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STATE OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT MESSAGE

FOURTH MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE

FIFTH REGULAR SESSION

by

THE HONORABLE FRANCISCO C. ADA

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR, MARIANA ISLANDS

FEBRUARY 3, 1975 - 6:00 P.M.

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DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR, MARIANA ISLANDS
FEBRUARY 3, 1975 - 6:00 P.M.

Once again, it is always my most honored privilege to address this august body, making this my sixth appearance since assuming the office in 1969. It is my desire to address ourselves to the many accomplishments together we have made during the almost six years of our stewardship as public servants. Corollary to the many accomplishments we have made, are the many problems which continue to confront us and the vision for better tomorrow for ourselves and our posterity.

There is no doubt that the living conditions of today is by far better than those of yesteryears. The progresses we have achieved are indicative of our hard works. Despite what our critics have said about lack of progress we cannot deny the fact that we have made considerable strides in the years of our administration.

Because of our concern on the education of our children, we continue to upgrade the trainings and skills of our teachers. In the summer of 1974, one hundred and nineteen (119) of our teachers enrolled in the University of Guam Extension Session with college credits which was held here on Saipan;

in addition, twenty seven (27) of our teachers attended the Community College of Micronesia for college credits and ninety-four (94) more attended our course work seminar bringing a total of two-hundred forty (240) teachers participated in training and education to upgrade their skills. Eight (8) Micronesian teachers with college degrees joined the school as staff members.

Thirteen (13) additional classrooms are budgetted for the current fiscal year and the contract for the construction of these classrooms has already been awarded. Last summer, Rota High School graduated eighteen (18) students. Because of our concern on retaining and strengthening our culture and language, we applied and received \$70,000 from federal funds to support the bilingual programs for our District.

In health services, a total of \$710,000 has been budgetted for the renovation and extension of the existing Dr. Torres Hospital. Under the domiciliary care program, a total of 4,803 home visits were made by the public health clinic division, extending medical care to the people instead of the people coming to the hospital. In close cooperation with the District Department of Education, extensive programs in dental care, immunizations and on the campus physical examinations were completed.

Our infant tourist industry continues to grow. Last year, seven chartered flights and seven luxury liners came to Saipan. The total number of tourists who visited our District was an increase of 10,000 over the number of 1973 bringing an estimated revenue of about \$4 million dollars. We now have about 400 hotel rooms in our District, three hotels are under construction and should be completed this year. With the opening of Saipan International Airport

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this coming fall, we expect that our tourist industry will greatly increase. We have every reason to believe that with careful planning and control, our tourist industry will be mutually beneficial.

To further assist our people in various economic ventures, a total of \$400,000 worth of economic development loans were granted in 1974. These loans were mostly for fishery, agriculture, poultry and livestock and other production loans.

Our agricultural production continues to develop. Crops and beef productions constitute an increase of 500,000 lbs. over that of 1973 and consequently, cash values shows an increase of about \$200,000 over that of 1973. The increase of egg production for 1974 constitute over 100% of that of 1973.

Presently, we are finalizing an arrangement with a company in Japan to export cantelopes, watermelons and other cash crops during the winter period in Japan when these crops because of weather condition are difficult to grow. This should be specifically be helpful when our new airport begins its operations and direct flight to Japan becomes a reality.

We are presently emphasizing production kind of economic goals such as agriculture and fishery. We shall continue to carry this course of economic development plan.

But while we are progressing steadily, we are certainly not immuned to the world- wide inflation. This is particularly true when we are totally dependent on imports for our livelihood. There is nothing we can do to influence world-wide inflation, but there is something we individually can do

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to ease the pain of inflation. What can each individual do? If every family will plant a small garden with vegetables around the house with the same vigor and stamina as when he or she put the middle of a slo if each head of the family works as overworked men with carefulness through of his family and exercises a certain degree of constancy without depriving a decent livelihood to his family, then I firmly believe that we can at least ease part of the pain of inflation.

With all the problems of our infrastructure we are moving along to continue improving economic requirements. A barge has been approved for assignment to the Department of Energy. This barge is on loan to us and it is capable of generating up to 30 kilowatts which is three times as much as we are now generating. This is necessary in order for us to expand our existing capabilities. We have a plan for power expansion during the next year period that we can be using the power barge. With the barge in operation by July of this year we can provide power to every applicant and will be enough for the next few years. It should be understood, however, that our existing generating capability is not sufficient to carry the load that the barge will be carrying when it becomes necessary to overhaul it.

We are budgetted for ten additional deep wells to be constructed. We have requested funds for certain works which are needed in order to use the Isley Airfield as water catchment source.

One of the biggest capital improvements projects near completion is, of course, the new Saipan International Airport. The airfield itself and

one building should be operational by September of this year. The contract for the rest of the building have been awarded and the completion date is for the late summer of 1976 which will make the airfield and terminal buildings and facilities in full operation. The total cost of this project is about \$10,000,000. This makes Saipan International Airport the first airfield built with federal funds involvement under the National Airfield and Airways Improvement Act of 1971. It is also the first airport with terminal buildings and being financed not by grant or appropriated funds but by a private company which successfully won a prime concession franchise for fifteen years through publicly competitive bidding system.

When the airport is completed, we have every reason to be optimistic that it will further enhance our infant tourist industry. We anticipate that this Airport will, in a given time, be a self-sustaining venture and could conceivably be a revenue generating source to finance other necessary infrastructures. We can all become proud of this facility and I look forward to the day when our visitors and especially our own people will not experience any inconvenience in the same manner that we are experiencing at our present airport.

In other areas of mutual concern, we are presently finalizing all the necessary documents for the invitation of proposals for the lease of our telephone system.

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I may add that one of the requirements in the proposed invitation is for our extension of a telephone system to both Tinian and Rota.

The increase in the demand for telephone service far out-distances our capability to meet such demand because of other high priority projects such as water and power to mention just a few. We are hopeful that if a private company is successful in getting the lease that it will improve our present system in addition to contributing to our economic development.

We have signed a lease agreement making available a space in our present Government-owned radio station to the Micronesian Broadcasting Corporation for operation of a television and a FM radio station which when completed Tinian will benefit greatly and that Rota will be able to pick-up our Government radio station more clearly for the first time.

In order to meet the vast backlog of homesteads, we have signed a contract for the survey of some 123 village lots at the Sugar King estate here in Saipan and some 230 agriculture homestead on Tinian. Both of these projects are now in progress. An appropriation from the Congress of Micronesia last year and financial assistance from Headquarters made these two projects possible. As additional funds become available, we shall continue to survey homestead lots with the hope that we can accomodate the vast majority of outstanding applicants. I have specifically instructed the District Land Management Officer, the District Agriculturist and the District Planner to review existing available public lands where utilities are available for

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additional village homestead sites. In this regard, I am asking this body to assist us in making available funds so that we can implement this plan.

While these are a handful few of notable accomplishments, I shall be remiss not to touch on the many problems we all share with the same degree of concern.

The continued increase in crime is of great concern, especially among our youth. Catching the culprit and sending him to jail is not a conclusive solution and may not be a corrective accomplishment. It is incumbent upon all of us to assist in their regard. The school, the community in total and most of all the parents of our children must assist.

For this matter I call upon this body to assist us in constructing more recreational facilities and plan more recreational programs to keep our youngsters occupied so that they will not roam the streets. A central youth center will soon be constructed in the vicinity of this building which we plan to have other indoor types of recreations. Additional funds are needed to buy all the necessary supplies for this center. Tinian and Rota recreational centers need replacement equipment as well.

Much have been publicized and seemingly much grounds have been gained in the area of political status. It is incumbent upon all of us as leaders to educate and prepare our people for whatever political status we so select. The task of political education does not exclusively rest with the local Task Force nor is it all the basic responsibility of the executive branch.

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It is all our task and the tragedy of tomorrow is when one will reflect in retrospect that because of lack of dialogue and careful explanation, our future generation will forever bear the eternal consequences.

Our people expect of us guidance and information on whatever political status we so collectively select. Political education must reach the grassroots level.

The state of our District then is not of proverbially supreme nor must it be termed a destitute state. The few notable accomplishments perhaps can be overshadowed by the magnitude of problems which we are painfully and slowly trying to partially resolve. However, one cannot hide the fact that life today in general is certainly better. Improvements visible at the present throughout our District are evidences of our accomplishments. The affluency of today is certainly much more noticeable than yesterday and more would be experienced.

There were moments in our almost six years of stewardship when turbulent political atmosphere would have weakened a lesser man to extreme frustration, but I for one, withstood such turbulence and continued to weather it out in the spirit not that of a master but a devoted and dedicated public servant, entrusted upon an oath to discharge this public trust as though I was given a public mandate through an electorate process. It is the challenges of the days ahead that urge me to serve.

Unquestionably, there were moments of differences of options and set of approaches to a common goal, but we have the same solemn mission and that is to serve our people.

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When we should reach that rightful age when we will have been placed on the sidelines because of our age, one of our satisfactions is to reflect in retrospect and reminisce that we were part of that foundation and that we are glad that a certain measure of devotion we were able to assist and to serve our people. For the measurement of personal gratification lies not in the provincial pride that one harbors for all of the accomplishments that one has achieved, but rather lies in the spiritual satisfaction that when he was summoned to serve he was able to help however little help one gave.

And so, this is the state of our District, as we bid farewell to the year under report and as we begin to chart the course for this year and subsequent years. The many challenges to come vary in dimensions brought about by the changes of time and all of the paraphernalias which accompany the changing of the character of a community, but we are no longer an isolated community, we are part of the total community of the world.

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