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FROM : USUN New York

25 JUL 1972
DATE: July 14, 1972

SUBJECT : Thirty-Ninth Session of the Trusteeship Council:
Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and
REF : Papua New Guinea.

GENERAL

The Trusteeship Council, at its Thirty-ninth Session May 23-June 16, 1972, held its annual hearing on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) and the Trust Territory of Papua New Guinea. Ambassador Bennett, United States Representative on the Council, was elected President of the Thirty-ninth Session and chaired the meetings.

As the session opened, the Chinese (PRC) delegation, in response to a Secretariat inquiry, said it would not take up its seat this year because of "limited personnel". The PRC's highest ranking national in the UN Secretariat, Under Secretary for Trusteeship and Decolonization Tang Ming-Chao, however, attended a surprisingly large number of Council meetings and made a special effort to cultivate Micronesians and Papua New Guineans at the many social gatherings held in connection with the Session.

The Soviet representatives on the Council gave every indication this year of being subject to the influence of the Moscow Summit. Soviet questioning of the United States over the administration of the TTPI was relatively mild compared to previous Council sessions, and the Soviets passed up several opportunities to exploit differences between USG representatives and members of the Congress of Micronesia which emerged during the meetings.

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Drafted by: IO/UNP:EFredricks
POL:RMImmerman

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TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

In reporting on developments in the TTPI during the past year, USG representatives emphasized two themes: Micronesians are rapidly moving towards direct management of their own affairs (i.e. self government), and considerable progress is being made towards the eventual termination of the Trusteeship. As proof of Micronesian political advancement under the Trusteeship, USG representatives cited the appointment of an ever increasing number of Micronesians to positions in the TTPI executive branch, the passage by the Congress of Micronesia of an advise and consent law which gives it a major new voice in approving such appointments to top level executive positions and the increased participation of the Congress in determining how funds available to the Territory will be spent.

USG representatives also summarized the results of the two rounds of future political status negotiations in Hawaii and Palau and stressed that separate talks with representatives of the Marianas district stemmed from the desire on the part of the Marianas to negotiate a political status different from that of the other five districts.

Both of the Special Advisers to the United States Delegation, Senator Andon Amaraich of Truk and Congressman Polycarp Basilius of Palau, were critical of USG administration of the TTPI, the former particularly so. Senator Amaraich, while admitting that "the door to self government was beginning to open", charged that policy making in the TTPI still rested almost exclusively in American hands, indigenous participation in the administration was still minimal and the United States continued to pursue a policy which encouraged the political fragmentation of Micronesia. He sharply criticized the USG for agreeing to the request of the Marianas for separate political status negotiations and said "the United States should have taken the position that the people of Micronesia would have to be dealt with as a whole until the Congress of Micronesia specified otherwise."

Amaraich's statement shaped the ensuing general debate in the Council, with representatives of Australia, France and the Soviet Union questioning petitioners from the Mariana Islands at some length about whether they had tried to obtain approval from the Congress of Micronesia for their direct talks with the USG. The Soviet representative publicly deplored alleged USG efforts to "fragment" Micronesia and charged that the US was trying to make the Marianas into a military base.

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In response, USG representatives took the position that the United States as the administering authority was committed to terminating the Trusteeship for the entire Territory at the same time but that under the Trusteeship Agreement the US was not obligated to guarantee a common future status for Micronesia. In private conversations with USUN officers, however, the Australian and French representatives argued that any future agreement terminating the Trusteeship which provided for separation of the Marianas District from the rest of the TTPI would face considerable difficulty in obtaining necessary Security Council approval unless the Congress of Micronesia had previously agreed to the separation. The French and Australians offered as "friendly advice" the observation that without such agreement on the part of the Congress of Micronesia, the US would find it hard to convince a majority of SC members that it had not actively encouraged "separatist feelings" in the Trust Territory in order to maintain control over the Marianas.

The Council's increasing preoccupation with the Marianas problem is reflected in the report it adopted this year which recommends for the first time that any future agreements on status have the approval of the "legislatures concerned". Next year's Trusteeship Council debate may well see even greater emphasis on the Marianas issue and the related issue of independence for the entire TTPI. If the PRC participates, the Soviets may feel obliged to outdo the Chinese in displays of anti-colonialist rhetoric.

Senator Amaraich also complained in his presentation that Micronesia might not be adequately represented by the United States at the forthcoming Law of the Sea Conference. The Australian and British representatives both expressed the hope that some means would be found for proper and full presentation of Micronesian views on Law of the Sea, particularly if these views differ from those of the USG.

The Council closed its consideration of the TTPI with the adoption of a resolution calling for the dispatch of a four-member Visiting Mission to the Territory in early 1973. The Mission will include a representative of the Soviet Union for the first time. Previous four-man missions had included a representative from the Republic of China as well as Australia, France and the United Kingdom. (During informal consultations among Western members of the Council before the beginning of this year's session there was no enthusiasm for any move to reduce the size of the mission to three. Instead, there was general agreement that such a transparent effort to keep the

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Soviets out of the TTPI would produce considerable unfavorable publicity for the Council.) The Soviets appeared delighted with the invitation to participate in a TTPI mission and, in an apparent move to reciprocate, hosted a reception for the Council, an unusual act of hospitality on their part since they have in recent years castigated the Council as dominated by the imperialist powers and cast themselves in the role of outsider.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Council's discussion of the Trust Territory of Papua New Guinea centered on the significance of the recently held (February-March 1972) House of Assembly election as well as on the Territory's political future.

The Council discussed the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission which had observed the elections on the invitation of the Government of Australia. The Mission, composed of two representatives from the General Assembly's Committee of 24 as well as two members of the Trusteeship Council, and headed by the US member, Ambassador Bennett, found the elections to be "comprehensive, thorough and fair". The Mission's report noted that the dominant issue of the election was the question of when Papua New Guinea should receive self government. The Pangu Pati (Papua New Guinea Union Party), which called for immediate self government, made the biggest gains in the election and became the senior partner in the new coalition government. The Australian representative on the Council pointed out that the Australian Government plans to enter very shortly into talks with the new coalition government regarding the timing of self government and that Australia is willing to grant full self government to the Territory during the lifetime of the present House of Assembly (i.e. by 1976) if "the people so desire it". Mr. Gavera Rea, Papua New Guinea Minister of Labor and a Special Adviser to the Australian delegation, stated that those parties which had joined with his party (the Pangu Pati) to form the coalition accepted the Pangu Pati's position advocating immediate self government. He admitted however that his party at this time was not calling for immediate independence. One of the other Special Advisers, Mr. Anton Parao of the opposition United Party, urged that self government not be "imposed" upon the Territory and in general called for a "go slow" policy on the part of Australia with regard to political development in Papua New Guinea.

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In their questioning, Council members expressed satisfaction with recent political advances as demonstrated by the House of Assembly election and focused principally on economic development issues, particularly the question of outside investment in the Territory and the degree of indigenous participation in local business ventures.

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