

It gives me great pleasure to join the parents and teachers of the members of the Class of 1972 of this High School to offer my congratulations for a ~~job~~ job well done.

Today marks for you not so much an end but a beginning. For you are on the threshold of a new world, the adult world, a world of responsibility and obligation in which you will be expected to give rather than receive guidance from others. As you enter this new world, you may very well be wondering what lies in store for you. You join the rest of ~~us~~ us in this room and all over Micronesia in this: we, too, are wondering what our future - the future of Micronesia - will be.

For the past five years your Congress has been negotiating the future with the United States. We have been negotiating to bring an honorable end to the Trusteeship and establish a self-governing Micronesian state in ~~with~~ free association with the United States. In these negotiations we have not asked ~~for~~ anything more-or less - than ~~what~~ what belongs to us. We have asked the United States to return our lands. We have asked for the recognition of our sovereignty and our right to independence if independence is what we want. We have asked ~~for~~ self-government. And we have asked for just add adequate compensation for the use of our islands and territorial waters by the United States. These we have asked because we have the right - inherent, moral and legal - to all of them.

It is not ~~for~~ anyone to grant or bequeath this right to us.

Yet, we are forced to "negotiate" for recognition of our sovereignty, for the ~~return~~ of eminent domain over our islands, for the right to draft our own constitution and control our internal laws and to receive a just and adequate rental for the use of our islands by the United States. Why? Why are we forced to negotiate for what belongs to us in the first place?

The Answer is painfully simple. We are weak and the ~~USA~~ United States is strong; we are small and the United States is huge. Our rights were taken away or suspended or entrusted to someone else not by our own choice but as a result of a war that we had no part in or any responsibility for. And so we have to negotiate. We have to negotiate because the United States for reasons of its own has not seen fit to return our rights voluntarily. Your Congress took the initiative on the status question. I shudder to think where we would be now if we had continued to wait for the United States to take the initiative in this whole question. For I have a suspicion that were ~~it~~ it left entirely up to the Administering Authority to take the lead, we would wait until hell freezes over before we resolve the question of Micronesia's future political status.

The United States can afford to take its time and wait. In view of the advantages it has in Micronesia, the trusteeship places no unbearable burden on the United States. There will be those who will argue that the \$50 million dollars given to the Trust Territory each year by the United States places unwarranted burden on a nation which not only faces many domestic problems of its own but has a war to fight in addition to

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of the world and conquest of outer space. Is this really so? I say no. The privileges and advantages that the United States has over a strategic trusteeship in Micronesia, and the denial of self-government to the Micronesians as a result of this trusteeship far outweigh this small amount of ~~money~~ money.

And so I say that the United States can afford to delay the resolution to the trusteeship in Micronesia, if it fails to get what it wants in the negotiations. By delaying the United States may also be hoping that more districts out of impatience or other reason will dissent from the position of the Congress of Micronesia and thereby undermine the ability of the Congress to negotiate with the United States for a future that may be less advantageous to the United States even if eminently suited to Micronesia.

I have been greatly irritated by reports that after the last round of status negotiations on Koror in April, certain members of the other delegation traveled to the other districts to talk to Micronesians whose positions about the future of Micronesia differs from the position of the Congress of Micronesia. I am disturbed not by the fact that they talked to these persons, or that there exist differing opinions in Micronesia - a fact that no one to my knowledge has denied or attempted to hide - but because this was a blatant move to undermine the negotiating position of the Congress of Micronesia, through direct contact with Micronesians not involved with the negotiations.

We do not deny that there are many Micronesians who question the desirability of free association and prefer a different alternative. Where such a different preference has been unmistakably made ~~clear~~ clear, as in the case of the Marianas, we have made due allowance for it in ~~our~~ our thinking and taken steps to recognize it. So there need be no~~x~~ fear in anyone's mind that the Congress^{of} Micronesia will impose on anyone a status that they oppose. It has always been the position of the Congress, after all, that the final decision on this ~~will~~ question will be made by the entire people of Micronesia.

But the entire population of Micronesia cannot negotiate with the government of the United States, just as the entire population of the United States cannot directly negotiate with the Congress of Micronesia on this question. For every Micronesian who disagrees with the Congress of Micronesia on this or any other decision, there are millions of Americans who will disagree with the United States government on any given decision it makes. So I say that the negotiations should be conducted by the authorized representatives of Micronesia and the representatives of the United^{States}, and the United States should live up to its pledge not to bypass the Congress of Micronesia and make direct contact with the population of Micronesia.

Having said that, let me now turn to what I consider to be an urgent step that should be made. This relates to preparation for taking over the government in Micronesia by Micronesians.

After the past four rounds of negotiations, it has been agreed by both sides that Micronesia will have self-government after we bring the trusteeship to a close. That much is clear. It is now time to start ~~the~~ taking concrete steps to prepare the Micronesians for that eventuality. In this we will need wholehearted support in Washington and the participation of the executive branch of the Trust Territory government. I want to propose several steps which should be taken immediately. First, I propose the creation of a Commission on National Unity. This commission should be empowered to review every government program to insure that they ~~do not~~ contribute to the strengthening of a sense of national unity in Micronesia. It will have the function of setting up national unity guidelines to be followed by the government in the allocation of funds and other resources.

Second, I propose the creation of a Commission on Transition to be composed by members of the Congress of Micronesia and others appointed from the ranks of the Executive Branch. This Commission on Transition should immediately get busy setting up target dates for the taking over of governmental responsibilities by Micronesians, and for the turning over of ~~the~~ governmental ~~responsibilities~~ property and facilities from the Trust Territory to the future government of Micronesia. Micronesians should be selected and training undertaken to prepare them to take over those key government positions which should be held by Micronesians on the day the new government of Micronesia comes into being. We cannot wait until day one to find and train Micronesians for this ~~purpose~~ purpose.

Third, I propose that the Congress of Micronesia during the special session in Ponape, or during the next regular session in January at the latest, enact the necessary legislation to create a Constitutional Convention. After this Constitutional Convention is created, it should ~~and~~ convene immediately to draft a constitution ~~to the people of Micronesia for their approval~~ for the new state of Micronesia. Within one year after the convention is convened, it should be required to submit a ~~new~~ constitution to the people of Micronesia for their approval.

Fourth, I endorse the recommendation of those members of the Congress of Micronesia who have asked for a review of our entire educational system in the Trust Territory. I note here that the latest such recommendation was made by my colleague, Representative Polycarb Basilius, during the last session of the Trusteeship Council.

Unless the goals of education in Micronesia ~~and~~ today are relevant to the kind of society we wish to see in Micronesia tomorrow, we shall ~~not~~ have wasted ^{every one's time} ~~everytime~~ effort, and money. I make these proposals as one member of the Congress of Micronesia. I understand that there are only 33 of us as opposed to 7,000 other Micronesians who are members of the executive branch of our government. I understand also that these 7,000 in the executive branch have taken issue with the Congress on certain key issues of government in the past and that their differing opinions have been the ~~the~~ reason for vetoing certain measures enacted by the Congress. I am glad to know that this is the case, that all 7,000 Micronesians

in the executive branch have such a strong influence on our executive. Perhaps it is only proper that the decisions of the 33 men in Congress should have less influence on the executive branch. After all, they are only responsible for their actions to those who elect them, and can be replaced every so often.

And so I make these recommendations with the understanding that many people may not agree with them. If that be the case, fine, but let us at least remember that unless we have established goals and ~~prop~~ priorities, we cannot begin to have truly organized and meaningful government and development in Micronesia.

I wish you all the best.