

file - General
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January 9, 1975

Mr. Earl T. Sato
2117 Bella Casa Street
Davis, California 94616

Dear Mr. Sato:

I have and thank you for your letter of January 4, 1975. This law firm serves as counsel to the Marianas Political Status Commission in its negotiations with the United States concerning the future political status of the Mariana Islands District of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

I am enclosing for your information copies of the final Joint Communique and of the draft Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America. As you will see, the Commission and the United States Delegation expect to meet again in Saipan in early February to complete their work on the Covenant. The Covenant will then be submitted to the Mariana Islands District Legislature and thereafter to the people of the Northern Marianas in a plebiscite. Assuming that it is approved, the Covenant will be submitted to the Congress of the United States. You will note from your review of the Covenant that most of its provisions will become effective prior to termination of the Trusteeship Agreement, see Section 1003(a), (b).

I would be most interested in your comments on the enclosed material and also in any scholarly piece which you produce for your Law Review.

Sincerely,

1975

Michael S. Helfer

Enclosures

bcc: Howard P. Willens, Esq.

2117 Bella Casa Street
Davis, California 95616
January 4, 1975

Mr. Michael S. Helfer
Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering
1666 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Helfer:

I am a student at the law school of the University of California at Davis. I am currently working on a law review article concerning the citizenship status of the peoples of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Senator J. Bennett Johnston, Chairman of the Territories and Insular Affairs Committee, has referred me to you concerning questions I had about the negotiation of the future political status of the trust territory.

I understand that you are counsel to the Mariana Islands in these negotiations. I would appreciate your thoughts on the following questions:

- 1) Must the Mariana Islands vote in a plebiscite on any proposal for the future status of the Marshall and Caroline Islands? That is, must there be one plebiscite for the entire trust territory?
- 2) Assuming that the Mariana Islands wish to achieve a different political status than the rest of the trust territory, must there be full provision for such status before dissolution will be voted by the U.N. Security Council?
- 3) Do you have an estimated timetable as to when a plebiscite would be held in the Mariana Islands and when dissolution would occur?
- 4) Is there a more recent proposed agreement than the tentative agreement for the future status of the Mariana Island District, dated December 19, 1973?

From the material I have seen, it seems to me that the proposed status can be achieved within the framework of the

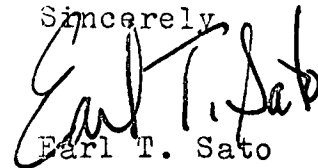
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Mr. Michael S. Helfer, January 4, 1975, page 2

the trusteeship agreement. If this is so, do you foresee any difficulties within the Security Council when the question of dissolution is presented?

I would appreciate any responses you might wish to offer. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Earl T. Sato". The signature is stylized and written over the typed name.

Earl T. Sato