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MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION
P. O. Box 825
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

April 5, 1973

The Honorable Franklin Hayden Williams
President, Asia Foundation
P. O. Box 3223
San Francisco, California 94119

Dear Ambassador Williams:

We of the Marianas Political Status Commission have been reviewing many areas in anticipation of our next meeting so that appropriate progress can be made towards our close association. One item of primary importance is the situation in reference to land in the Marianas. For many years people have attempted to get homesteads, and to get these homesteads carried through to the appropriate conclusion. Unfortunately, for many years the Trust Territory Government has been unable to satisfy the needs of the people of the Marianas in this area. With the potential of the new status being eminent, the following problems become more acute:

- 1) Presently there are more than 200 applications pending for homesteads in the Mariana Islands District. These applications have not been acted on in any way.
- 2) There are approximately 100 to 200 people who have been designated and given verbal permission by the Trust Territory Government to enter certain pieces of public land for homestead purposes, and told they would get homestead permits in due course; however, these permits as of yet have not been issued.
- 3) Some people who were granted entry permits for the purpose of homestead, and where the Government had accepted the \$10 registration fee for the homestead, after entering the homestead, and in fact making certain improvements on same, the Government withdrew the homestead and indicated that the people could no longer have the land for homestead. Additionally, they offered to refund the \$10.
- 4) Presently there are private property owners who have not been able to clear up their title due to bad land descriptions from a survey that was originally a paper survey only; and when the people went to the locations as described, they found substantial property variances.

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5) Lastly, there are approximately 300 homestead permits that were issued, and the people have completed all of the requirements and have been given certifications of compliance; however, as of yet there have been no deeds issued because of one or more of the following shortcomings:

- a) No survey;
- b) No mapping;
- c) No land description.

Mr. Ambassador, it is hoped that additional funds and/or personnel may be immediately made available within the Marianas District for purposes of rectifying the specific problems outlined above as quickly as possible. Most of these problems are occasioned by the lack of some survey teams and certain administrative writing capabilities to adequately make the present land situation current. There is a certain reluctance on the part of many people to move too far down the line towards a new political status without the present, pressing land questions being adequately concluded.

These highlighted specific problems are being forwarded to you directly at this time to give you as much opportunity as possible to study them and take action on them with the hope of including a solution in the framework of the next series of talks. With prompt attention to these problems we can forestall a lot of potential complications later. I would appreciate your remarks at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Chairman
Marianas Political Status Commission

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