCLUDED AND SIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS A TRUSTEESHIP

AGREEMENT FOR MICRONESIA. THIS TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT HAS BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE 1947, OR FOR ALMOST 25 YEARS.

IT IS WELL TO POINT OUT AGAIN THAT ALL THIS FOREIGN DOMINATION IN MICRONESIA-DOMINATION OVER OUR LAND, OUR PEOPLES, WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT CONSULTATION OR ACQUIESCENCE BY THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA. NEVER WAS THERE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR PEOPLE TO HAVE THE OPTION TO SPEAK OUT ON THE IMPORTANT MATTERS WHICH FACED THEM, SUCH AS THE NATURE OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRY, AND THEIR FUTURE.

THE UNITED NATIONS HAS ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO DETERMINE THEIR POLITICAL FUTURE. THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER, WHICH ARE REITERATED IN THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT, MAKE IT VERY PLAIN THAT ALL PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO RUN THEIR OWN LIVES, AND TO HAVE AND BE FREE TO EXERCISE THE FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS WHICH ARE THE PROPERTY OF EVERY MAN.

OVER THE MANY YEARS OF FOREIGN DOMINATION, OUR PEOPLE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS OF EACH OF OUR FOREIGN RULERS. DURING ALL THOSE YEARS, WE HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO OBSERVE CLOSELY THE SYSTEMS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR, AND HOW THEY REFLECTED THEMSELVES IN THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES, ESPECIALLY WITH RELATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS. THE SPANISH ADMINISTRATION BROUGHT US ROMAN CATHOLICISM, WHICH TODAY IS THE FAITH PROFESSED BY VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE MARIANAS, AND WELL OVER HALF OF ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA.

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GERMANY CONCENTRATED AS MUCH ON COMMERCE IN MICRONESIA AS THE SPANISH DID ON RELIGION. THE JAPANESE ADMINISTRATION ACHIEVED NOTABLE SUCCESSES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT MOST OF THIS DEVELOPMENT ACCRUED DIRECTLY TO THE BENEFIT OF JAPANESE FIRMS AND INDIVIDUAL ENTREPRENEURS. THE LOCAL PEOPLE WERE AFFORDED ONLY A VERY LIMITED OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATIONS LEVEL, AND HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY WERE PRIVILEGES RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE JAPANESE. THE COMING OF THE AMERICANS USHERED IN A NEW ERA FOR US. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR CENTURIES, WE COULD ENJOY THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS TO WHICH ALL MEN ARE ENTITLED. AMERICA BROUGHT US ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND HEALTH CARE. MORE IMPORTANT, AMERICA TAUGHT US HOW TO LIVE AS FREE MEN. THUS, AFTER SO MANY YEARS, WE HAVE COME TO BEGIN TO SEE THE DAY WHEN WE WILL BE ABLE TO RUN OUR OWN GOVERNMENT. AS A DIRECT RESULT, WE ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE OUR OBLIGATION TO OURSELVES AND OUR PEOPLE MORE SERIOUSLY: OUR OBLIGATION TO ARRIVE AT A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL BE MOST BENEFICIAL TO OUR PEOPLE; A GOVERNMENT THAT WILL CONTINUE TO ASSURE THE FUNDAMENTAL EQUALITY OF ALL MEN AND PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE OTHER FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

OUR PEOPLE, AFTER A QUARTER-CENTURY OF AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION, HAVE COME TO KNOW THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY HAS BECOME VERY IMPORTANT TO US. AS A RESULT, WE HAVE BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN EXPRESSING OUR WISHES AS TO THE FORM WHICH OUR FUTURE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE. WE WANT A

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POLITICAL SYSTEM WHICH WILL INCORPORATE US INTO THE POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, OUR PEOPLE, THROUGH THEIR DULY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, HAVE EXPRESSED BOTH FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY, TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, THROUGH PETITIONS, AND THROUGH PLEBISCITES, OUR STRONG DESIRE THAT THE MARIANAS BECOME A PART OF THE UNITED STATES. THE PLEBISCITES WHICH HAVE BEEN HELD IN THE MARIANAS PROBABLY ARE THE BEST INDICATORS OF POPULAR SENTIMENT. IN THE MOST RECENT DISTRICT-WIDE PLEBISCITE, CONDUCTED IN 1969 BY THE MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS HAVE AGAIN VOTED

FOR CLOSE POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

A 1971 SURVEY, CONDUCTED AFTER THE COMMONWEALTH OFFER HAD BEEN MADE, REAFFIRMED THIS RESULT.

AT THIS STAGE, IT MUST BE POINTED OUT THAT WE DO NOT AS YET HAVE ANY SPECIFIC POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT IN MIND. THE POSSIBILITIES ARE, OF COURSE, LARGE. THEY INCLUDE REINTEGRATION WITH THE UNINCORPORATED UNITED STATES TERRITORY OF GUAM, INCORPORATION AS A SEPARATE TERRITORY, ATTAINING A COMMONWEALTH STATUS, AND OTHER POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS. IT IS OUR INTENTION TO ARRIVE AT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF OUR POLITICAL FUTURE THROUGH THOROUGH STUDIES OF THE AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES, THROUGH DISCUSSIONS AMONG OUR PEOPLE, AND EVENTUALLY, BY FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. WE WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS

THIS COUNCIL THAT, WHATEVER THE NATURE OF OUR FUTURE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES MAY BE, IT WILL PROVIDE FOR AS MUCH SELF-GOVERNMENT AS IS POSSIBLE WITHIN THE SYSTEM. AND IT WILL COME INTO EFFECT ONLY AFTER A SOVEREIGN ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS, HAVING VOTED AND APPROVING IT.

IN CONCLUSION, WE IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS ARE MOST APPRECIATIVE TO THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL FOR ITS LONG AND DEDICATED ASSISTANCE AND GUIDANCE DURING THESE MANY YEARS, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE PAST FEW YEARS WHEN OUR POLITICAL MATURITY WAS IN ITS FORMATIVE STAGES. ALL OF US WOULD AGAIN LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE NOT ONLY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, BUT TO EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS, FOR GUARANTEEING TO US OF THE INHERENT RIGHTS OF ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN POLITICAL DESTINY.

THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS HAVE OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED THAT THEY ARE READY TO EXERCISE THEIR BASIC RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION. WE HAVE EXPLORED THE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TOWARD A NEW AND GREAT FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS FOR OUR PEOPLE, AND WE HAVE RECEIVED AN ENCOURAGING REPLY TO THAT EXPLORATION. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS CAN TAKE PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT THE MATTER OF OUR FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS CAN BE RESOLVED. I AM CONFIDENT THAT OUR FUTURE PROMISES A NEW AND BETTER GOVERNMENT IN POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES, AND, AS A RESULT, A NEW AND

BETTER WAY OF LIFE FOR OUR PEOPLE.

AGAIN, MR. PRESIDENT, LET ME EXPRESS MY THANKS TO YOU AND
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR ALLOWING US TO APPEAR BEFORE
YOU TODAY. THANK YOU.