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4/24/74

SAIPAN, APRIL 24 (MNS)---REFERRING TO STATEMENTS MADE LAST WEEK BY US REP. PHILIP BURTON TO AMEND THE LEGISLATION TO PAY

ALL WAR CLAIMS IN FULL IN MICRONESIA, MARIANAS SENATOR PEDRO A. TENORIO SAID THIS WEEK THAT BURTON'S STATEMENTS WERE "MISINTERPRETED TO MEAN THAT THE US IS OPEN TO RE-NEGOTIATION OF OTHER ISSUES IN THE COVENANT."

TENORIO SAID IN HIS LETTER TO BURTON THAT "IF SUCH RE-NEGOTIATION IS POSSIBLE, I WOULD SINCERELY REQUEST THAT THE NPSC BE INFORMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THE PLEBISCITE MAY BE APPROPRIATELY RE-SCHEDULED FOR SUCH FUTURE RE-NEGOTIATION."

THE MARIANAS SENATOR FURTHER ADDED THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS ARE READY TO VOTE IN THE PLEBISCITE, "BUT CURRENT DEVELOPMENT HAS LED MANY OF THEM TO BELIEVE THAT A RE-NEGOTIATION TO INCLUDE FAST AND FULL WAR CLAIMS SETTLEMENT IS STILL POSSIBLE."

"MY HOPE IS THAT THIS ISSUE WILL BE RESOLVED OUTSIDE OF THE REALM OF OUR STATUS PLEBISCITE, FOR I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE ISSUE PROPERLY FALLS UNDER A STATUS NEGOTIATION," TENORIO ADDED. "I STRONGLY FEEL THAT YOUR STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF MY VIEW WILL HAVE A DEFINITE CLARIFICATION AMONG THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE THAT SUCH ISSUE IS NOT IN FACT A PART OF THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN SIGNED," HE SAID.

JUDGING FROM THE PRESENT AUTHORIZATIONS, TENORIO INDICATED, IT DOES NOT SEEM POSSIBLE THAT EXCESS FUNDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR THE FINAL PAYMENT. CERTAIN PROVISIONS UNDER US PUBLIC LAW 92-39 "CONFUSES ALL MY PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY, IN THE FIRST PLACE, ARE EXPECTING FULL COMPENSATION AND SECONDLY, WHEN THEY FILED THEIR CLAIMS, THEY WERE TOLD THAT THEY WILL ONLY RECEIVE 16 PERCENT, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, WERE OBLIGATED TO EXECUTE A FULL RELEASE AS A CONDITION FOR RECEIPT OF COMPENSATION NEGATING ANY FURTHER GUARANTEE FOR FULL SETTLEMENT OF THEIR CLAIMS," SENATOR TENORIO WROTE.