

Tinian Men Retain Guam Legal Firm

P.O.N. *Wally*

SAIPAN (MNS)—A former member of the Marianas Political Status Commission has joined two other residents of Tinian in retaining a private law firm to prepare a position paper on behalf of Tinian people who oppose U.S. military plans for the island.

The group is headed by Marianas District legislator and former status negotiator Herman Manglona and includes Tinian Councilman Sylvestre Cruz and former council speaker Felipe Mendiolá. The men were

to travel to Guam yesterday to consult with their new legal counsel, the Guam law firm of Arriola, Cushnie and Stevens, according to a KJQR Radio news report.

The position paper will deal mostly with the opposition of several Tinian people to the proposed U.S. military land requirement for about two-thirds of the island, the radio report stated. Cruz plans to offer a resolution during the coming council meeting to

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request the Marianas Political Status Commission to discontinue negotiations on Tinian's military requirements until the views of the people of Tinian have been expressed fully. He said he hopes to introduce the resolution before the next round of status talks between the Marianas Status Commission and the U.S., tentatively scheduled to begin May 15.

Manglona said the position paper will be presented to the people of Tinian for public referendum. Should the paper be approved, the Marianas Political Status Commission then would be asked to go to Tinian where the paper would be presented to it. The law firm retained by the group also will be on Tinian for the presentation, Manglona said. He added that the law firm will be the group's legal counsel during negotiations between the Marianas group and the U.S. delegation.

Marianas Political Status Commission Chairman Edward DLG. Pangelinan told Micronesian News Service yesterday that Tuesday he believes the people of Tinian already are being represented by two capable Tinian representatives on the commission. He added that the commission will listen to these representatives as elected by the

Tinian Municipal Council under the law which establishes the Marianas Status Commission. He said he regrets that Manglona resigned from the commission and that if he wants to represent the wishes of the people of Tinian he should have stayed on the status commission.

Rep. Felipe Q. Atalig, whose election precinct includes Tinian, expressed surprise at actions taken by the group headed by Manglona.

"The proposed movement to present a position paper to the Marianas Political Status Commission, on behalf of the people of Tinian, headed by legislator Manglona will serve no useful purpose other than to create confusion among the people of Tinian and to hinder the current status negotiations," Atalig said. He pointed out that the Guam-based law firm has no business in the status talks.

Bernard Hofschneider, one of two Tinian representatives on the status commission, told MNS that as an elected representative he will go along with what the majority of the people of Tinian want. He said he will check with the people concerning these new developments.

The other member of the status commission from Tinian is Jose R. Cruz, who could not be reached for comment yesterday.

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File # 4-2-4