

DRAFT SECRETARIAL ORDER

OUTLINE

I. Naming of a Plebiscite Commissioner to direct the preparations for a plebiscite in the Northern Marianas on behalf of the United States Government as Administering Authority: an experienced American of acknowledged prestige and calibre. Duties will include operation of and impartial Plebiscite Information and Education Program (PIEP).

II. Duties of High Commissioner

Provide administrative support including funding for the Plebiscite Commissioner.

III. Mechanism of Plebiscite

A. Marianas Plebiscite Advisory Committee to advise Plebiscite Commissioner. Committee would consist of one representative of each of following bodies chosen by the body concerned:

1. Marianas District Legislature
2. Marianas Political Status Commission
3. District Administration
4. Saipan Municipal Council
5. Rota Municipal Council
6. Tinian Municipal Council
7. United Carolinian Association
8. Popular Party
9. Territorial Party
10. Chamber of Commerce

B. Executive Director to work directly under Plebiscite Commissioner with duty of actual running of PIEP: a Trust Territory official on special detail.

VOTER REGISTRATION BOARD

A. Members. Seven. (Suggestions only)

Chairmen: Mr. Farber, former TTPI Chief Justice
Mr. Ada, District Administrator, Marianas
Members: Judge Benevinte
Fr. Villagomez
Dr. Kaipat
Mr. Cepeda
Mrs. Lupe Sablan

B. Functions.

1. Oversee voter registration, using existing TTPI machinery
2. Act as an appellate review board to hear challenges to voter registration charges from which challenges may be taken to the TT Courts.
3. Certify final voter registration lists to the Plebiscite Commission.

C. Powers.

1. Issues regulations and guidelines based on qualifications for registering to vote in the plebiscite.
2. Review and take corrective actions in the registration of voters, e.g., maintain order at registration areas, prevent discrimination or abusive discretion, prevent intimidation.
3. Receive all challenges, hold formal hearings, issue subpoenas for the production of persons and records and hear all evidence regarding actions by the Election Commission and make final administrative rulings as to whether individuals qualify for registration to vote in the plebiscite.
4. Receive and review all voter registration lists, delete or add to the lists, and certify their accuracy and completeness to the Plebiscite Commission.

C. Voter Registration Board to recommend voter qualifications and act as an appellate board as necessary to consist of:

1. Co-Chairmen - a retired American judge and the District Administrator

2. Five members from Marianas community.

Board will be responsible to Plebiscite Commissioner

IV. Observation

A. United Nations - to be invited to observe:

1. Voter registration and other pre-plebiscite activity

2. Plebiscite (UNVM or special mission)

B. U.S. Congress - Senate and House to be invited to send observers for plebiscite.