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A-3 from Saipan

Congress of Micronesia - February 13, 1975

Mr. President (sic): Mr. President, I would like to request the Senate to give me a few minutes to say a few words.

Mr. President, members of the Senate:

I speak to you today about the future of Micronesia -- our nation, to be sure, but not yet fully sure. Last Monday our distinguished colleagues from the Marshalls spoke about economic development, about our urgent and long-frustrated desire for economic self-reliance.

I will talk today about our future political status. I speak from my experience gained over the years as Chairman of our Joint Committee on Future Status, but I do not necessarily speak for the Committee, not all of whose members may agree with my personal conclusions and recommendations.

We have had six years of negotiations with the United States, six years which have cost all of us much time, energy, and concern, and close to half a million dollars of our funds. The Americans have probably spent even more. What have we accomplished?

In spite of the progress we seemed to be making at the beginning, we are accomplishing less and less now. We are still a long way from any agreement satisfactory to both sides. Why is this so? Perhaps it is because the two sides want different things which are mutually contradictory. We have been guided from the beginning by the four principles given to us by this Congress as our mandate, although we have always been willing going to recognize the security interests of the United States in Micronesia. The United States, on the other hand, puts its security interests first. Specifically, they demand continued access to our islands for their military facilities and for excluding others from our islands, although they, too, acknowledge their obligations under the Trusteeship Agreement.

This attitude -- this underlying goal of keeping Micronesia forever dependent -- is also manifested in the levels of financial compensation that the United States will be willing to give my future Government of Micronesia after termination of the Trusteeship Agreement.

If my suspicion is correct, the United States is not only violating its promises under the Trusteeship Agreement, a matter for which it has long been criticized in the United Nations; it is also demonstrating extreme bad faith. While America is offering promises and concessions with one hand, the other hand continues to hold a club. Under these circumstances I do not see how we can responsibly continue the negotiations.

I do not recommend that we terminate negotiations permanently, not now at least. But I do recommend that we suspend them indefinitely. We must then ask the Administering Authority for the last time to honor our requests and to honor their obligations, and to take full and positive action upon the economic development of Micronesia, upon the economic legislation we have passed, or will pass in this and future sessions of this Congress. We can offer the United States one last chance to start and carry through the kind of full economic development we have demanded and legislated during these past ten years. Then, when we are no longer entirely dependent upon the American taxpayer, upon the American Treasury, and can see ourselves well on the road to self-reliance, even though with some sacrifice, then we can resume negotiations here as equals. More important, we can negotiate in an atmosphere of trust we once had, but have now lost.

My conclusion is therefore simple. If the Administering Authority does not make a radical change in its economic development policies very soon, then that will be a signal to us of the continued lack of faith and therefore we must then start anew and look into completely different alternatives for the future of our nation.

Thank you very much.