

Seminar Studies Micronesia Unity

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The only feasible and acceptable form of integration for the Micronesian people is a loose federation of internally autonomous, quasi-sovereign states, said Palauan Sen. Roman Tmetuchl at an "All University Seminar" held yesterday to discuss the political status of Micronesia and Guam.

Dr. Donald F. McHenry, project director of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, cautioned those attending the day-long seminar at the University of Guam that discussion of incorporation

may be readily appealing, but

These remarks were among many discussed yesterday by persons ranging from senators in the Trust Territory and Guam, professors, a Carnegie Endowment director to university students.

Dr. Frank King, associate moderator, said the university has not played a strong enough role in the political status movement in Micronesia.

McHenry cited a need for groups to get together to examine foreign policy and determine the natural sources of democracy and the tendency of governments to change

evolution or had they held. Former Gov. Carlos Skinner, during a brief introductory talk, noted the continuous progress of developing self-government in the Pacific.

The trend began constitutionally on Guam with the passage of the Organic Act of 1950. It continued with sovereignty changes in Western Samoa in 1962, the Cook Islands in 1964, Nauru in 1968 and Fiji in 1970, he said.

"We are now facing the political maturity of the Trust Territory and New Guinea," Tmetuchl added.

Gov. Carlos Skinner, in a statement by Gerald S. Perez, said,

"Guam and Micronesia are severely impeded from realizing their fullest and most optimum potential within a self-determined political framework...as many of the present laws and policies of the United States are not in harmony with local conditions and aspirations."

Dr. William V. Vitarelli, moderator of the seminar, said islanders had independence before Western Civilization and Japan encroached their cultures and governments in the Pacific.

Sen. Frank Lujan, chairman of the Legislature's Political Status Commission, said in his

policy statement that Guam as an "unincorporated territory" is nothing more than "a colony."

"We are helpless to regulate policy on alien immigration, which has increased more than 130 per cent in the last eight years," he said.

Lujan called the Commonwealth status of Puerto Rico a "dressed-up" Organic Act. "We do not want to follow Puerto Rico's footsteps, and should never enter into a compact with the U.S. or another country without unilateral amendment," he concluded.

Sen. Paul Bordallo, a member of the Political Status Commission, called for the political unity of all of Micronesia in the form of a "confederation" patterned similarly after Europe.

"Collectively we can bargain, individually we cannot," he said.

"Economic dependence is a hurdle to Guam's change in political status, as is the strategic military interest of all major nations in Micronesia and Guam," Bordallo added.

Congress of Micronesia Sen. Tmetuchl, after conducting a study among villages in Palau, stated the official position of the Palau delegation on any change in political status at Wednesday's COM session in Saipan.

...we wish to make clear the minimum conditions and terms we will insist upon in considering any integration of Palau District into a larger

Micronesian legal and political entity," he began.

"Like the other peoples of Micronesia, we Palauans have our own culture and language, and our own unique economic and political history, both past and recent. It follows therefore, that we also have our own particular needs and expectations for the future.

"This is equally true of the peoples of the other five districts of the TT. The U.S. has recognized these differences with respect to the people of the Marianas and should also recognize them elsewhere.

"Because of these differences," Tmetuchl continued, "we Palauans find unrealistic and unacceptable the concept of a strong central government with the power to impose uniform laws or similar types of economic development upon all the people of Micronesia.

"The laws and political and economic institutions desired, for example, by the people of Truk might be as unsuitable for us as ours appear to be to the people of the Marianas.

"It is the position of the Palau delegation that the only feasible and acceptable form of integration of the Micronesian people is a loose federation of internally autonomous, quasi-sovereign states.

"Our proposal for a federation envisions the individual states, separately and collectively, delegating authority and funds to the central government in certain areas; each state would be responsible for all aspects of internal government, as well as

certain aspects of international affairs, finance and foreign trade which have direct impact upon each state."

...the assumption of its own

...acceptable to the U.S. or the rest of Micronesia.

He concluded his remarks accusing the U.S. of pursuing a course more consistent with its own interests in Micronesia rather than those of Micronesians.

COM Sen. Edward Pangelinan, of Saipan, addressed the afternoon session of the seminar, saying separate negotiations by the Marianas Political Status Commission are necessary to preserve independence and identity.

...encourage open discussion

...Guam and the TT," he added. "Our doors are open at all times for dialogue on political status."

Former TT High Commissioner William Norwood posed the question, "Can political self-determination be separated from economic self-determination?"

Audrey Camba challenged his "implication" that the only money available to the TT for political self-determination is from the U.S.

"An Asian Bank was discussed at the South Pacific Conference here in September, 1973—the U.S. and France, traditional colonial powers, opposed it, but Australia, Canada, Japan and a representative from the United Nations supported it.

"The World Bank as a loan source is another possibility," she added.

"It is a disastrous thing to tell the people of Micronesia that the TT would be separate