

REMOVAL OF MARIANAS FROM COM

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1972

B. Proposed Amendment to Part III, Secretarial Order 2918,
As Amended

Part III

Section 5. Membership

For the purpose of representation in the Congress, the Trust Territory is divided into five (5) Districts as described in Section 39 of the Code of the Trust Territory excluding the administrative district of the Mariana Islands.

The Senate shall consist of ten (10) members, who shall be known as "Senators", of which each of the five Districts shall elect two.

The House of Representatives shall consist of eighteen members who shall be known as "Representatives", and who shall be elected from each of the five Districts as follows:

In the Marshall Islands District, four

In the Palau District, three

In the Ponape District, four

In the Truk District, five

In the Yap District, two

Each of the five Administrative Districts comprising the Congress of Micronesia shall be subdivided initially into single member election districts of approximately equal population, in such manner as the High Commissioner shall determine, and each such election district shall elect one of the Representatives to which the Administrative District is entitled. Future subdivisions shall be established by law.

Election districts shall be reapportioned every 10 years on the basis of population, but each District (as described in Section 1 of Title 3 of the Trust Territory Code excluding the Mariana Islands District), shall be entitled to at least two Representatives. The first such reapportionment shall be made in 1974.

Section 2. Legislative Power

Add:

"All revenues collected in the Mariana Islands District pursuant to the Code of the Trust Territory shall be set aside for appropriation by the Mariana Islands District Legislature. No law of the Congress shall be enacted that shall apply after this date singularly to the Mariana Islands District unless the Mariana Islands District Legislature first consent by majority vote in writing to such enactment."

Advantages

1. No separate administration required
2. Would permit Marianas to begin to exercise local self-government in preparation for future GO Marianas
3. Removes jurisdiction of COM from all matters relating to the Mariana Islands
4. Would permit USG to act in special relationship with Marianas

Disadvantages

1. COM should not enact legislation for Mariana Islands without Marianas representation in COM
2. May invite further fragmentation by other districts by use of similar method
3. Raises issues of whether COM law superior to local and confusion over applicability of laws/programs

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4. May make future cooperation difficult between Mariana Islands and future GOM.
5. Possible criticism from UN and COM on heavy-handed US tactics on status matters

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