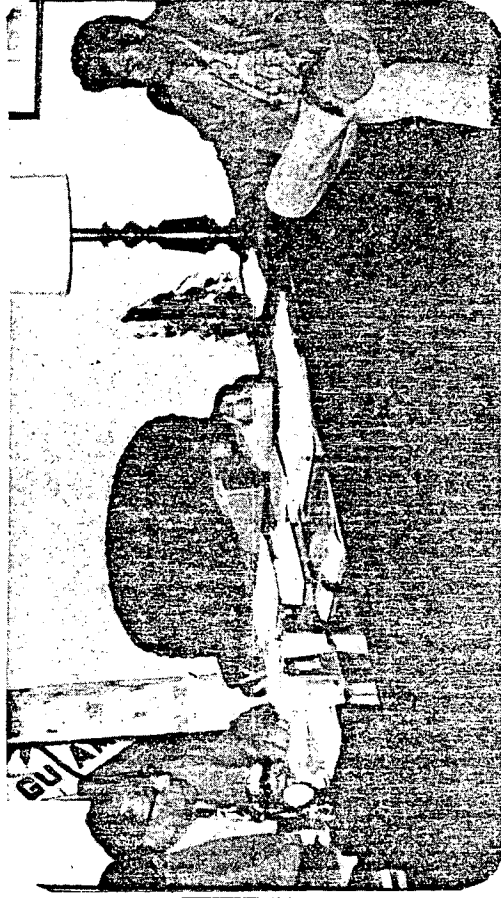


Rasa

RASA OPPOSES REINTEGRATION, BLASTS GUAM LEADERS

Oscar Cruz Rasa is a Doctoral student at the American University in Washington, D.C. He is currently taking a leave of absence from the University. Mr. Rasa ran as a Senatorial candidate last election and lost to Senator Borja by a margin of 164 votes. He holds a B.A. degree in Political Science and Sociology and an M.A. in Education with emphasis in Political Science and Sociology. Mr. Rasa is a potential candidate for the up-coming election for the Congress of Micronesia. Being young, articulate and instrumental in the Marianas District, "I Gaseta" decided to interview him on the Reintegration Issue.



Rasa (r) with Won Pat in Washington, D.C.

SAIPAN -- "As a people, we have always been dominated. Reintegration with our so-called Chamorro cousins on Guam would not end this domination and give us real self-government. Reintegration would simply make us a colony of the business,

political, and military leaders of Guam."

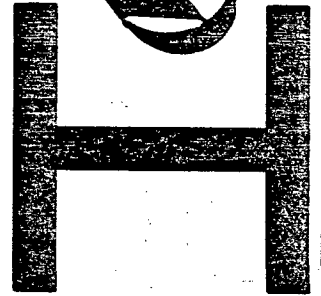
In this way, Oscar Cruz Rasa, summed up his views on the topic of reintegration with Guam, an unincorporated U. S. territory since 1898, and little more than an American colony.

According to Rasa, as the Northern Marianas progresses in its negotiations with the United States to become an American Commonwealth, many leaders on Guam see Saipan and the other Northern Marianas as ripe for investment pur-

poses, but only speak of reunification based on cultural reasons.

"The leaders of Guam are arguing for reintegration on the basis of cultural heritage and have told visiting American Congressmen recently that a unified

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RASA BLASTS GUAM LEADERS

Marianas would be advantageous for administrative reasons," stated Rasa. "From the stateside point of view, they are correct; but from our point of reference, it would mean very little self-government. We are only 15,000 people and could not compete with 100,000 people on Guam. Simple arithmetic tells us Guam would have the economic power, political influence, and both add up to complete authority over our islands."

Rasa said as far as cultural reasons for reunification are concerned, "...the sad truth is, Guam wants not only to control our islands, but wants to gain from the sacrifices we will make in order to become an American Commonwealth."

"At this time in our history, the word 'Chamorro' requires a sociological definition because today we have two very distinct Chamorro 'cultures.' It will take more than a constitutional document to

unite the Mariana Islands now."

Rasa described the concept of reintegration that is now frequently heard from Guam leaders and written about in the Guam press as an "exploitative mechanism."

"The benefits derived from a close association with the U. S. must come directly from the United States and not via Guam," he said. "Otherwise why should Guam benefit when we make part of Tinian avail-

able to the American military?" he asked.

"For some reason our leaders in the Marianas have been strangely silent whenever reintegration has been mentioned recently," said Rasa. "I am deeply concerned over this."

Rasa said despite the cultural and political divisions between the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, economic coexistence should continue.

"But after over 300 years of outside domination, first by the Spanish, Germans, Japanese, and Americans, joining Guam would not give us the kind of self-government we need. They naturally would place their interests before our own."

