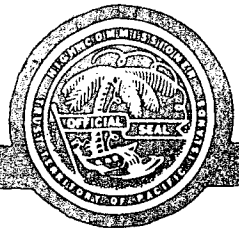


# PRESS RELEASE



## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

96950

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Marianas

### TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL CONTINUES CONSIDERATION OF PACIFIC ISLANDS

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, June 19 . . . The United Nations Trusteeship Council on June 8 began consideration of the conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. At that time they heard statements from W.R. Norwood, High Commissioner and Representative Lazarus Salii, Congress of Micronesia, who served as Special Adviser to the U.S. Delegation.

Tauk

Ponape

The following account of the June 9 meeting is taken from U.N. Press Releases TR/1910 and TR/1911.

Marshalls

The Trusteeship Council continued the consideration of conditions in the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands on Friday morning, June 9.

Yap

The Representative of France and the Soviet Union put questions to which the Special Representative of the United States, the United States Representative in the Council, and the Representative of the Congress of Micronesia replied.

#### Question by France

Palau

Paul Gaschignard (France) asked whether the United States Government intended to take action on the request of the Micronesian Congress to the President of the United States that a commission be appointed to consider the future of the Territory.

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Donald F. McHenry (United States) said that his question was under review.

The United States was aware that the time was rapidly approaching, when the people of Micronesia would decide on their future.

Replying to another question of Mr. Gaschignard, William Norwood, Special Representative of the United States, said that it was contemplated to elevate the commissioner of health to cabinet level.

Cabinet meetings were held, as a rule, once a week, and heads of departments were invited to these meetings, as sometimes were district administrators. Thus, Micronesian officials were attending these meetings, he said, and they were taking part in the decision-making process.

Mr. Gaschignard (France) asked whether the aim was to set up a ministerial cabinet in the Territory.

Mr. Norwood said the whole question was now under review and that there was some feeling that the current system was "over-stratified", that is, some of the lower officials would well qualify for a cabinet post.

To another question of Mr. Gaschignard, Mr. Norwood said that more effective participation by the Congress of Micronesia in the formulation of the budget was envisaged. As of now, he said, such participation was "extremely limited".

Lazarus Salii, Special Representative and member of the Congress of Micronesia, said that the Congress of Micronesia generally did not have adequate time to go into the budget proposals. The Congress was

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limited to a 30-day session each year, he said, but it was hoped that the sessions would be extended in future.

Mr. Gaschignard (France) asked whether the Micronesian Congress had power to deal with funds allocated by the United States.

Mr. Salii said that the general feeling of the Micronesian Congress was that it should have a greater voice in how the funds allocated by the United States should be used in the Territory, and that ultimately, appropriations of funds should be determined by the Congress itself. However, it was not felt that "now is the time to do that".

Mr. Norwood, Special Representative of the United States, said it was envisaged that one or more representatives of the Congress of Micronesia would participate in budget presentations. This would be a "transitional step", he said.

Replying to the next question by the representative of France, Mr. Norwood said that a larger sum of money would be available to the Congress of Micronesia if there were a more effective procedure for collecting taxes in the Territory. Some measures were being introduced now to overcome this problem.

Also, Mr. Norwood said, the time was approaching when there would be an income tax for United States officials, which would benefit the Territory. There was also a suggestion to have the Federal income taxes paid by these officials refunded to the Territory, he stated.

To another question by Mr. Gaschignard, Mr. Norwood said there was a loan fund in the Territory whose task it was to grant loans for

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local businesses. However, Micronesia was not yet served by the United States Small Business Administration, though this was envisaged for the future.

To a question regarding missionary schools, Mr. Norwood said that these schools were a valuable supplement to the educational system in the Territory. He said that there were some constitutional restrictions on aid to such schools.

In reply to another question, Mr. McHenry (United States) said that a number of ways had been considered for compensation to Micronesia for damage during World War II, and that a solution seemed possible in a reasonable time.

The issues were extremely complicated, he added, but the United States would keep the Council informed about the negotiations.

Questions by Soviet Union

P.F. Shakhov (Soviet Union) said the Special Representative of the United States spoke mainly of future plans for the Territory, but glossed over the present situation.

Mr. Norwood, in reply to a question by the Representative of the Soviet Union, agreed that a large amount of land was held by the Administering Authority. The Administering Authority was trying to institute a master plan and a homestead program to improve the situation, and hopes to return much of the Government-held land not needed by the Government.

In answer to another question asked by Mr. Shakhov, Mr. Norwood said the Micronesian constitution had been approved by the Micronesian

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council, the body which preceded the Micronesian Congress.

Mr. Shakhov said that Mr. Norwood's answer meant that the constitution had been adopted by the United States Department of the Interior.

Mr. McHenry (United States) said that he disagreed and that the current Micronesian Congress could change the constitution if it so wished.

In answer to another question from Mr. Shakhov, Mr. Norwood explained that laws passed by the local district governments could be vetoed by the local district administrator, but the legislative body could override the veto and submit the proposed law to the High Commissioner for a final decision.

Responding to another question of Mr. Shakhov, Mr. Norwood said the High Commissioner does have the ultimate veto power. However, said Mr. Norwood, who is the High Commissioner, he was very reluctant to veto any law passed by a legislative body.

Mr. Shakhov said that as he understood the answer, any law passed in the Territory was subject to the High Commissioner's veto.

Mr. McHenry (United States) said that the conclusion of the Representative of the Soviet Union was correct, but his implications were wrong. He said that Micronesia was not an independent, self-governing country but a Trust Territory.

Responding to another question of the Soviet Representative, Mr. Norwood said there was currently only one Micronesian in a high

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administrative position, but there were a number holding lower administrative positions. He said that this situation was of great concern to his Government and, although the Administering Authority had not progressed enough in this area, it was now training Micronesians to fill these positions.

Mr. Shakhov said that according to the Visiting Mission's report, Micronesia was suffering from "economic stagnation".

Mr. Norwood said that the resources of the area were limited and "offer little opportunity for a self-sustaining economy at the present moment".

In answer to Mr. Shakhov's question, he said that Micronesia's prosperity under Japanese Administration was due to that Government's military economy. He said that it was true that the Japanese had developed the fishing industry more than the United States, but that his Government was attempting to improve that.

Mr. Salii, Special Representative and member of the Micronesian Congress, said that the business economy under the Japanese was designed primarily for the benefit of the Japanese residents of Micronesia. A majority of the Micronesians would rather have the economy develop more slowly, but develop for the benefit of the Micronesians rather than foreigners.

Mr. McHenry (United States) said that because of the relatively small number of skilled foreigners in the Territory, more would have to be brought in, or more Micronesians would have to be trained, before the economy could grow. Both of these were being done, he said.

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With regard to the question of land, Mr. McHenry said that the alienated land was not held by the United States Government but by the Micronesian Government and would be used according to the wishes of the Micronesian Congress.

Mr. Norwood said that more than half of the land in the Territory is held by the Government.

Answering another question of Mr. Shakhov, he said that former owners had been compensated for the alienated land. He said a law, restricting the Government's acquisition of land, was being contemplated by the Micronesian Congress.

Mr. McHenry (United States) said that Mr. Shakhov knew he would not answer a question by the Soviet Representative concerning how much of the land in Micronesia was devoted to military uses.

The Trusteeship Council continued its consideration of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered by the United States on Friday afternoon.

The Special Representative of the United States answered questions of the representatives of China, New Zealand and Liberia.

Questions by China

Lin Mousheng (China), the first speaker, asked about the change in the legal system in Micronesia to require trial by jury for certain criminal cases.

William Norwood, Special Representative of the United States, said that only one of the six districts had adopted the jury system. He

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felt that it would gain greater acceptance after the people became used to the idea.

He agreed that the jury system would serve as a bridge between older tribal customs and the recent written laws of Micronesia.

In response to another question by the Representative of China, Mr. Norwood said that the police in Micronesia could arrest a suspect without a warrant, but the police were instructed to advise an arrested suspect of his right to remain silent, so as not to incriminate himself.

Answering another question by the Representative of China, Mr. Norwood said that new ideas in education were welcome, no matter from what quarter. He was certain that the Stanford University Team, hired to evaluate the educational system, would interview the Micronesian teachers, legislators and other leaders to learn their points of view.

The emphasis on English as a second language, he said, was designed to help unify the peoples of Micronesia and to allow them to communicate with the outside world. In no sense was it planned to supplant the native languages.

In response to other questions by the Representative of China, Mr. Norwood said that the traditional Micronesian values, such as the matrilineal line of descent and powers and the tradition of hereditary chiefs were still very strong and would probably last a long time. But there were already certain signs of change.

In the area of mental health, he said that the Administering Authority did not have a well-rounded program, but it was giving priority to the treatment of physically debilitating diseases.

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Questions by New Zealand

David Keith McDowell (New Zealand) said he had been surprised to hear Lazarus Salii, Special Representative and member of the Congress of Micronesia, say earlier that it was difficult for the Congress to meet to prepare the budget in time for submission to the United States Government.

Mr. Norwood, Special Representative of the United States, answered that, while the regular session of the Congress of Micronesia only lasted 30 days, the Congressmen normally worked almost six months on legislative or related business and, at the same time, most of them also had to earn a living.

Replying to the next questions of Mr. McDowell, Mr. Norwood said that all members of the Micronesian Congress had received a copy of the so-called Nathan Report, and that the report would be discussed at the forthcoming session of the Congress.

Also, Mr. Norwood said, if the Congress should reject the recommendations of the report, "it would be virtually impossible to implement it".

It had been the Administration's policy "not to encourage exploiters" but only such foreign investment which would be to the benefit of the population. The policy was "to preserve Micronesia for the Micronesians", he declared.

Mr. McDowell then asked whether the members of the Congress had access to advisers other than Government economists, since they would certainly be "baffled" by the technical language of the report.

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Mr. Norwood said that they certainly were not baffled but that, if necessary, an adviser who could give an independent appraisal would be available to them.

Replying to another question, Mr. Norwood stated that the agricultural programs in the Territory would now lay more emphasis on production than on experimentation. It was felt, he said, that not enough stress had been put on an agricultural extension service; measures, with the assistance of the Peace Corps, were envisaged to strengthen the copra extension service, although the problem here was the need for the extension of the shipping service at a time when there was a shortage of ships.

In reply to another question, Mr. Norwood said that more liberal loan policies were envisaged than had been practiced in the past.

There had been a rapid growth of credit unions, as well as of co-operatives, he added. The Nathan Report, he recalled, had proposed a small business assistance program which was already being carried out with the help of the Peace Corps.

To a question regarding the role of the Peace Corps, especially in the health field, Mr. Norwood said that of some 450 Peace Corps members, about 70 were involved in the health service, mainly serving as health aides in the outlying islands with the task of assisting in health education.

Questions of Liberia

Nathaniel Eastman (Liberia) asked what the Administering Authority intended to do in connection with the future of the people of the Territory.

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He referred to General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) which reaffirmed the people's right to self-determination.

Donald McHenry (United States) said that the whole process of administration was aimed at the ultimate objective of self-determination. It was a right, however, which had to be exercised in the context of the other obligations the United States had undertaken.

The time, however, was rapidly approaching, he declared, when the people of Micronesia would exercise their rights. The exact date would be decided by the people themselves.

Mr. Eastman asked whether the United States had awakened an awareness in the people of their rights. The "other obligations" of the United States, he recalled, should not be used as a pretext for delaying self-determination.

Mr. McHenry (United States) said that all proposals for advancement were aimed at the ultimate objective of self-determination.

Replying to another question of Mr. Eastman, Mr. Norwood, the Special Representative of the United States, said that there had been "some lag" in opening opportunities for Micronesians to advance to higher positions in the Administration. However, the number of Micronesians in high places of responsibility was growing, and further progress was envisaged. More accelerated results would be achieved by an improved training program, Mr. Norwood said.

Mr. Eastman then asked how the Government had acquired the land it now owned.

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Mr. Norwood said that most of the Government land had been acquired when the Administering Authority took over the Territory from the Japanese. It was land previously owned by the Japanese Government, he said.

More than half of the land was now Government land, but most of this was committed to public use, though part of it would be put to agricultural development on the basis of a homestead program.

However, the homestead program had not proved too successful, Mr. Norwood observed.

Mr. McHenry (United States) added that the question of land was a particularly difficult one in Micronesia. Much of the land that had been held by the Japanese Government was being used for public facilities, and it was planned to return the rest as rapidly as possible to the individual owners.

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