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How

1 . After three hours of testimony, the hearing was
2 recessed to continue at a later date, not yet specified.

3 (ALL USERS PLEASE CREDIT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)

4 (PANGELINAN'S STATEMENT ON STATUS SEMINAR)

5 SAIPAN, February 13 (CONGRESS RELEASE)---During Wednesday's

6 Senate meeting (Feb. 13) Senator Edward Pangelinan of the

7 Marianas submitted for insertion in the Senate Journal, a

8 prepared statement he delivered at the University of Guam

9 seminar on "The Future Political Status of Micronesia, Guam

10 and any Inter-Relationship of the Two."

11 According to Pangelinan's statement, the last ten years

12 have revived the age-old question of whether man can govern

13 himself in the midst of problems brought about by technology

14 versus the question of whether once adequate political skills

15 could be used by man to "determine his destiny." Pangelinan's

16 statement noted that the Marianas Political Status Commission

17 which he heads is seeking the "best of both possible worlds,

18 a degree of self-government never before achieved by the

19 people of the Marianas and for the first time,...to be

20 combined with the strength and security made possible by a

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1 close working and political relationship with the United
2 States."

3 The Senator's statement outlined the history behind the
4 present Marianas/U.S. Negotiations stating: "The Marianas
5 people have persistently expressed their desire for closer
6 and more secure ties with the United States." This expression,
7 according to the statement, have come in the form of resolutions
8 passed in two meetings, municipal councils, the District
9 Legislature and through referenda of the people.

10 A brief summary of what has transpired during the
11 Marianas/U.S. Negotiations was also outlined in the statement.
12 It pointed out that the Marianas Political Status Commission
13 has no desire to hamper or undercut the negotiations of the
14 Joint Committee of the Congress of Micronesia since termination
15 of the Trusteeship Agreement can only occur simultaneously
16 for all districts of Micronesia.

17 Pangelinan's remarks noted that concurrent with the
18 Marianas Negotiations, efforts are underway to improve the
19 status relationships presently in force between the U.S. and
20 Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. It also noted

1 that although the Joint Communique describes the future
2 status of the Marianas as that of "Commonwealth," there is
3 no intention or desire to "imitate the Puerto Rico experience
4 and although the territorial frameworks as now exist in Guam
5 and the Virgin Islands have been evolving and improving over
6 the years, they fall short of the local self-government
7 required by the Marianas."

8 There is also a critical need for capital improvements
9 and economic development in the Marianas and that presents a
10 unique opportunity for implementation of an overall plan for
11 the islands, the statement said. By the orderly implementation
12 of those plans, according to the statement, the Marianas
13 could move quickly toward economic self-sufficiency while
14 "avoiding the perils of uncontrolled growth and development
15 that have plagued Guam and the Virgin Islands."

16 In terms of U.S. military land requirements in the Marianas,
17 the statement indicated that the people of the Marianas are
18 prepared to make land available to meet the U.S. Defense
19 role in the Western Pacific in return for a long-term assurance
20 of economic and financial support by the U.S. Pangelinan's

1 remarks pointed out that these questions are still under
2 negotiations and must be freely decided by the people of the
3 Marianas.

4 The Senator's statement also mentioned the familiar and
5 major divisive factors affecting political modernization and
6 unity in Micronesia such as geographical dispersion of the
7 islands, the several existing local languages and ethnic
8 diversity. It noted that the democratic political development
9 which has occurred under the sponsorship of the U.S. leadership
10 might be considered by some as a "divisive rather than a
11 unifying force."

12 The statement, however, noted that despite all these
13 factors which work against Micronesian unity, there are
14 other powerful forces which tend to bring Micronesians
15 together such as the establishment in 1964 of the Congress of
16 Micronesia; development of frequent air service among the
17 districts which bring people into frequent contact;
18 Micronesians attending schools in common institutions of
19 learning both within and outside of Micronesia and the use of
20 the English language and others, all of which have contributed

1 to the "Pan-Micronesian Ideal."

2 All in all, the eventual political destiny of Micronesia
3 remains to be seen, the statement indicated, which if it were
4 to become "Independent" would be the largest nation -state
5 in the Pacific. The statement questioned whether any nation,
6 even long-established and powerful ones are any longer
7 "Independent." It concluded that "Interdependence" not only
8 economically but perhaps politically could be a reality in
9 the future among nations of the world.

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