

1975
(MARIANAS VOTERS APPROVE COMMONWEALTH)

SAIPAN, JUNE 18 (MNS)---BY A VOTE OF 3,648 TO 1,002 THE VOTERS OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT APPROVED THE COVENANT WHICH WOULD SET UP THE PROPOSED U.S. COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS. THE PLEBISCITE WHICH WAS HELD ON JUNE 17 WAS OBSERVED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL HEADED BY MR. JAMES MURRAY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN EDWARD PANGELINAN SAID "PERSONALLY, I'M VERY EXCITED AND I'M PLEASED WITH THIS EXPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE. WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO EXPRESS OUR DESIRE TO BECOME A PART OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS AND, AFTER SPENDING TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS, THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS, IN A FREE ELECTION, HAVE EXERCISED THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND HAVE DECIDED THEIR FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS--THAT IS TO APPROVE THE COVENANT TO ESTABLISH THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS IN POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"I BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN AND I'M VERY PLEASED WITH THE RESULT OF TODAY'S ELECTION. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ADD THAT THE PLEBISCITE HAS BEEN CONDUCTED IN A FAIR AND ORDERLY MANNER. WE HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVES WHO CONDUCTED THE PLEBISCITE AND I BELIEVE THAT EVERYBODY HAS BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS. THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION IS HERE TO OBSERVE THE CONDUCT OF THE PLEBISCITE AND I BELIEVE, IN GENERAL, THAT THE PLEBISCITE HAS BEEN CONDUCTED IN A MOST DEMOCRATIC, MOST ORDERLY FASHION THAT YOU CAN FIND ANY PLACE IN THE 11 TRUST TERRITORY OF THE UNITED NATIONS. "I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE PEOPLE FOR GOING OUT TO VOTE ON THIS VERY IMPORTANT AND VERY HISTORIC OCCASION AND I CONGRATULATE THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO SUPPORTED THE COVENANT. THOSE WHO OPPOSED THE COVENANT I ALSO EXTEND MY PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS FOR EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS IN THIS VERY IMPORTANT OCCASION. I BELIEVE NOW THAT IT IS TIME TO WORK TOGETHER--BOTH THOSE WHO OPPOSED IT AND THOSE WHO SUPPORTED IT--AND TO WORK FOR A BETTER COMMONWEALTH FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS. I HOPE THAT THIS IS THE TURNING POINT OF THE POLITICAL STATUS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS. I HOPE THAT EVERYBODY IN THE MARIANAS WILL WORK TOGETHER AS ONE UNITED PEOPLE AND I EXTEND MY PERSONAL CONGRATULATION TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS FOR EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS IN THIS HISTORIC PLEBISCITE FOR THE MARIANAS ON JUNE 17."

JOE CRUZ, MEMBER OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION SAID "I THINK THE RESULT OF THE PLEBISCITE TODAY IS JUST GREAT. WE'VE WAITED FOR 21 YEARS FOR THIS VERY SPECIAL MOMENT. IT'S REJOICE AND JUBILEE TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WORK HARD FOR THIS GOAL. I ONLY REGRET THAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO ASPIRED FOR THIS HAVE PASSED AWAY BUT I AM HAPPY FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN. I WANT TO CONGRATULATE THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS FOR A VERY FINE DECISION AND I'M SURE THEY WILL NOT REGRET THIS DECISION THAT WE MADE TODAY. I WANT TO THANK EVERYBODY WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE ELECTION, INCLUDING THE PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER, FOR A VERY FAIR DECISION."

PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER MR. ERWIN CANHAM SAID "I'M VERY GRATEFUL THAT THE VOTING TODAY WAS CONDUCTED IN SUCH A GOOD SPIRIT. THERE WERE NO DISORDERS OF ANY KIND THAT I KNEW ABOUT. THERE WERE VERY FEW DISPUTES ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO VOTE AND COULDN'T. ONLY EIGHT CASES CAME TO MY ATTENTION, FOUR OF THEM WERE ABLE TO VOTE AND FOUR OTHERS HADN'T BEEN REGISTERED AND SO WE COULDN'T PERMIT THEM TO VOTE. I THINK THAT THE ACTUAL OPERATIONS WERE VERY SATISFACTORY AND AS PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER I'M PARTICULARLY GREATFUL TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS FOR THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY CONDUCTED TODAY'S VOTING. IF I MAY ADD, THE RESULT IS SO DECISIVE THAT THIS IS A CLEAR MANDATE OF PUBLIC OPINION."

(WILLIAMS COMMENT ON PLEBISCITE)

SAIPAN, JUNE 13 (MNS)---THE FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF THE STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR F. HAYDN WILLIAMS, THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS ON THE RESULTS OF THE PLEBISCITE IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS:

"I AM NATURALLY PLEASED THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS HAVE IN A FREE EXERCISE OF THEIR RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY IN FAVOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT AND POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES. THIS POPULAR EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE WORK OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE MUST BE MOST GRATIFYING TO THOSE IN THE MARIANAS WHO HAVE LABORED LONG AND HARD FOR A NEW POLITICAL STATUS FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. I SEND TO THEM MY CONGRATULATIONS FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

"THOSE OF US ON THE AMERICAN SIDE WHO HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTICIPATING IN THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO THE SIGNING OF THE COVENANT ALSO TAKE PLEASURE IN KNOWING THAT OUR EFFORTS COMBINED WITH THOSE OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF PUBLIC EXAMINATION AND DEBATE AND THE FREE BALLOT BOX. WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER, MR. ERWIN CANHAM, AND HIS STAFF FOR THE ESSENTIAL ROLE THEY PLAYED IN THE BASIC PLANNING AND ADMINISTERING OF THE PLEBISCITE AND FOR THE WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING AND INTEGRITY THEY BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THIS PROCESS.

"MOST OF ALL, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS FOR ALL THE COURTESIES AND KINDNESSES THEY HAVE SHOWN ME AND THE MEMBERS OF MY DELEGATION DURING EVERY PHASE OF THE STATUS TALKS AND ON MANY PUBLIC OCCASIONS. I WISH ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS SUCCESS AS THEY NOW JOIN IN COMMON TASKS FOR THE COMMON GOOD, TASKS DESIGNED TO FURTHER THE WELL BEING OF ALL THE CITIZENS OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS AS THEY PLAN FOR THE YEARS AHEAD."

(PALAU LEGISLATURE MEETS)

KOROR, JUNE 13 (MNS)---AS THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS WENT TO THE POLLS TUESDAY (JUNE 17) TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS ON WHETHER TO APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT IN POLITICAL AFFILIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE FIFTH PALAU DISTRICT LEGISLATURE CONVENED ITS THIRD SPECIAL SESSION IN KOROR FOR A FOUR-DAY

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SESSION TO "CONSIDER THE TWO DRAFT PALAU CONSTITUTIONS AND A LEGISLATION CALLING FOR A DISTRICT-WIDE REFERENDUM."

PALAU DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR THOMAS REMENGESAU SAID "I AM VERY HAPPY TO INFORM THE LEGISLATURE THAT I HAVE SIGNED INTO LAW A BILL CREATING A DISTRICT PUBLIC LANDS AUTHORITY AS THE LEGAL ENTITY TO RECEIVE CERTAIN PUBLIC LANDS IN THE PALAU DISTRICT PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECRETARIAL ORDER NO. 2969."

WITH RESPECT TO THE PALAU CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, DISTAD REMENGESAU SAID THAT HE HAS RECEIVED THE TWO DRAFT CONSTITUTIONS FROM THE PALAU CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. THE DISTAD TRANSMITTED THE DRAFT CONSTITUTIONS TO THE PALAU LEGISLATURE FOR ITS CONSIDERATION.

SPEAKER ITELBANG LUII STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UPCOMING JULY 8 TRUST TERRITORY-WIDE REFERENDUM, WHICH HE REGARDS AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE CONFRONTING PALAU AND MICRONESIA.