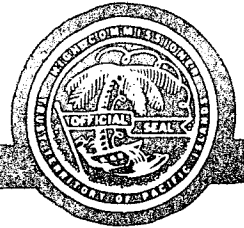


PRESS RELEASE



TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

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TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL BEGINS DEBATE ON PACIFIC ISLANDS TRUST TERRITORY

Marianas

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, June 19 . . . The U. N. Trusteeship Council on June 8 began consideration of the conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. This consideration continued on June 9. The following account of the June 12 meeting is taken from U.N. Press Release TR/1912.

Truk

The Trusteeship Council this morning began general debate on conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered by the United States, and heard a statement by the representative of China. Earlier, the Special Representative of the United States answered questions put to him by the Representative of Australia.

Answers by United States

Ponape

In response to a question by Dudley McCarthy (Australia), William Norwood, Special Representative of the United States, said there were 450 Peace Corps Volunteers in Micronesia, most of them involved in teaching or public health. It was anticipated that the number would mount to 635 volunteers by September and to more than 800 by December. However, he added, the Peace Corps program was currently being re-evaluated by his Government and the number of volunteers might be reduced.

Marshalls

Yap

Because the volunteers lived with the people, he went on, they had been especially helpful in motivating the villagers in self-help programs.

Palau

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The influx of Peace Corps Volunteers in Micronesia had created problems for the Administering Authority by identifying needs hitherto undiscovered or ignored, Mr. Norwood said.

Comparing the volunteers with the Administering Authority's civil servants, the Special Representative of the United States said the Peace Corps personnel were more highly motivated and therefore generally more impatient with the rate of improvement of conditions in the Territory.

Transportation facilities were in great need of improvement, Mr. Norwood replied in response to a further question by the Representative of Australia. Air transportation would probably be easier to improve than surface transportation.

The great deficiency in surface transportation was in conveying administrative and professional personnel around the islands, he said. Currently, these personnel were forced to arrange their services according to the schedules of commercial trade vessels.

The road system in Micronesia was greatly in need of improvement and funds had been allocated for construction of new roads and improvement of existing ones, he added.

Mr. McCarthy (Australia) referred to his country's "flying doctor services", which enabled people in outlying areas to receive medical attention by radio and, when necessary, by flying in medical help.

Mr. Norwood, Special Representative of the United States said there was great use of radios but, because of the difficulties of building landing strips and making sea landings in Micronesia the concept of the flying doctor probably would not work in the Trust Territory.

MORE

In response to another question, he stated that the Administering Authority was aware of the problems involved in having civil servants in the legislature. He said that in the election of 1962, the higher level civil servants would have to choose between the Legislative and Executive branches of Government.

Mr. Norwood said his Government had reservations about recommendations by the Nathan Associates on the import of foreign labor and the ownership of land. The Administering Authority would import only those skilled laborers whose skills were absolutely essential; it would not import large numbers of cheap workers even if that policy slowed the development of the economy.

He also said the Administering Authority had no plans to change the restrictions on land ownership. Such a change would be politically hazardous and the problems could be met by the current policy of long-term leases.

Views of China

Lin Mousheng (China), opening the general debate on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, said the fact that the tiny islands of Micronesia were scattered over vast expanses of water made the task of modernizing the Territory "Herculean".

The Administering Authority was not satisfied with its progress so far and the United Nations Visiting Mission had reported that the educational system needed improvement, he observed. Mr. Lin suggested that the Micronesian leaders be consulted on proposed changes.

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Universal education and suffrage were undermining the society's traditional hierarchy, he went on. Therefore, he said, it was good to see that the Administering Authority was urging the people to integrate the new values into their traditional values.

Progress in Micronesia had been slow, he said, but the Administering Authority had been studying the needs of the society. His Government was happy to see that the Administering Authority was allowing the Congress of Micronesia to help formulate new policies. The creation of the Congress, which had become the center of political life in the Territory, was truly a landmark, he said.

Mr. Lin stated that the policy of allowing Micronesian leaders to sit in on cabinet and other policy-making meetings was a very worthwhile experiment.

Micronesia had "come of age", he said, adding that his Government believed that the people of the Territory would very soon exercise their right of self-determination.

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