

M.P.S.C.

Guam 3rd Choice

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Marianas Talks: Now To U.S.?

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SAIPAN - The next round of talks on the future political status of the Marianas may be held in Washington or Hawaii. Guam is the third choice.

Sen. Edward DLG. Pangelinan, chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission, says that the U.S. delegation has encouraged the selection of a meeting site in the U.S.

The third round of negotiations is due to get under way this fall. Current plans now call for the U.S. delegation to meet with the Joint Committee on Future Status in Truk sometime in October. The Marianas talks would begin after these negotiations are completed.

The first two rounds of Marianas talks were held on Saipan in December and May to June. To cover a possible five weeks of talks in the U.S., the Marianas commission is seeking \$40,500. This would include the travel and per diem of the full 15-member commission and staff.

This request is part of a \$55,000 travel budget the commission estimates it needs to take it to February 1974. Another \$10,900 is being sought to send five members of the military and lands committee and five members of the economic and finance committee on two-week trips to the Far East.

The commission has proposed an additional \$110,000 budget for professional services, staff compensation and office expenses. Of this, \$50,000 would be applied for legal consultants from the Washington law firm of

Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering; \$35,000 for economic consultants from James Leonard Associates; and \$8,000 for the commission's executive director, James E. White. Members of the commission would be compensated \$15,000, with \$1,500 reserved for secretarial services and \$55 for supplies.

As of July 30 the commission had \$422.06 on hand.

A bill authorizing the appropriation of \$110,000 for the commission has been introduced into the Marianas District Legislature. Pangelinan has said he is not optimistic that the legislature can fulfill this request and he plans to put the request before the Congress of Micronesia as well.

Last year the commission received \$92,100 from the district legislature.

The congress of Micronesia appropriated \$155,000 for its Joint Committee on Future Status in the last fiscal year. In a revised fiscal year ending next March 31 the committee has \$69,688, says a Congress spokesman, with which to further its work toward a new political status for five, and perhaps all six, districts of Micronesia.

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