

Government structure/a new national government: Much of the current governing system of Chuuk State can readily be adopted by a new Chuuk National Government. Executive, legislative and judicial branches will be formed, based on existing bodies with some exceptions. The Commission, for example, has considered whether a 2-house (bi-cameral) legislature will be necessary at all. Some prefer a single legislative house. This is a matter to be decided by the people. One new department will be essential: the Chuuk Department of Foreign Affairs. Most important is the fact that none of the new national bodies will be responsible in any way to outside authorities. Each branch will report only to our people.



Financing/supporting our new status of independence: Nobody has proposed that independence will be easy. However, life under U.S.-FSM rule has turned out to be disastrous for our infrastructure, for our health, for our island environment, for our waters. We must be willing to work and pay for a better future for our children. It will be time to take a new, hard, and clear look at how we do business, what we produce, how we regulate commerce, how we tax, how we use foreign assistance.

Local business sector: Our greatest need among small businesses here may be management and accounting skills. Our people will show what they want through their purchases: the power of the marketplace. At the same time, without a clear picture of income and profits, any new national government will be in the dark with regard to possible revenue. Review and revision to the tax codes of Chuuk are essential to make sure that all have a fair chance at the market. Oppressive taxation can crush any size enterprise, but without regulation and revenue, no government can ever provide any services for our people. In addition to improved regulation, any new national government should assist in new ventures as yet not strong enough in Chuuk.

Independence for Chuuk: Public Hearings

Information from the Political Status Commission for a Free and Independent Republic of Chuuk

For example, the new ecology tourism market ("eco-tourism"): thousands of travelers who are trying to totally escape civilization and immerse themselves in the natural world. While the diving industry here presents some of this, we can show off tropical jungles, mountainous islands and remote beaches. Another relatively undeveloped area of commerce is that of joint foreign-local enterprises. These have proven extremely beneficial to the people of Belau since the 1990s, who enter in to such businesses with Taiwanese firms and make efficient use of tax revenues for infrastructure development. New direct foreign relations under independence will provide profitable commercial partnerships using the most advanced business methods



Improving production in agriculture and mariculture: There is room in Chuuk to diversify our agriculture. Crops which now see only limited production (small bananas or pineapple for example) can be grown "plantation style" (on a larger scale) with the aim of local sale as well as export. Once we have established direct relations with other nations, we can develop agricultural exchange programs and gain the most successful growing methods for marketable produce. The same holds true for fishing. New fishing technologies are in use by fleets from developed Pacific countries. With national status, we can directly enter into treaties beneficial to our fishing industry.

New channels of foreign assistance: Independence will bring our new freedom to establish relations with whatever nation we choose. No longer will aid and development funding be filtered through the FSM or need approval from the U.S. Interior or State Departments. The horizon is broad for new positive relationships with neighboring countries, all Pacific Rim nations and wherever our sovereign diplomacy can take us. We can look beyond Japan and the U.S., to Australia, Taiwan, China and farther.

The people of Chuuk must have the same right to access development assistance that all other small island states enjoy. Throughout the 20th and now into the 21st century, we have been denied full respect as a people, as a culture, as a society, as a nation. As a free country, our new diplomatic corps will be welcomed as equals, not former colonized subjects.

Continuation of U.S. Aid: We must expect that the U.S., as our former rulers, will continue their moral obligation to fund our progress toward a self-sufficient future. After all, the U.S., with its paternalistic approach to Micronesia over the generations, has kept us on the slowest track to independence which they could devise. They have us in an arrangement now which has us desperately concerned, anticipating just what our future will be with the steadily declining Compact funds and full cutoff just a few years away.

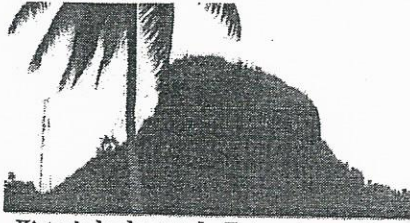
If the sheer suffering and basic denials our people undergo each day of their lives were not enough, then this dark threat of U.S. bureaucrats has surely and finally awakened us to the course we should have taken in the late 1940s. Then, the great push toward self-determination by peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific was kept from our learning processes by careful manipulation of our educational systems, emanating from Washington and the TTPI.

Ultimately, the U.S. must face the reality they have pretended to want for us for so long: true, sovereign national independence. From our new position as a nation, we must make clear in discussions and negotiations with U.S. officials that we fully expect their continuation of Compact funding for Chuuk as per Compact provisions.

New international relations: Chuuk is well-situated to expand its diplomatic horizons to regions of the world long out of our experience. With broader international contacts our people can reach their full potential as world citizens. Over the years, we have gained much from our relationship with the U.S. Our ties to Hawaii are significant, and some of us have enjoyed the beauty, the cities and the economic and educational opportunities of California and the Pacific Northwest. But Chuuk can no longer be limited to these regions, this relationship. There are great universities in China, Japan, and other areas, not only the U.S. There are great employment opportunities in developed nations of Asia and Europe as well. There is great technical training to be had in Southeast Asia, even South America, not only in California.

We must lift ourselves out of the narrow outlooks we have held for our futures. Our education, our training, our views of the future have limited us. They have resulted in no real progress for most of our people, no modern development for most of our islands, no real confidence that we can rule ourselves. Only from a basis of a true national identity can we break out of the grasp of this semi-colonial history which shapes our thinking and thus our state of underdevelopment. We are a nation. We may not be recognized on paper as such yet, but we are a nation. It is time to formally declare this fact,

Independence for Chuuk: Public Hearings



Historic background: History has not been kind to the islands and people of Chuuk. For generations, layer after layer of authority over us has kept Chuuk on the outside, watching the rest of the Pacific develop and make progress. Whether under foreign power or native Micronesian political arrangement, Chuuk has consistently been the last in line for modern development. The regional federation of states has failed us. Declining U.S. assistance under two Compacts shows we are being abandoned by that superpower. We must make our own future without outside meddling. The first step toward that future is the creation of an independent Chuuk, a full-fledged, duly recognized, internationally respected nation.

What is the CSPSC? The Political Status Commission was created by the Chuuk State Legislature to study and identify which of various possible political arrangements would free our people from the limitations of economic underdevelopment. The findings of this legislative commission have now been made clear; Chuuk must become an independent nation.

Statement by Kachutosy Paulus, Chairman of Chuuk Status Commission:

Hello to my fellow citizens. After much research and work toward a better Chuuk, your Commission has made the decision to promote the goal of complete independence for our islands. We are now entering an important time of personal contact with our people in public meetings to explain this new direction for Chuuk. We will be urging your participation, your discussion, your vote for independence in a future plebiscite. Only if we gain the energy and the will of the people will we win nationhood.

The outlook for independence: As small island nations around the world have shown, the first step toward true and just economic and social development is to secure national liberation from outside forces, whether foreign governments or foreign commercial powers. The most viable, the most practical, the most healthful and the most peaceful future for any people sits on a foundation of national independence. Large and small nations show this; international organizations recognize this; it is time for our people to join this process. Chuuk must no longer be outside looking in, but must join the community of nations as a full member.

Current conditions making independence necessary: The people of Chuuk are consistently denied the fundamental benefits of nationhood. Our citizens, living, working and struggling day-to-day within or outside our lagoon face harsh and backward conditions in every sector of activity.

Information from the Political Status Commission

Our old infrastructure: Inferior sewers, impassable roads, unreliable electric power, unhealthy water, primitive transportation, poor construction, ruined and unsafe buildings. Seventy years of post-World War II "development" under outside control has delivered this. We must take over the management of our entire infrastructure.

Our polluted environment: Land and ground water, lagoon and reef, harbor and storage tanks are all heavily affected by unregulated usage and commerce with no concern for the people, no respect for life. National status for Chuuk will bring scientific interchanges with other island nations who are solving dangerous environmental issues.

Our inadequate health system: Even with skilled professionals, health services cannot be delivered properly with facilities which are now worse than ever. Independence can bring a national medical system with access to modern health care for all.

Our poor educational system: Chuuk schools continue to produce only a fortunate few with university skills or productive trades. Our teachers, poorly paid, do their best but must be provided with modern and sufficient supplies, equipment and facilities. Direct nation-to-nation relations will move us toward advanced technology and education.

Recap of Commission efforts: The CSPSC was created by the Chuuk State Legislature and was given the responsibility of recommending back to the CSL the best political path to follow in order to lift Chuuk out of the miseries of underdevelopment.

Organization: Officers of the Commission were selected, research committees formed, timetables developed, consultants hired. A broad plan to involve all Chuukese in a status plebiscite was developed.

The Independence Resolution: After investigation, research, debate, and extensive meetings, the Commission agreed that the only practical way out of the stagnation of the current political system would be to declare Chuuk a sovereign nation, linked to no outside authority. **Commission Resolution #01-14**, passed in February, urged a proclamation of independence, hearings, and a public vote on the issue.

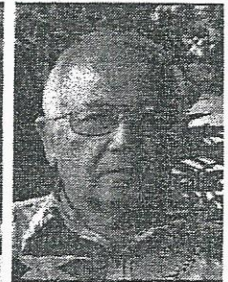
Public involvement: With independence as the choice, political education outreach was planned for all Chuukese populations, within Chuuk and living abroad. The final goal: a high participation vote (plebiscite) in support of immediate national independence.

Political education materials: The CSPSC produced the first *Beyond the Compact* full-color newsletter introducing the Commission and its responsibilities and goals. Next, this newsletter was revised and updated with a **second edition** including pro-independence statements. Thousands of the second newsletter were printed and distributed through Commission members and officials.

A third document was printed and circulated containing strong and thorough statements by Chairman Paulus and Speaker Oneisom. Yet another newsletter of information is to be developed for political outreach to all Chuukese here and abroad, to be sent through CSPSC political education teams.



Mark Mailo
Senate President



Kachutosy O. Paulus

Governing on our own: Despite steady progress toward full self-government throughout smaller nations, including Pacific Island groups, Chuuk has never experienced the full benefit of actual self-rule. Every budget, every fiscal act, every regulation, every program, every commercial activity, every foreign contact, every aspect of civil (and military) life is somehow dependent on approval from "higher" authority, whether the U.S. or the FSM. In many cases, the Chuuk government must obtain authorization from *both* of these governments situated outside our islands. The process can take years but our needs are immediate. Whatever word one uses for "authorization" (permission, approval, oversight, etc.), the actual situation of Chuuk is one of subservience or obedience or submission to a "higher" outside authority. In finally rejecting such relationships, we will face new political realities, but from a position of autonomy.

Transition period/diplomacy with the U.S.: When this crucial time arrives, key parts of our long-standing relationship with the U.S. will come up for negotiation. Under the Compacts, we have had rights which have proven beneficial to many Chuukese. Among these are: passport recognition, enabling travel throughout the U.S., and opportunities to reside, study and work within that country. Independence does not mean an automatic end to such privileges.

In fact, one of the first duties of any transition government will be to enter into diplomatic talks with U.S. officials regarding these matters. Some Commissioners want **dual citizenship** with the U.S., a matter to be decided by the people of Chuuk. U.S. officials always maintain that their Compacts with us are designed to promote democracy, development and self-government. Surely we can expect (and should demand) they will assist in guiding us into an independent future by continuing such country-to-country privileges in some form.

Free Association? What's So Free About It?

Speaker Oneisom on Amended Compact realities: he calls for justice, a re-examination of U.S. role, and complete fulfillment of U.S. treaty obligations



House Speaker
Innocente Oneisom
Member, CSPSC

The governments of the U.S. and the Federated States of Micronesia have maintained an alliance since 1986, when they established a special relationship by mutual agreement; that agreement was subject to substantial changes and wholesale renegotiation that took effect in 2004. The details of that relationship are found in the documents of the Compact of Free Association. A superficial reading of those documents shows that we are now entering the final decade of that relationship, one that is supposedly based on providing mutual benefits or both sides.

Like all relationships, we have had our share of problems, and we have gone through challenges that call for changes by both sides. Without doubt, more changes are coming. These changes must be addressed by both parties with due diligence and in a forum that is facilitated by collaboration, wisdom, and respect for each other. Anything less is a farce and violates the spirit of the Compact of Free Association.

But farces are sometimes a reality when trying to maintain a special relationship, and the latest of these is demonstrated by the actions of the late Honorable Daniel Inouye of Hawaii as he chaired the Senate Appropriations Committee and tried to bar citizens of the FSM from freely entering the United States.

Free entry into the United States for citizens of the FSM is one of the major considerations for the Compact. Absent that provision, what could the U.S. offer Micronesians that would entice us to bargain away the control of our neager land masses and the bountiful waters that surround us? The first Micronesian negotiators knew that we were not in a strong position, especially in comparison with a super-power like the United States, but they knew that our land and water resources were invaluable. These resources are invaluable to us; they provide us with our very lives. These resources are invaluable to the U.S., whose unwavering goal is to defend its interest throughout the world. A guaranteed foothold in the Pacific is essential to that goal. Since the beginning of the Compact era our invaluable resources have been at the disposal of the U.S. government; under the Compact terms, the U.S. can, if it deems necessary, take up the exclusive use of our lands and water for its defense.

In return, Micronesians were guaranteed a flow of financial assistance and rights for FSM citizens that put them somewhat on par with U.S. citizens. Was this a sweet deal? The area of the three FAS nations who are signatories to the Compacts extends from the Republic of Belau far in the western Pacific, to the four states of the FSM in the central Pacific, to the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the east. Covering thousands of miles from west to east, that is an immense chunk of the vast Pacific Ocean for the U.S. to have "friendly nations" as its allies, willing to let the American forces use what little we have.

negotiators, especially on the United States' side? Surely they knew the situations faced by the inhabitants of these remote islands. Surely they knew the disproportionate bargaining power between the parties. Did we arrive at a mutually beneficial special relationship, or was it a big win for the big guys at the expense of the disadvantaged?

As a citizen of the FSM, one of those FAS nations, I can't help but feel we were cheated. We gave up our most important assets, but we have not been given what we were promised. The financial support continues to dwindle. Rights negotiated in the Compact are negated without compensation, citing overriding concerns about terrorism or whatever is the cause of the day. When Senator Inouye demanded that our right to freely enter the U.S. be taken away, did he offer to give back our absolute control over our lands and waters? What has become of the mutual benefit? If you agree on a Compact of Free Association, isn't fairness implied?

Yes, the United States has attracted the attention of some heinous criminals, who are intent on waging war. We can easily understand that the U.S. is greatly concerned. But not every nation that is not "American" is against the U.S. In fact, the FAS nations have always sided with the U.S. At the United Nations, our ally, the U.S., can always count on supporting votes from us. Globally, men and women of the FAS nations are at the forefront of U.S. actions, promoting and maintaining peace as they serve and die alongside U.S. servicemen and servicewomen as members of the U.S. Armed Forces. We are not terrorists.

According to testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, the Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Mr. Kurt Campbell, stated that citizens of the FAS nations "volunteer to serve in the U.S. military at a rate higher than in any individual U.S. state."

Whenever and wherever FAS citizens live in the United States or its territories, they contribute to the local economy; they work at real jobs, often jobs that Americans don't want; they pay taxes; they buy local goods and service from local businesses. Yet, at times, Micronesians are treated like invaders, as if our presence in the U.S. is illegal. The American Enterprise Institute scholar, Mr. Ben Wattenberg, put it this way: "How many invaders compete to mow the lawns and clean dishes of those they have invaded?"

How can it be that we Micronesians give up our most precious resources, volunteer to serve in the U.S. military, integrate ourselves and our families into U.S. communities, and support the U.S. in its diplomatic actions, and yet we are treated like terrorists? Is there any justification for trying to place Micronesians under the watchful eye of the Department of Homeland Security, as was "played out" by Senator Inouye's committee?

My impression is that the United States changes the rules in the middle of the game, while the FSM maintains the integrity of its commitments. The time has come for the FSM to carefully examine what the U.S. plans with regard to its commitment.

Throughout the First Compact and into the Second, the U.S. has reneged on its promises and duties as originally agreed upon. We negotiated the rights for citizens of the FSM to enter the U.S. without passports, eligibility for Medicare, use of the U.S. Postal services, eligibility for FEMA assistance, rights to participate in some federally-funded education programs, and others. The United States has backed away from its responsibilities, always citing some overriding consideration. The FSM has kept its promises.

For many years, the Territory of Guam has screamed louder than the rest, "Give us more money!" Now, Guam has acquired some supporters, including Senator Inouye and others in Washington, D.C. But, truly, how much Compact Impact funding would satisfy Guam and others? What is the real impact on the affected territories and states? Could we have a study by an independent party to provide a true and accurate picture?

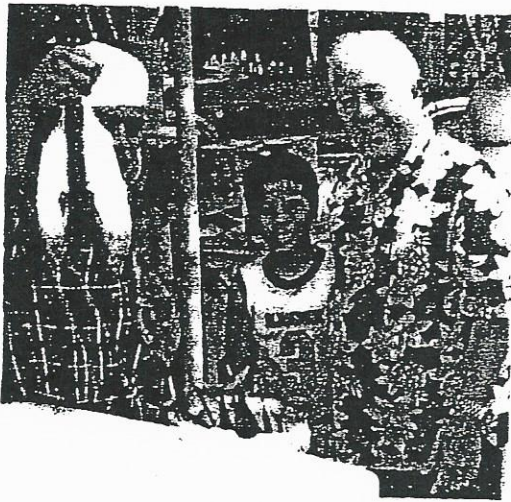
This much is known. Under the Compact, \$430 million is disbursed annually among Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the State of Hawaii, and others. Guam receives nearly half of that amount, and its debt to the U.S. (estimated at \$150 million) was forgiven. I believe that the Territory of Guam has definitely benefitted from the arrangement. Not all of us have done so well.

The Compact of Free Association is a done deal -- twice already. Yet, even after the ink has dried, the U.S. makes changes, some of them substantial changes. Most of the changes remove benefits negotiated for the FAS nations, without reducing the burden of those nations. No, it is not fair.

But this is not a marriage. Unlike matrimonial vows, the promises made under the Free Association are not permanent. Those promises are conditional and subject to change. This is a special relationship, and like in marriage, changes must be addressed through in-depth consultation, respectful discussion, and an agreement through mutual understanding. We should not allow pressures from peers and relatives, and like with a marriage, when those occur, we should examine their intentions. If both parties are not willing to work this out, then the relationship is no longer special, no longer fair, and no longer free.

Kachutosy Paulus: Full Independence Necessary for Modernization of Chuuk

Chairman says U.S. and FSM have held Chuuk back



Kachutosy O. Paulus on one of his morning trips to markets on Weno

To all my fellow Chuukese, at home and abroad: I want to wish you the best for the year ahead. Not just the best of luck, but the best schools, the best roads, the best local businesses, the best health system, the best food and fishing, and, so important for all the above, the best government of, by and for our people.

Now it is clear that "wishing" for something does not make it happen. Dreaming of a healthy future for our islands does not show us the clear path to sensible and fair development. For too long, we have listened to the promises of foreign and local politicians alike. We have seen our riches wasted, our programs poorly run, our promised funding reduced, our islands polluted.

Many of you have known me over the years, through the post-World War 2 era, through the Trust Territory control, through the times of the first Compact. You know that I have devoted most of my life to activities aimed at building our islands into a strong and healthy place. I felt that much could be done if I concentrated my work toward development in my home lagoon islands of Faichuk. I felt, perhaps too strongly, that if Faichuk could be modernized, it would serve as an example to all of Chuuk.

Of course, we all know what happened to most of the Faichuk development projects. They were either dismissed by the U.S. authorities as "impractical," or vetoed by our FSM Government as too idealistic, too self-centered, too selfish. The outcome: Faichuk has not progressed. But of course, neither have the rest of our beautiful Lagoon and outer island groups.

This is not the time for blame or bitterness, however. This is the time, as the new century rolls on, for all Chuukese to bring in a new age, a new way, a truly independent nation of Chuuk, involving all 80,000 or 90,000 of us. (Yes, even the U.S. State Department admits these figures).

Realistically, we have nowhere to go but up. Many of our roads and buildings are in ruins. Our water and power systems continue their unreliability and failures. Our communications are far behind what modern technology offers to the rest of the world. The health system has not gained the confidence of our people, and their health has suffered therefore. Despite some excellent doctors and committed nurses, we have not built the public knowledge of prevention as the best cure. We should all be concerned about the poor condition of our old and only hospital.

I will not blame our people for their plight. Yet we have to recognize our own part in what Chuuk has become. I have heard our islands referred to (by U.S. university types) as the "ghetto of the Pacific," a place where poverty rules, where social services are barely provided, where diet is poor, where education is only seen as a means of escaping our homeland, not as a means to building a modern and productive society right here where we were born.

So now, here we are in 2014. Since I am older than many of you, let me say that things in Chuuk are not really better than 40 years ago, or even 60 years ago as the Japanese military was driven from our shores. Let us not forget that, 40 years after they left, the new power here, the U.S., had still not offered the basis of modern health for our people. Cholera, a deadly disease rarely seen outside of the most miserable living conditions in the world, struck us in the 1980s.

The political typhoon which followed was largely U.S. administrators trying to cover up what they had brought on with their own supervisory neglect of our infrastructure. Chuuk made national news in the U.S., as the U.S. Congress addressed the issue by throwing money to us. If any of you want to know what conditions brought on that disease, simply look around yourselves: flooded roads, broken sewage systems, weak public health facilities, insufficient health education, often careless food handling and hygiene. We are still risking major disease.

Is there any way out of this situation? Did early missionaries show the way? Did foreign religious orders pull us up? Did the occupation by Japan serve our people? Did the U.S. liberators actually fully liberate us? Did their various arrangements for island rule take us into a modern life? And our federation with neighbor island groups (the "solution" sponsored in large part by the U.S.): has this federation produced fair commercial and social outcomes for Chuuk?

I would answer NO to all but the first. I will state that, YES, there is a way out. We must declare our independence, not only of the current political arrangements, but of the past itself, of the obstructions which have held us back. We have to recognize that for any nation to modernize for the benefit of the people, for it to rise to the social and economic levels of more developed countries, that nation must act

independently, free of outside control. As long as foreign, or semi-colonial, or outside rule of any nature continues, "modernization" is really just a way to extend power over people and resources. What is "modernized" is the flow of wealth out of the country. Actual wars of independence have been fought to end such economic injustices.

We are not so confined here. We can quite peacefully end our current relationships with outside powers, whether in Pohnpei or Washington. Nor do we have to give up what has been extended in exchange for our "strategic denial" of other non-U.S. superpowers. We know the processes of working in and studying in the U.S. have proven useful, especially for the families strong enough to take part. Yet we have to recognize that U.S. universities are not the only great schools of Pacific Rim nations, and workplaces such as Hawaii and the West Coast of the U.S. do not offer the only productive employment for Chuukese. All of developed Asia can equally provide great education, great employment, great opportunities for our people. Many of our youth are facing discrimination and violence right now in urban and rural Hawaii. This must end, and with independence it will.

With independence, with a new Republic of Chuuk, our islands can once again be productive, peaceful and beautiful. The possibilities are there, because without outside interference from the U.S. or the FSM, we will be able to enter into projects of our own choosing. Perhaps solar energy or tidal power generation (instead of ancient diesel), perhaps undersea cables (instead of unaffordable Telecom charges), perhaps modern "eco-tourism" (instead of isolated visits by divers only). We will be free to develop Chuuk as we see fit.

So it is time to move, to welcome change, to get ready to work together as never before. We can have a Republic, we can have a Chuuk National Legislature, we can even have a Prime Minister or President, like so many of our fellow small nations of the world. Why should Chuuk be left out of direct U.N. membership? Why should Chuuk be kept from negotiating trade with whatever nation we choose? Why should Chuuk be kept in this semi-colonial status, begging for assistance through an intermediate power, subjected to two levels of outside interference?

We must not fear independence. We must take on the challenge for our children and our grandchildren. Let them enjoy the fruits of a modern Chuuk, instead of becoming anxious to leave difficult conditions and rejecting their own heritage. We must have a Republic of Chuuk! With our determined efforts, we shall.

Kinisou Chapur, Kach

Mr. Paulus is Chairman of the Chuuk State Political Status Commission, created by and reporting to the Chuuk Legislature.