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SUBJECT: POLITICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES OF MARIANAS POLITICAL

STATUS COMMISSION (MPSC)
REF: STATUS LNO 16C
1. (C) CONTENT AND AUDIENCE OF MPSC MEETINGS IN SAIPAN COMMUNITIES TO EXPLAIN AND DISCUSS MARIANAS STATUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S. APPEAR TO HAVE PICKED UP CONSIDERABLY FROM FIRST SAIPAN MEETING LAST WEEK REFERRED TO IN REFTEL. MEETINGS ARE CHAIRED BY MPSC CHAIRMAN PANGELINAN, WHO EXPLAINS COMMONWEALTH CONCEPT AND REPORTS PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS. HE IS ACCOMPANIED BY SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF MPSC MEMBERS. PROCEEDING ARE MOSTLY IN CHAMORRO WITH MPSC RABOULIMAN INTERPRETING IN CAROLINIAN AS NECESSARY. PANGELINAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN SANTOS DESCRIBE AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AS WIDE-RANGING, COVERING SUCH ASPECTS OF FUTURE STATUS AS TAXATION, CITIZENSHIP, AND LAND.

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2. (C) WHILE TURNOUTS ARE NOT ALWAYS LARGE, PROCEEDINGS ARE TAPED AND AIRED FOLLOWING DAY ON RADIO WHICH COVERS ALL MARIANAS. BROADCASTS SOMETIMES LAST AS LONG AS FIVE HOURS, AND SINCE PROCEEDINGS ARE IN THE TWO LOCAL VERNACULARS THEY ARE INTELLIGIBLE TO EVERYBODY (I.E. ALL RESIDENTS OF MARIANAS) AND SEEM TO BE DRAWING WIDE AUDIENCE.

3. (C) IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH U.S. DELEGATION MEMBERS PANGELINAN AND OTHER MPSC MEMBERS CAMACHO AND GUERRERO HAVE EXPRESSED

ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE MEETINGS. PANGELINAN POINTS OUT THAT MPSC PROGRAM IS BRINGING THE IMPORTANT STATUS ISSUES TO THE PEOPLE. IN THIS CONNECTION HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PROSPECTIVE TT PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT DOES NOT REALLY MEET THE NEED. HE FEELS THAT PARAMOUNT NEED IS POLITICAL STATUS EDUCATION AND THAT ONLY THE STATUS NEGOTIATORS THEMSELVES ARE PROPER OR CREDIBLE INFORMANTS. WITH REGARD TO MARIANAS, HE TOLD DOTA OFFICER BERG THAT HE ENVISIONS A BILATERAL "COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM" AS SOON AS AGREEMENT IS CONCLUDED, AND SEES ROLE FOR A FULL-TIME U.S. CITIZEN IN THIS EFFORT. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT STATUS POLITICAL EDUCATION WOULD NECESSARILY OVERLAP SUCH OTHER POLITICAL EDUCATION DURING TRANSITION PERIOD AS THAT RELATING TO MARIANAS CONSTITUTION.

4. (C) IN FURTHER CONVERSATION WITH BERG (JAN 26) PANGELINAN COMMENTED ON VIEWS OF CAROLINIAN SECTOR OF MARIANAS POPULATION. HE SAID THE CAROLINIANS ARE WARY ABOUT BECOMING U.S. CITIZENS. APPARENTLY THEY FEEL THAT THIS WOULD TEND TO LUMP THEM TOGETHER WITH THE MORE NUMEROUS CHAMORROS IN THE EYES OF THE U.S. AND THUS CAUSE THEM TO LOSE THEIR IDENTITY. THEY ARE ALSO CONCERNED FOR THE FATE OF CAROLINIANS WHO WORK IN AND AROUND TT HEADQUARTER. PANGELINAN SAID THAT THE MAJORITY OF MARIANAS CITIZENS WHO WORK AT HEADQUARTERS ARE

CAROLINIAN. HE SAID THAT HE ANSWERED THIS CONCERN BY SAYING IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE IN THE MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT, ON TINIAN, ETC. THIS INFORMATION SEEMED, HE SAID, TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF THEIR CONCERN. THE CAROLINIAN RELUCTANCE AS TO U.S. CITIZENSHIP, HE FEELS, GOES TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER; THE ASSUMPTION THAT THERE WILL "ALWAYS" BE TWO PEOPLES IN THE MARIANAS. HE SAID HIS PERSONAL FEELING IS THAT THE DIFFERENCES WILL VANISH OVER TIME BUT HE IS NOT SO SURE THAT THE CAROLINIANS AND SOME CHAMORROS BELIEVE THIS OR DESIRE IT.

5. (C) COMMENT: UNDER ITS ENERGETIC CHAIRMAN, WHOSE LEGAL TRAINING

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AND NATURAL LEADERSHIP ARE PROVING HIGHLY EFFECTIVE, MPSC THOUGH CONSCIOUS OF PROBLEMS INVOLVED IS RETAINING MOMENTUM ENGENDERED BY MARIANAS III. TRENT, GDS 00

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