

SPC Ends: Delegates

PACIFIC DAILY NEWS, Sept 23, 1973

A-3 The historic 13th South Pacific Conference ended here Thursday afternoon slightly ahead of schedule after a fortnight of meetings dotted with strained, dramatic and emotional moments.

In the final meeting Thursday the report of the conference was unanimously adopted by the delegates. Friday and Saturday mornings the report was under consideration by the South Pacific Commission, which will conclude Tuesday, it is hoped.

The Commission, made up of eight Governments, is meeting perhaps for the last time in closed and separate session. It started deliberations Friday and hopes to conclude Tuesday.

The French Senior Commissioner, H. Nette, broke himself away from his routine of swimming in Tumon Bay, which he has done daily since he walked out of the conference Monday, to chair the Commission.

Three of the projects approved in the conference report which affect Guam are the South Pacific Regional Development Bank, the South Pacific Regional Transport Survey and the Fifth South Pacific Games.

Jesus C. Guerrero, president of the Bank of Guam, was appointed chairman of a South Pacific Regional Bank Committee which would determine whether capital was available to establish such a bank and would investigate the possibility of obtaining soft loans. The committee will submit a report by July 1974.

Chairman of the SPC subcommittee on the proposed regional bank, Tom Tobunbun of Papua-New Guinea concluded in his report that "it is recognized that the establishment and operation of a South Pacific regional development bank will probably depend on political decisions rather than questions of strict financial feasibility. This study has shown that the bank could be a viable institution even if its capital resources comprised solely of paid up capital—the alternative levels suggested being \$30 million and \$56 million. These amounts may seem large for the developing countries and

accepted the invitation of the Government of Cook Islands to host the 14th (1974) South Pacific Conference at Rarotonga. The 15th conference will be held at Nauru.

The representative of Fiji nominated G. Champmoreau, delegate from New Caledonia, as vice chairman of the 1974 conference.

Champmoreau replied that he was touched by this gesture but wanted time to think about it. The outspoken and frank delegate pointed out that the nomination was "somewhat embarrassing to him" since only his government could nominate its delegate to the next conference.

Since the delegate from New Caledonia did not follow France's example and walk out of the conference last Monday when the delegate from Cook Islands spoke against the French nuclear tests in the Pacific, Champmoreau felt perhaps he

would not be on good terms with the government once he returned home.

The conference finally amended the proposal to state that it would like a member of the New Caledonian delegation at the 14th conference to be vice chairman and expressed with acclamation the wish that it be Champmoreau.

At the conclusion of the conference, Mrs. S. Scanlan, from American Samoa, said, "Our family of islands must continue to work together under those immortal words of liberty, equality and brotherhood."

Champmoreau of New Caledonia was asked to speak on behalf of his fellow delegates. In an emotional speech, he thanked Guam for being such good hosts. He especially thanked Senator Ricardo Bordallo and family for the cruise which enabled the delegates to see the "beautiful

coast of Guam."

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Won Pat Wants Weight Behind Status Study

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — In a letter to President Nixon Thursday, Rep. Antonio B. Won Pat asked for the creation of a special commission to study possible changes in the political status of Guam.

"I respectfully request that you appoint a special presidential committee which can study the situation in concert with the elected officials of Guam, and make the necessary recommendations to you and to the Congress," Won Pat wrote.

The Guamanian delegate said that such a White House commission would lend weight to the findings of the status investigation set up by the 12th Guam Legislature and the governor's office. Won Pat included a copy of the House resolution he introduced last week urging Congress to support the effort of Guam's elected officials in determining the best political alternative open to them.

One possibility suggested is the advancement of Guam from a territory to commonwealth status, the level of relationship Puerto Rico now has with the United States. The White House already has commissions studying the political status in Puerto Rico and in Micronesia. Won Pat earlier this year introduced legislation that would grant Guam the presidential and vice presidential vote. Won Pat himself has a vote in committee and a voice on the House floor, but no power to vote in the House.

"As citizens of a free democracy, the people of Guam are now asking that their position within the frame work of this great country be reviewed and improved," Won Pat told the President. "I trust that your support for this endeavor will be forthcoming, and I would be most happy to cooperate and

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3
coast of Guam."

The Senior Commissioner for Australia, C. Reseigh, told the conference that it would be his last time at the SPC. With the full self-government of Papua New Guinea coming in a few months, his link with the SPC would be severed.

G.F.D. Betham, secretary general of the SPC said, "neither the conference nor the commission would ever be the same again after this historic self-examination."

During early stages of the conference, a resolution was adopted to modify the functions and operation of the SPC by amending the Canberra Agreement. The future status committee would recommend proposals for the merger of the South Pacific Conference with the Commission session.

Betham added that he thought the Commission would "prove itself sturdy enough to emerge from the crucible of self-examination a stronger,

more rational, more effective and truly regional organization."

Before formally declaring the Conference closed, Chairman Kurt Moylan said he "had added some new words to his vocabulary—Pacific diplomacy, the Pacific Way. Nothing is accomplished when you walk away from your brothers."...

He felt the Conference would go away stronger, more united and more determined to succeed.