

Phone : 3206

JAMES E. WHITE
ATTORNEY AT LAW
P. O. BOX 47, Capitol Hill
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950

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Mr. Howard P. Willens
Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering
1666 K Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Dear Howard:

To bring you up to date as quickly as possible, things look a little blue at this end as far as election returns are concerned. Although not all the ballots have been counted, and they haven't even started on the district for Herman Q. Guerrero, what appears to have happened is a large number of non-Marianas Micronesian citizens, living in Saipan, quietly registered to vote for this election. Estimates vary between 400 and 800 voters, and these individuals are voting for the Territorial Party candidates in an attempt to slow down the status talks. It appears the weight of these ballots is sufficient to tip the scales in Ed's election to Pete Tenorio. Even without the vote counted in Herman Q.'s district it appears the election will probably go to Oscar Rasa. We will know definitely the outcome by Monday or Tuesday of next week, and I will fill you in immediately.

This creates a very serious situation for the Status Commission. There must be an immediate reaction to establish a signed status agreement before the end of this year; otherwise, I feel there will be no status agreement forthcoming. The majority of the people who are Marianas citizens want this status agreement to go through, and the leadership of the Popular Party is very nervous that this may not happen unless it is done immediately. The way it stacks up now, if Ed and Herman lose their seats they also lose their positions on the Political Status Commission; and with the Marianas delegation to the Congress of Micronesia then being three (3) members from the Territorial Party and two (2) members from the Popular Party, it appears as though that delegation will name Pete and Oscar to the Political Status Commission in January replacing

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Ed and Herman. This would free up Pete's present seat on the Board and the Chamber of Commerce which is controlled by Joe Ten would appoint a new member from the "business community". If this all occurs, this would mean the complexity of the Status Commission would read eight (8) for slow down, seven (7) for moving ahead. This could mean the status agreement itself would be in serious jeopardy. The Popular Party members are rallying around the cause, on the Status Commission and in the District Legislature, both of which are presently controlled sufficiently to probably give a ten (10) to five (5) vote on most necessary issues on the Status Commission, and a sufficient vote in the District Legislature to get it approved there.

Also, a new resolution will be introduced asking for separate administration immediately upon approval of the status agreement by the District Legislature and prior to the plebiscite.

It seems imperative to me that we reduce the actual number of issues for Marianas Five to its lowest possible denominator, and that we get a vote through on each of these issues in whatever vein is necessary in order to get this agreement finalized and signed prior to the end of this year. I am very much afraid, if it's not signed by the end of this year, it never will be signed. It seems, off hand, that probably the approach to take would be a quiet discussion with the U. S. counterpart back there about the following:

1. We submit as realistic a counter offer as possible. Murray could be of great value here by establishing an appropriately reduced figure with a renegotiation after the fifty (50) year term. Thereafter, if the counter offer is accepted by the Commission, it can be offered to the U. S. as a much more realistic top that the U.S. could accept.

2. Convince the U. S. to accept the counter offer in total.

3. Whenever and wherever possible we give in on the other areas needed for agreement in the status agreement itself.

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4. You come out well in advance of the December 2 date and we try to have tentative voted conclusions in each of the significant areas prior to the first formal session on December 2 with the U. S.

In this fashion, we may be able to get the agreement put completely together and signed before the end of the year. I would like to hear your thoughts in reference to what I have discussed here as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,



James E. White
Attorney at Law

P.S. This letter has no circulation at this end - not even with ~~Ed~~ Ed at this point.