

12
7
13
Dec 1972
1

GOVERNOR CAMACHO, ADMIRAL MORRISON, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS, SENATOR
PANGELINAN, BISHOP FLORES, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR ADA, AND OTHER
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

As we gather here this morning for this most historic occasion,
I cannot help but recall the day some 43 months ago when I stood here
at Mt. Carmel with my hand on the Holy Bible and had the distinct
honor of becoming the first High Commissioner to be sworn into office
within the Trust Territory.

Much has happened in those 43 months as we have dealt with the
myriad problems of this vast but wonderfully fascinating area, and
sometimes that day in early May, 1969, seems a part of the distant
past; but I can still recall --- and do recall frequently --- the
words which were spoken by then Secretary of Interior, Walter Hickel,
here at Mt. Carmel on that occasion, because he set forth the policy
of President Nixon --- which has been so important to all of us here
in Micronesia.

Many of you were here on that day as he said:

"Just one day before I left Washington, D. C., I discussed many things about Micronesia with the President of the United States. Our discussion was one of a number which we have held about Micronesia during his first 100 days in office, and I can say he wants to understand -- even more -- your needs and aspirations.

We discussed, of course, two points present in your minds -- your political future and your economic development. But foremost in the President's mind -- and in my thoughts also -- was that you, the people of these islands, be fully consulted about every step we take in these areas.

We do not come here today to outline our plans for you. The President does not believe in the government ruling the people. Instead, he believes in the ~~pe~~ople ruling the government. He does not believe in Washington imposing its will on the people. He believes in government voicing the will of the people.

And especially this applies to you. For years you have had little voice in your government. This is wrong. Only when people lead their government can that government be great and that people prosper."

Under the guidance of Secretary Hickel and then Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton, this policy of President Nixon has resulted in the greatest progress in any similar period in the history of the Trust Territory.

The historic talks which will begin here today between the United States and the people of the Marianas District to resolve your future political status are certainly a firm indication that President Nixon's policy was not one of idle words.

Although many of us had entertained a hope that the Trust Territory could remain a single entity upon termination of the Trusteeship Agreement, it became increasingly apparent that the citizens of the Marianas District had aspirations and goals different from those of the other five districts, and that it would be necessary to conduct separate negotiations toward the solution of your future political status.

The President's personal representative, Ambassador Franklin Hayden Williams, was authorized to begin such negotiations. American leaders in Washington have listened to Marianas leaders in Saipan and today's ceremonies are the result.

The status talks which begin here today could well be the most important discussions in the history of the Marianas; but while fully realizing their importance to this area, let us not overlook their perhaps even more important message to the rest of the world -- the message that today -- and in the days to come -- the representatives of two free peoples can sit at the negotiating table -- and in the true spirit that has guided America since 1776, can resolve their mutual problems in peace and harmony as equal partners.