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VICARIATE OF THE CAROLINES AND MARSHALLS
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Suggestions for Follow-Up on Bishop Neylon's Pastoral Letter

I. INTRODUCTION. In his pastoral letter of January 1st, 1973, Bishop Neylon urged all of the people of the Vicariate to assume their responsibility as Christians in working for the future political status. As a practical means for their obtaining the knowledge they must have to evaluate the issues, Bishop Neylon suggests in his covering letter of January 2, 1973 that we "cooperate in the political education of the people by organizing discussion groups, meetings, etc."

These notes are intended as a help for those who would like to get their people discussing the issues, but find that they are short of materials for structuring such discussions.

II. AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

A. Personnel. In each district center there is a Political Education Officer ready and willing to provide materials that have been published on the Status question. Often these men would be able to conduct meetings themselves, but would be very grateful for any help the parish could give in setting up the meetings.

In the Education Office there are Social Studies Specialists, area supervisors, high school teachers who frequently have worked up materials on this question.

B. Written Materials.

I. Official Documents. The most important and useful documents on the Status question are the following, all of which should be obtainable through the Political Education Office in each district.

1. Final Report of Future Political Status Commission to Congress of Micronesia, July, 1969.
2. Reports on Micronesian-U.S. Discussions. These are: Round Three (Hana-Hawaii, October 1971), Round Four (Koror, April 1972), Round Five (Washington, August 1972) and Round Six (Barbers Point, October 1972).
3. Report of the Political Status Delegation of the Congress of Micronesia, July, 1972.

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4. Political Status Digest, vol. I (1970) and vol. II (1971). These contain Congressional Speeches on the Status question.

II. Other Valuable Materials.

1. Micronesia: A Changing Society, by Father Francis X. Hezel. Unit IV of this high school textbook deals with "The Building of A Nation." (PLEASE NOTE: you will need both the Student Booklet and the Teacher's Guide.) Copies of these works are available in all Trust Territory high schools, public and private.
2. Ponapean Clergy Statement of August 29th, 1972 to the Congressional Delegation from Ponape District. (5 pages, xeroxed.)
3. Analysis of the Draft Compact of Free Association, by F. T. Uludong, August 25th, 1972. (11 pages, xeroxed.)
4. Gualdalupe Borja, "American Territories - A Survey" in Micronesian Reporter, 3rd Quarter, 1972.

III. HISTORY. The basic facts in the evaluation of the Political Status question are these:

1. In 1967, Congress of Micronesia established a joint commission of Senators and Representatives to begin investigation of the question on Micronesia's permanent political status in the future.
2. In time this commission become the Congress' delegation to work out a political status agreement with the U.S. Six rounds of talks were held.

Round 1, Washington, 1969
Round 2, Saipan, 1970
Round 3, Hawaii, 1971
Round 4, Koror, April, 1972
Round 5, Washington, August, 1972
Round 6, Barbers Point, October, 1972

3. The highlights of these talks had been as follows:

Round 2: U.S. offers Commonwealth, Micronesia rejects and proposes Free Association founded on four basic propositions:
"(a) That sovereignty in Micronesia resides in the people of Micronesia and their duly constituted government;

- "(b) That the people of Micronesia possess the right of self-determination and may therefore choose independence or self-government in free association with any nation or organization of nations;
- "(c) That the people of Micronesia have the right to adopt their own constitution and to amend, change or revoke any constitution or government plan at any time; and
- "(d) That free association should be in the form of a revocable compact, terminable unilaterally by either party."

Round 5: Partial Draft Compact is drawn up covering three areas; Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Defense.

Round 6: Micronesian delegation, after hearing much criticism of the Draft Compact, asks the U.S. to consider both Free Association and Independence. U.S. claim it has no authorization to consider Independence. Talks come to a halt with no development on either option.

IV. POSSIBLE PROGRAMS. We suggest three possible programs you might use to help your people grow in their Christian understanding of the Status question.

PROGRAM 1. Working from Felt Needs.

Purpose: For people to come to see the advantages/disadvantages of each option by beginning with their aspirations and seeing how each option meets or fails to meet these aspirations.

Method: Ask people what they want from their government. They will probably indicate first: schools, hospitals, field-trips, jobs. From there some might go deeper to such things as preserving Micronesian identity, custom, values, etc. Then with the list of their felt needs before them, see what option seems best.

This method, as compared with the other methods listed, involves the participants more, is less technical, convinces them they can evaluate the factors of the problem. It is less informational, but more suited to building up right attitudes towards the Status question, and towards their capacity to cope with it.

PROGRAM 2. Explanation of the Pastoral Letter. (one or two meetings; one or two sermons.)

Purpose: To explain, paragraph by paragraph, the salient ideas of the Bishop's pastoral letter in order to arouse people's interest. If successful, this program should lead people to want more. Confer Programs 3 and 4.

Method: Explanation of salient ideas;

Paragraph 1. Christian involvement in development, cf. Vatican II "The Church in the Modern World.", Chapter 4, Progress of Peoples, paragraph 13.

Paragraph 2. A Christian right to determine his future. This is based ultimately on his freedom as a son of God and on his human dignity, healed and elevated by Christ redemptive incarnation.

Paragraph 3. The Christian's responsibility and obligation to exercise his right of choice.

Paragraph 4. The complexity of the issues. At first, most people will feel incapable of evaluating the options and making a good choice, but if the options are explained clearly and simply and if some of the consequences are pointed out, as for example, a military presence, many will find they can make wise Christian decisions.

Paragraph 5. All of us should discuss the matter with openness and a real desire to find what is God's will in the matter.

PROGRAM 3. "What Are The Options?" (5 or 6 meetings.)

Purpose: To make people aware of what is meant by "Free Association", "Independence", "Commonwealth", and to show what we can expect to happen in Micronesia in any of these options.

Method: Use the explanations of Borja's "Survey" cited above and the materials in Father Hezel's textbook. For groups that can read English, you may be able to obtain copies of the student's booklets from the local high school.

PROGRAM 4. "How Are Things Now?"
(3 or 4 sessions.)

Purpose: To consider the Draft Compact drawn up by the two delegates in Washington, 1972 and to see if they are acceptable in terms of Christian and Micronesian values.

Method: For English speakers, to have copies of the Draft Compact as drawn up at the 5th Round of Talks (Washington, 1972), as well as a copy (or copies) of the Ponape Clergy Statement, and then read and discuss the compact. Is it clear and detailed enough in determining each side's rights and obligations? Do you agree with Uludong's analysis that one paragraph takes away what a previous one seemed to give? Does the Compact excessively limit the sovereignty of Micronesia as a people? Does the Compact leave Micronesia with full control over her internal affairs?

For non-English speakers, it will be necessary to explain the Draft Compact and discuss it, as above, in terms of the explanation. It would seem to be necessary at least to translate sections of the Compact into the language so people could study the text.

January 16, 1973