



4/28/75 10/5,6 USC
Department of State

TELEGRAM

[1975]

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 290832Z

WASHINGTON, ~~APR 20~~ (MNS) --- IN A PREPARED ORAL BRIEFING IN WASHINGTON ON APRIL 14, AMBASSADOR FRANKLIN HAYDN WILLIAMS, THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS, DESCRIBED FOR THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRITORIAL AND INSULAR AFFAIRS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE COVENANT TO ESTABLISH A COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS IN POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES, SIGNED ON SAIPAN ON FEBRUARY 15, 1975.

PAGE 03 RUHGSAA0084 UNCLAS.

WILLIAMS NOTED THAT IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS A DETERMINED EFFORT WAS MADE TO SATISFY THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION IN SEEKING FULL INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION, WHILE GIVING FULL WEIGHT TO VIEWS OF MEMBERS OF THE U.S. CONGRESS.

MANY OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT REFLECT THE ADVICE AND WISHES OF THE U.S. CONGRESS, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO THE APPLICABILITY OF THE U.S. LAWS TO THE NEW COMMONWEALTH. THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THAT SINCE THE COVENANT IN ITS FINAL FORM WAS TO BE PRESENTED TO THE U.S. CONGRESS FOR EITHER APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL BUT NOT AMENDMENT, IT WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT THE U.S. SIDE MAKES SURE THAT ITS NEGOTIATING POSITION SHOULD NOT BE CONTRARY TO KNOWN CONGRESSIONAL VIEWS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BRIEFING FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE, THE AMBASSADOR SAID, WAS TO REPORT ON THE FINAL ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS AND TO BRIEF THEM ABOUT THE PLEBISCITE, NOW FIXED FOR JUNE 17. AFTER THE DECEMBER NEGOTIATING SESSION IF WAS NECESSARY, HE NOTED, TO REVIEW CERTAIN TENTATIVELY AGREED PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT WITH THE U.S. CONGRESS

PAGE 04 RUHGSAA0084 UNCLAS.

AND FOLLOWING THESE CONSULTATIONS THE U.S. WAS ABLE TO ELIMINATE ITS REMAINING RESERVATIONS. WHEN THE NEGOTIATORS MET AGAIN IN FEBRUARY, THERE WERE A FEW MINOR TECHNICAL CHANGES PREPARED BY THE MPSC, AND THE PROPOSAL FOR A BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH WITH EQUAL



UNCLASSIFIED

03 - 034867



Department of State **TELEGRAM**

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 290832Z

REPRESENTATION FROM EACH CHARTERED MUNICIPALITY IN ONE HOUSE. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON THESE PROPOSALS.

AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS EMPHASIZED THAT THE CALL TO NEGOTIATE A SEPARATE STATUS FOR THE MARIANAS CAME FROM THE PEOPLE OF THAT DISTRICT AND THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. THEIR DESIRE FOR POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES, FIRST EXPRESSED IN 1950, HAS BEEN REPEATED OVER THE YEARS THROUGH RESOLUTIONS, REFERENDUMS, AND REPRESENTATIONS TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND TO THE UNITED NATIONS.

THE U.S. NEGOTIATOR DESCRIBED TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COVENANT, NOTING THAT IF THE CONGRESS APPROVES THE COVENANT, IT WILL VOLUNTARILY LIMIT ITS PLENARY POWERS TO AMEND CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT UNLESS CONSENTED TO BY THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROVISIONS ARE: THE BASIC POLITICAL

PAGE 05 RUHGSAA0084 UNCLAS.

RELATIONSHIP, THE RIGHT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT, THE RIGHT TO U.S. CITIZENSHIP, THE SECTION DEALING WITH THE APPLICABILITY OF BASIC PROVISIONS OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION TO THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS, AND PROTECTION AGAINST ALIENATION OF LAND.

THE AMBASSADOR SAID "THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TAKES MOST SERIOUSLY ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY TO SEE THAT A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL PLEBISCITE IS HELD ON THE COVENANT." HE TOLD THE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. ERWIN CANHAM AS PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER. HIS DUTIES WILL BE TO SUPERVISE THE PLEBISCITE AND CARRY OUT AN IMPARTIAL PLEBISCITE EDUCATION PROGRAM. WILLIAMS TOLD THE SUBCOMMITTEE ABOUT THE FORM OF THE VOTE ON THE COVENANT, NOTING THAT THE DRAFTING WAS A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION. THIS FORM OF VOTE WAS DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS THAT A "NO" VOTE MEANS THAT THE MARIANAS WOULD BE FREE TO SEEK AN ALTERNATIVE FUTURE STATUS IN CONCERT WITH THE OTHER DISTRICTS.

IN CONCLUDING, THE AMBASSADOR VOICED HIS SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO THE CHAIRMAN FOR THE ATTENTION AND TIME HE HAS GIVEN THESE TALKS, AND FOR HIS ADVICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

UNCLASSIFIED

*Need quote re
land ownership*

034968