



PRESS RELEASE

HEADQUARTERS
TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
Saipan, Mariana Islands

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TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS.
November 12, 1963--OPENING REMARKS OF HONORABLE M. W. GODING, HIGH COMMISSIONER,
AT THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MICRONESIA ON NOVEMBER 12, 1963.

Chairman Heine, Mr. Secretary, Delegates:

It is an honor to open the Fourth Session of the Council of Micronesia. Events have moved swiftly since our special session last March and, I feel, that real progress has been made on many fronts. In the foreground, of course, has been our accelerated elementary education program. I am pleased to report that some 60 American teachers now are at work in our elementary schools. In some instances, teacher have not waited for housing to be completed but have left families behind in the United States in order to be here for the opening of the fall term. Others are pioneering away from district centers; a few are living in temporary quarters while awaiting housing; others are hiking 6 to 8 miles a day to reach their schools. In all districts new elementary schools are under construction and we can be justly proud of the progress made thus far. We have a long way to go but the people of the Territory are demonstrating, as they have so often in the past, that given the means, they will provide wholehearted cooperation and support.

I have just returned from Washington, D.C., where I met with the President's Inter-Departmental Task Force and with officials of the Budget Bureau. Secretary Carver, who is the chairman of the Inter-Departmental Task Force, has explained the purpose of his visit to Saipan and I am very please to have him with us as well as Mr. George Milner of the Office of Territories.

Mr. Carver has explained that the Solomon Report has been submitted to the President for review. The report, as an official report to the President, has not been released by the President's Office for circulation. There are many aspects of the report, however, which have direct bearing on our work here this week and I propose to discuss these items with you. These aspects cover all segments of the report--political, social and economic. In general, I might say that a number of the major recommendations made to the President were very much in the same direction of our accelerated programs already underway in the Territory. The breadth and detail of the many specific recommendations would in any event preclude full discussion in the limited amount of time we have before us and I propose, with the Council's concurrence, to devote primary attention to the important area of political development. Specifically, I hope, that after discussion and debate, that the Council working in collaboration with my staff, can determine not only the organizational structure of the proposed legislative body but can work out the steps needed to implement the transition of this Council into such a body.

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The session we now open may well go down in local history as the most important session of the Council of Micronesia. You have a task of magnitude and of great responsibility. I have confidence that the delegates gathered here today, both new members as well as old, will meet the challenge and that this session will produce a draft of transitional measures which we can present to the Secretary of the Interior for consideration and appropriate adoption.

I realize that the Council already has given a great deal of time and thought to this important task.

A year ago, at the meeting in Koror, Palau, the Council after considering the report of the Political Subcommittee, voted to establish a Legislature Drafting Committee to prepare preliminary recommendations on a proposed territorial legislature. At the Special Session last March the Council debated these preliminary recommendations and through Recommendation No. 3 of that session presented for my consideration a number of suggestions with respect to the structure of a proposed legislature.

Since that time, the President's Mission, headed by Mr. Solomon, visited all of the districts, met with district congresses as well as with most of the members of this Council.

During the past eight months I have given a great deal of thought to the suggestions made in Recommendation No. 3 which the Third Session of the Council presented for my consideration.

Thus, as we meet here this week to discuss the next steps needed, we have before us a number of suggestions as to the role of a proposed legislature and suggestions as to the framework or structure of such a body.

I have requested the staff to prepare a synthesis of the various suggestions and this composite draft will be available to all delegates for study. It is my hope that after debate and analysis that we can work out the form and detail of a representative Legislature which will be acceptable to the people of the Territory and to the Administering Authority which must take the appropriate legal steps to enable a legislature to come into existence.

Your work, in a sense, is only beginning. Once an acceptable structure is decided upon, we must then plan the procedure by which this present 12 man advisory council can be converted into an elected territorial legislature. Discussions should be held in the districts with representatives of the district congresses; planning must be done for holding elections; rules and procedures must be drafted.

In addition to Mr. Milner of the Office of Territories who will be available for consultation, I have assigned our new Assistant Attorney General, Mr. Kaleb Udui, to serve as legal advisor to the Council during this session. I think it most fitting that our first Micronesian attorney be available at this extremely important session of the Council. The Acting Attorney General, Mr. Charles Hughes, will also be available at any time to give additional advice and counsel on legal matters, as will Mr. John deYoung and all other members of the Headquarters staff.

I look forward with anticipation to the deliberations of this week. I shall be available to meet with you both in general session and in committee and personally.