

COMM. ON ARMED SERVICES
PUBLIC WORKS
Mr. Helms

0157

June 12, 1975

File - CON IN
Congress

AIR MAIL

Juan DLG. Demapan,
Susupe, Village
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Mr. Demapan:

Thank you very much for your May 28 letter. I am truly astonished to hear that Ambassador Williams has decided for the people of the Marianas and of the United States that the draft covenant shall be forever unchanged. He does not have the right to make such statements because approval of the covenant is the prerogative of the Congress, not of the Executive Branch. It is my opinion that Congress will make changes in the covenant because some features of it are unprecedented, unnecessary or even of doubtful constitutionality.

Since Congress has the unquestioned right to alter the terms of the covenant, it follows that the people of the Marianas, the other party to the agreement, have an equal right to do the same. I find it distressing that the plebiscite will be conducted before Congress makes its inevitable alterations.

The plebiscite results will, therefore, not be a true indication of the desires of the people of the Marianas, even if the "education program" is being run impartially, which does not seem to be the case. It is quite possible, it seems to me, that yet another vote will be necessary to see if Congress' version of the covenant is acceptable in the Marianas.

It is clear to me that the Nixon and Ford Administrations have acted as if they are the complete government of the United States. They have kept Congress out of the negotiating process, and they now expect a rubber-stamped O.K. of what they have done. What is worse is that they intend to separate the administration of the Marianas from that of Micronesia after the plebiscite but before Congress even begins its discussions of whether acquiring the islands is in the best interests of the people of the Marianas, of Micronesia or of the United States. It is a clear case of government by steamroller tactics, and I and many of my colleagues in the Senate do not want it to occur the way the Administration plans.

I cannot tell you if the door will be open in future years for the Marianas to join the United States, but I do know that Ambassador Williams has no right to tell you it will not be.

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You are correct that events in the Far East have a direct bearing on future status, but that not one word of these important developments has been discussed. Certainly, the Marianas should be making a reevaluation, but so should the United States. In other words, a lot has changed in the three years since Ambassador Williams switched his efforts from the political status of Micronesia to that of the Marianas alone, and this should be the compelling argument in favor of my position that we are going too far too fast in this matter.

I appreciated receiving your letter and want to thank you for taking the time to correspond.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



Gary Hart
U.S.S.

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June 16, 1975

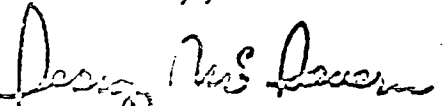
Dear Mr. Demapan:

Thank you for your letter of May 28, advising me of the situation on the Mariana Islands.

Unfortunately, your letter arrived too late for my reply to reach you before the June 17 plebiscite. As to your question about renegotiation of the covenant after the 1976 elections: that would depend on who wins that election, which as you realize cannot be known in advance.

I appreciate that you have written to me on this matter, and will take your views into consideration when it comes up before Congress.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

George McGovern

Juan DLG. Demapan
Susupe Village
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

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