

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS
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Ambassador Williams in an informal meeting with the Marianas Political Status Commission and the Marianas District Legislature on 31 August 1973 in reference to the moratorium on accepting new applications for homesteads on Tinian stated that the suspension was temporary and "should be thought of in terms of weeks and months and not years". The Ambassador's statement was in direct response to questions and concerns expressed at the meeting that the moratorium would last for years.

The Ambassador's assurance of the temporary nature of the moratorium on new leases for public land on Tinian and the holding in abeyance of new applications for homesteads confirmed earlier statements in this same regard made by the TTPI Administration, the Marianas District Administrator and the Deputy U.S. Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations.

His answer of August 31 also reflected the Ambassador's hope that the third round of negotiations which were then scheduled for November, and only weeks away, would lead to an agreement on the U.S. Tinian land requirements. This would have made a further suspension unnecessary on status grounds and this is why the Ambassador spoke of the moratorium duration in terms of "weeks and months and not years".

The basic reasons for the moratorium on new leases and the processing of new applications for homesteads during the negotiations are to be found in the recent Trust Territory Administration testimony to your committee and in the HICOM memorandum of December 14, 1973.

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