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Micronesians Divided

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. (AP) — Trouble in paradise is the theme that is painted at U.N. headquarters of faraway Micronesia, known officially as the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Outsiders thinking about the 115,000 inhabitants of the 2,000-odd islands may envy their simple life, their 75-to 85-degree climate and their elbow room of three million square miles of ocean.

But U.N. observers report that the islanders are divided over whether they should stay together or split up and whether they should remain under the United States or take some degree of self-government.

Germany controlled the islands before World War I, and Japan had them between the wars. The United States took them in World War II. The U.N. Security Council gave Washington a trusteeship over them on April 2, 1947.

The agreement made the islands a so-called strategic trust territory. That allowed the United States to establish bases and station forces there but required that it move the inhabitants toward self-government or independence.

Even before that, however, the United States had started using some of the islands as atomic test zones, and Bikini Atoll became an international household word.

Bikini, Eniwetok and Kwajalein are part of the Marshall Islands, one of three groups in Micronesia. The others are the

Carolines, which include Pohnpei, and the Marianas, of which Saipan and Tinian are part. Saipan is the territorial capital.

The United States ultimately saw the islanders develop enough political consciousness to establish a Congress of Micronesia. Four years ago, a delegation from the congress began talks with U.S. officials on the territory's future.

They had agreed by last year that Micronesia should have self-government in free association with the United States. Then the congress suddenly instructed its delegates to seek independence. The talks were suspended.

Since then, the United States has begun separate talks with delegates from the legislature of the Marianas.

The Marianas islanders have voted several times for separation from the rest of Micronesia and unification with Guam, formerly part of the Marianas but now a direct U.S. dependency. The United States has agreed to the separation.

Meanwhile, a U.N. mission reported the situation to the Trusteeship Council. The council elicited a statement from the U.S. delegate that U.S. policy still was to maintain the unity of the territory.

On June 22, the council urged the United States to resume the talks with the all-Micronesia delegation and said a final settlement should please both the Marianas islanders and the other