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Joint Statement by Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, The President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, ~~and~~ Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission, and **President Vicente N. Santos of the Marianas District Legislature**

At the invitation of Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan and President Vicente N. Santos, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Marianas Political Status Commission, Ambassador Haydn Williams, the President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, met Friday afternoon, August 31 on Saipan with the MPSC and the Marianas District Legislature to discuss steps now underway in the ongoing negotiations toward the future political status of **were the Mayor and members of the Saipan Municipal Council, as well as** the Mariana Islands District. Present also/~~was~~ Captain Richard Scott, USN, who has recently assumed the post of Director of the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations, and Miss Mary Vance Trent, Liaison Officer for Micronesian Status Negotiations.

The discussion on Saipan followed an earlier meeting on Guam on August 29 at which the Ambassador, Senator Pangelinan and President Santos reviewed the current activities and progress of the sub-committees now at work on each side, in line with agreement reached in the status talks of last May-June, in such fields as legal aspects of the envisaged status arrangement, economics and finance, and land. They agreed that approximately two months would be required to examine the results of the studies. They therefore agreed tentatively that the next meeting in the Marianas Status Negotiations series should take place shortly after mid-November.

At the meeting on Saipan the Ambassador reviewed the considerable progress in the Marianas Status Negotiations over the past months and took occasion to stress that the status agreement when reached will be referred for approval to the Marianas District Legislature and by plebiscite to the people of the Marianas.

The subject of principal concern at the meeting was the question of permits for homesteading and foreign business establishments on Tinian in this interim

period pending the completion of status negotiations. Acknowledging with regret that there had not been sufficient communication and coordination with the MPSC concerning the temporary suspension of such permits, the Ambassador stated that measures would be taken to prevent such a gap in the future. He stressed the reasons for the suspension of permits in order to prevent land speculation and preemption of business opportunities, neither of which would be in the interest of the people of Tinian nor of the United States. Pointing out that the suspension of land acquisition in areas under consideration for public use is a normal procedure, the Ambassador stressed that such suspension is customarily temporary until final decisions are made and stated that in the case of land on Tinian such suspension should be thought of in terms of weeks rather than years as has been mistakenly assumed in some cases.

Concern was also expressed in the meeting with regard to the granting of long-term leases of land in the Marianas to non-Micronesians and the Ambassador and Senator Pangelinan expressed agreement that this subject should be among those on which joint consideration is advisable.

The Ambassador expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to meet jointly with the Marianas District Legislature and Marianas Political Status Commission, and both he and Senator Pangelinan/**and President Santos** stressed their intention that as the work proceeds toward completion of studies preparing the way for the resumption of the status talks this fall, coordination and communication may be closely maintained.