

PRESS RELEASE



TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

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Morinos

TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL HEARS FURTHER STATEMENTS ON 'PACIFIC ISLANDS

Truk

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, June 21 . . . The Trusteeship Council continued its general debate on conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands on June 14. Statements were made by the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Liberia and the United Kingdom.

Penape

The Council also discussed the Secretary-General's reports on the dissemination within the Trust Territories of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System and offers of member states of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories. The Council concluded its general debate on the conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands on June 15.

Marshalls

Statement by Soviet Union

Yap

P.F. Shakhov (Soviet Union) said that after 20 years of United States administration of the Pacific Islands, there had been no political, economic, social, or educational progress, as called for in the charter. The Administering Authority had deliberately tried to absorb the Territory economically, militarily and politically.

Palau

Despite comments in the Council to the contrary, Micronesia was not on the verge of self-determination. The Congress of Micronesia had no

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actual power, he said; all of its bills were thought out in Washington, and all legislative and executive power rested with the High Commissioner, who had the veto power.

Mr. Shakhov also said that most important positions in the Territory were held by Americans, and the process of replacing them with Micronesians was very slow.

Some members of the United States Congress had spoken of absorbing the Pacific Islands into that country, either as another state or as part of Hawaii, contrary to the principles of the United Nations, the Representative of the Soviet Union went on.

Mr. Shakhov said that for 20 years the United States had tried to convince the Micronesians that they were incapable of self-government. To this end, it especially used the services of "the infamous Peace Corps" which had inundated the country in recent years.

The United States, he went on, wished to absorb these islands to advance its economic imperialism by obtaining a supply of raw materials and a market for American business. The only things done in the islands were done to fulfil the economic and military interests of the United States, not the interests of the indigenous population.

The Americans were appropriating the most fertile land for their own military and other purposes, the Representative of the Soviet Union went on. When the United States took over the administration of the Territory, not only did they not correct the injustices of the preceding authority--the Japanese--but they consolidated and expanded the program of alienating the land from the people, Mr. Shakhov said.

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According to the Americans, the alienated land was used for schools, hospitals and roads, the Representative of the Soviet Union said. Since 50 percent of the land was government-owned, it would seem that the islands were covered with these institutions--which was not so, by the admission of the Administering Authority and testimony of the Visiting Mission, Mr. Shakhov said.

He added that the United States Government explained that these poor conditions -- lack of roads, schools, hospitals -- were due to the lack of funds, but "the rich country of America" always had enough money to build military bases on a large scale in Micronesia.

The Council must immediately call upon the Administering Authority, he said, to: (1) implement the resolutions of the General Assembly to discontinue the alienation of land and construction and operation of military bases on foreign land; (2) give the indigenous population more executive and legislative power in the governing of their land in preparation for self-determination and (3) immediately resolve the problems of outstanding war-damage claims.

Replied by United States

In reply to the Representative of the Soviet Union, Donald McHenry (United States) said that any similarity between the testimony heard in the Trusteeship Council and what Mr. Shakhov had just said "was purely coincidental".

He also said that his Government would have been delinquent in its responsibilities if it had not continued to participate in and advise the Government of Micronesia, which was not yet ready for self-government.

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The sole objective of the United States in the Territory was to carry out the principles of the United Nations, he said.

Mr. Shakhov (Soviet Union) said that the Representative of the United States had not answered a single one of his statements, and citing the Visiting Mission's report, he said the Territory had been neglected and the economy was "stagnant".

Statement by Liberia

Nathaniel Eastman (Liberia) said his delegation felt that the goal and right of self-determination must be kept in front of the people of Micronesia at all times.

His government was generally happy with the Congress of Micronesia, Mr. Eastman went on, but it disapproved of the High Commissioner's veto power because it tended to frustrate the people. He suggested that rather than veto a bill, the High Commissioner should suggest a compromise.

He went on to say that funds raised by taxes in Micronesia should be appropriated by the Congress of Micronesia and that the Administering Authority should encourage local industry.

There was urgent need for land reform and the return of the alienated land, or compensation to the former owners.

His delegation was also concerned about health conditions in the Territory and felt that the Administering Authority had not done anything to improve them.

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The Micronesians should be taught to contribute to the financial support of their own government, if only to free them from the United States.

Mr. Eastman concluded by calling for settlement of the unpaid war damage claims.

Views of United Kingdom

John Shaw (United Kingdom) said the imbalance in the economic and social development of the Territory -- noted last year by the Council -- still seemed to exist.

He complimented the Administering Authority for its planned experiments in education, especially in vocational training, and warned that it was dangerous to generate a distaste for manual labor in those who would not proceed beyond secondary education.

In the area of public health, he said his delegation felt that, because of the special problems in the Territory, an emphasis on sanitation and preventive medicine, rather than on curative medicine, was necessary.

It was necessary to emphasize Micronesian self-sufficiency in the economic development of the islands, the Representative of the United Kingdom went on, also calling for special attention in the areas of transport and communication.

Mr. Shaw said he disagreed with the Soviet criticism of the Administering Authority's policy on land alienation. He said that most of the land was held by the Government of Micronesia and that the Congress of Micronesia had outlawed any further land alienation.

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The expansion of the Territory's credit program would help accelerate the economic development of the Islands.

He complimented the growth of political awareness of the people and the achievements of the Congress of Micronesia, but said that the Administering Authority's proposals on taxation and local budgetary control were not final answers. Ninety-five per cent of the Territory's finances came from the United States, he said. He said new taxes should be imposed by the Territory's Congress.

He also called for Micronesian participation in policy making and suggested that direct experience was necessary to train the people. Although he complimented the Administering Authority's current policy in this area, he said that participation as an observer was not the same as participation as a decision-maker.

Speaking of the political future of the Territory, Mr. Shaw said that there were special problems because of the "immense geographic difficulties" and the small population; he suggested that special solutions might be necessary.

The delegation of the United Kingdom respected the view expressed by Lazarus Salii, Special Representative and member of the Congress of Micronesia, to the effect that if the people had a right to determine their future, they also had a right to determine the rate of change.

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