

Draft - Sent to Amb/OASN

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MEMORANDUM

September 4, 1973

SUBJECT: Minutes of Meeting of Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams with Marianas Political Status Commission, Marianas District Legislature and Saipan Municipal Council, Saipan, August 31, 1973

Present at the meeting which was chaired by MPSC Chairman, Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan, were the following other members of the MPSC:

Mr. Vicente N. Santos, Vice-Chairman  
Sen. Mr. Olympio T. Borja  
Mr. Herman Manglona  
Mr. Francisco T. Palacios  
Mr. Felipe A. Salas  
Mr. Jose C. Tenorio  
Rep. Mr. Herman Q. Guerrero

Also present were Congressman Felipe Atalig, Mayor Vicente D. Sablan of Saipan, Mr. David Q. Maratita, District Public Affairs Officer, and Mr. William Nabcrs, attorney for the District Legislature.

The Ambassador was accompanied by Captain Richard Scott, USN, Director of OMSN and Miss Mary Vance Trent, Liaison Officer for Micronesian Status Negotiations.

The Ambassador opened his informal discussion by pointing out that agreements which will be reached between the MPSC and the U.S. Delegation will be tentative; they are ad referendum, subject to the approval of the Marianas District Legislature, a plebiscite of the people of the Marianas and the U.S. Congress. Results of the negotiations and their general nature are in no sense secret, although in the process of negotiating it is naturally useful to maintain some privacy of discussion.

The Ambassador reviewed the course of negotiations to date pointing out that substantial progress has been made. He ~~expressed~~ the important function of the Marianas District Legislature, particularly in regard to transition, and the land issue. He noted in this latter connection that the Legislature would have to consider the matter of the establishment of a body for the return of the public lands. He stressed that the Legislature has a big opportunity and a challenge in the work toward the commonwealth arrangement.

The Ambassador reported briefly on his meeting on Guam with Senator Pangelinan and President Santos concerning Marianas Status Neogitations and said it had been determined that the next meeting with the MPSC and the U. S. Delegation should take place within the last two weeks of November at a place most convenient for the Marianas. He announced that Mr. Solomon Silver

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presently attached to the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations will be arriving shortly on Saipan to study economic aspects of the prospective commonwealth arrangement and transition toward it.

Stressing the importance of the public land issue, the Ambassador noted the visits of the two teams from OMSN to Micronesia. He commented that the land issue is an exceedingly complicated problem and he acknowledged the need to speed up land survey and legislation. The Ambassador pledged that he would take steps to see that this work proceeds and said he would keep in touch with the MPSC on matters affecting land. On land alienation, he observed that the way is clear legally to protect Marianas land from alienation to non-Micronesians if they wish to have such protection.

Concerning U. S. land requirements, the Ambassador noted that the MPSC has recognized the U.S. legitimate requirements and has undertaken to negotiate in good faith, but it is not committed to the full extent of our requirements. The Ambassador said he will take a further look at our requirements and alternatives. He said that such study might affect our statements concerning requirements and used as an illustration the recent visits of a Navy and Air Force team to Tinian. He said that another Air Force team will come in November and will look at the impact of military requirements on the ecology of the area in preparation toward making the required statement on the environment.

The Ambassador stressed that the negotiations on land are in an active state and will be pursued. He recalled that on Tinian military requirements call for the acquisition of two-thirds of the island with the additional third to be leased back for private purposes. The Ambassador stressed the need to coordinate efforts in order that no actions will be taken by the district or by Headquarters that might disturb the negotiations. For this reason there should be no further action on public land during

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negotiations. This suspension, he noted, is in the interest of both the people of the Marianas and of the United States. He regretted that the U.S. explanations were not sufficiently timely and he acknowledged that the MPSC and the MDL should have been <sup>consulted</sup> ~~considered~~ in advance before the moratorium was announced. Such consultation would have eliminated much of the misunderstanding.

It is in the interest of the people of Tinian, the Ambassador said, to prevent further wild speculation which has already started. He noted his awareness that the MPSC position is to lease rather than sell to the United States, the land on Tinian needed for military requirements.

The Ambassador also emphasized that it was not helpful to either side to give permits to foreign businesses to build something that might soon have to be removed. He emphasized the importance of joint efforts in land developments and said steps should not be permitted which would preclude the cooperation asked for by the MPSC. He observed that much had been said during the MPSC/U.S. talks about giving local people the opportunity to develop businesses. He regretted the failure of the U.S. to communicate adequately concerning suspension of permits but defended the U.S. motives as in the best interests of both sides. He stressed the belief that the status negotiations can result in new and expanding opportunities. The MPSC had made clear that it wants to lay a sound basis for economic development. The temporary moratorium may inconvenience those looking for short-term profit, the Ambassador said, but in the long-term it will provide for sounder developments.

The Ambassador closed his remarks by saying he was looking forward to the next talks and that he welcomed the work going on now which will facilitate further progress.

After a few brief remarks from Senator Pangelinan expressing appreciation for the Ambassador's briefing, Herman Manglona, Tinian representative in both the MDL and the MPSC read a prepared statement charging the U.S. with bad faith in unilaterally imposing the moratorium and asking that it be lifted immediately.

The Ambassador expressed appreciation for this presentation of views which had been expressed previously by the Speaker. He said that the U. S. takes seriously this expression and the views of those who share its sentiments.

Danny Muna of the MPSC and the MDL asked the Ambassador to comment on the amendment which he had submitted a few days previously to the MDL calling on the MDL to pursue negotiations with another country if negotiations with the U.S. are not satisfactory.

The Ambassador replied that he felt it would be improper for him to comment on a matter currently before the Legislature.

Senator Pangelinan expressed strong disappointment that the subject of the amendment was discussed in a public hearing and that there had been no chance to present MPSC views. He felt that "there had been tremendous progress" in status negotiations and he pointed out that the moratorium, like other issues, could be discussed with the U.S. in that forum. "The amendment makes it look like we were not negotiating seriously," Pangelinan said. If negotiations with the U.S. should fail, then it would be time to change the MPSC mandate. The Ambassador stressed that the U. S. will live up to its obligations and commitments, one of which is self determination, and it would not stand between the majority of the people of the Marianas and their duly expressed desire with regard to ~~our~~ <sup>Their</sup> political status.

Senator Borja of the MPSC, calling the Ambassador's presence "timely," asserted that "we have the right to homestead our land." He expressed strong objection to the moratorium on Tinian homsteading and business permits and called for consultation with the MPSC. In response to a question from the floor, the Ambassador noted that the suspension should be thought of in terms of weeks and months, not years. Congressman Atalig spoke briefly declaring that the moratorium denies a privilege which the people of Tinian have guaranteed to them by the Trusteeship Agreement calling for economic development opportunities.

The Ambassador vigorously declared that we want to encourage and support economic development at a pace consistent with the desires of the people concerned. He said that new lands will be opened on Tinian for private use. He pointed out the suspension of permits is a normal happening whenever it is foreseen that land will be needed for public purposes - roads or airports or other public needs. We had assumed, wrongly, that explanations would be made locally and will assure that consultation is held in the future. We want to speed up the availability of land for private development, he said.

In response to a question from Jose Tenorio of the MPSC, the Ambassador pointed out that the U.S. desires for economic development opportunities applies to all the people of the Marianas, not just Tinian. He said we would prefer to purchase the land on Tinian, but he understands the Mariana's preference for lease arrangements.

Frank Palacios of the MPSC observed that public land resources should benefit the public and be used for the public interest. If they are used only for the benefit of a few this is not acceptable. A long-term lease can deprive future generations of both land and money, he said, and he urged caution in trusting others with local lands, mentioning the Japanese in this regard.

Danny Muna pointed to possible loss of land through long-term lease to non-Micronesians and took as an example the arrangements for the building of a hotel on Pagan. He requested a joint effort to have the High Commissioner consult with the MPSC on the subject of any long-term lease to non-Micronesians.

The Ambassador promised to work with the MPSC Chairman on this subject.

Joe Tenorio pointed out the purpose of long-term leases should be known and they should not be given purely for purposes of speculation.

The meeting closed with an emphasis on this point from Senator Pangelinan who said the MPSC must reconsider the whole subject of long-term leases.

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