

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

The Old Executive Office Building  
Room 361  
Washington, D. C. 20506

March 28, 1974

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The Honorable Edward D.G. Pangelinan, Chairman  
The Honorable Vicente N. Santos, Vice-Chairman  
Marianas Political Status Commission  
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Chairman Pangelinan and President Santos:

Thank you both once again for coming to Honolulu last week. I was pleased naturally to hear you say that you found our exchange of views and the discussions with Frank Ada useful and productive. I too found them most helpful and I especially appreciated the spirit of open friendliness and cooperation that was evidenced on all sides throughout the week.

The talks were informal and off-the-record and no final written summary of our discussions was attempted. I do believe, however, in retrospect, that a brief listing of the areas of understanding reached would be useful to both sides. Your comments on the following summary would, of course, be helpful in assuring that your understandings of what was agreed upon correspond with my memory.

With respect to the next meeting between the United States and the Marianas Political Status Commission, it was agreed that you would propose to your Commission that we meet during the early part of May for approximately 14 days. As I understand it the Commission would prefer to meet in Hawaii if funds were to be available. A site in Hawaii would be agreeable to the U.S. and we will undertake to explore possible locations and the costs involved. It was agreed that the next meeting would concentrate its early attention on those provisions of an agreement covering U.S. land requirements and that such an agreement would be necessary before any new status agreement could be concluded. It was further understood that the MPSC was empowered to conduct land negotiations with the U.S. and that the Covenant would commit both parties to the terms of the agreed land provisions, subject of course to the ad referendum nature of the negotiated agreement.

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It was agreed that prior to the proposed May meeting there would be a further exchange between the heads of delegations on the Report of the Ad Hoc Preparatory Committee on Transition. The deadline for this report has been extended to April 1. It was agreed that a joint cooperative approach to Phase I planning would be required and that the involvement of the District Government was a necessity if the planning and the implementation of plans for transition were to be smooth and effective. It was further agreed that supplemental funding might be necessary to cover further approved planning towards the end of Phase I and during the early stages of Phase II.

The discussion on transition led to the question of the possible separate administration for the Marianas and the pros and cons of early action and either partial or complete administrative separation of the Marianas District from the TTPI Administration prior to the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. As I understood it, while you both favored early action to give the Marianas its own administration, you intended to explore the matter further on an informal basis with members of the MPSC and the Marianas District Legislature. As I said--and had previously said--the U.S. Government would not wish to take the initiative with regard to this matter but would be willing to consider a request for such an action from the MDL. We will therefore await further word from you on this subject.

Our exchange on political education clearly demonstrated your concern with the confusion and possible areas of conflict and contradiction between the TTPI-wide Education and Self-Government program and the MPSC efforts to inform the public on the Marianas talks and the Commonwealth alternative. Your proposal to expand and regularize a political status education program in the Marianas with our cooperation and participation was acceptable to us. We believe that it is a good and timely idea and we hope you will send us your suggestions as to how we can be helpful in this regard. Your endorsement of occasional U.S. unilateral initiatives to inform the people on status matters was also appreciated.

With respect to funding matters we assured you that \$30,000 would be forthcoming in support of the MPSC's transition planning preparation and that we were still seeking an additional \$15,000 to cover this item. We also agreed that the possibility of the U.S.G. covering the costs of Marianas IV would be explored as well as the MPSC's cost in a special joint political education program to be conducted over the next few months. It was further understood that the MDL had authorized \$50,000 toward the work of the MPSC but that these funds would not be available before July of this year.

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The discussions with Frank Ada led to agreement among the three of you that there was an immediate need to establish a special Marianas Commission to reevaluate the entire homestead program in the Marianas, including (1) how much public land should be set aside for homesteads, (2) what types and sizes of homesteads should be granted, and, finally, (3) current procedures, regulations and policy enforcement. It was agreed that the need for such a local commission was urgent, that it was within the authority of the District Administrator to establish and name such a commission, that its review could be completed in two-three months and that the MDL and the MPSC should back the Distad's efforts to review the entire homestead question before it is too late.

I was also pleased that all parties agreed that the early establishment of a U.S.-Marianas Advisory Committee on Civil-Military Affairs and Planning would be a big step forward in encouraging cooperation and open discourse on a number of matters of concern to the local communities on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. The establishment of such a committee representing the local municipal councils, the District Administration, the MDL, the MPSC and the U.S. would be helpful not only in terms of the advisory service it could perform with respect to economic development, zoning, joint use of facilities, etc., but also as an added channel for the dissemination of factual information and as a public forum.

In all I thought the sessions in Honolulu were most worthwhile. I of course was pleased with the participation of the representatives of the TIPI Headquarters Administration and the District Administration, as well as the Marianas Political Status Commission and the Marianas District Legislature. A continuing dialogue between everyone concerned will be helpful in fostering the kind of full cooperation necessary for the effective implementation of our joint effort.

In closing, let me say how shocked and grieved I was to learn of the tragic boat accident and the ensuing loss of lives. I do hope you will accept my sympathy and convey to those on Tinian my heartfelt condolences.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

Franklin Haydn Williams  
The President's Personal Representative  
for Micronesian Status Negotiations

HW:dt

cc: Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations  
Status LNO, Saipan

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