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DRAFT LETTER TO PANGELINAN

Dear Mr. Chairman:

During this fifth session of our negotiations leading to the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America we have discussed among other things joint steps that will be taken during the first phase of transition before the installation of the new Government of the new Government of the Northern Mariana Islands under its own Constitution. In particular we have reconsidered the Report of the Ad Hoc Preparatory Committee on Transition in the Marianas, as approved at the Fourth Negotiation Session in May 1974, and have discussed certain changes proposed therein by both sides.

As a means of recording our understandings on these matters I would like to propose the following:

a. That the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee be modified to provide that the name of the Joint Secretariat be changed to the Joint Office of Transition Studies and Planning and that it be attached for administrative and budgetary purposes to the office of the U.S. Resident Commission, while continuing to receive policy guidance from the Joint Commission on Transition;

b. That the agreement in the joint communique of May 31, 1974 that the transition period would begin upon signature of the Covenant be modified to delay its start until approval of the Covenant by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands in a plebiscite and the establishment of a separate administration for the Marianas District immediately following, it being understood that funds will be found by the Trust Territory Government meanwhile to finance a program of political educa-

tion for the people leading up to the plebiscite.

c. That the U.S. Government has no objection to the proposal from the Marianas Political Status Commission to change the Marianas membership in the Joint Commission on Transition to include one representative each appointed by the Municipalities of Rota, Saipan and Tinian, a representative of the United Carolinian Association and one representative each appointed by the Territorial and Popular Parties, it being understood the United States will be able to increase its membership proportionately and to include therein the District Administrator. At the same time, given the change in the previous ex-officio character of the membership of the Joint Commission, the Ad Hoc Committee should be convened as soon as possible in Washington to consider appropriate adjustments in the Commission's functions and prepare a report for my approval and that of the Marianas Political Status Commission which will constitute a further revision of the May 1974 report.

If this proposal meets with your concurrence I suggest that this letter and your letter of reply so stating serve to record our agreement on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

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