

Congress of Micronesia

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July 21, 1975

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Alfred I. Kendall

DISTRICT

Barbarus E. Salli

Leoman Tmetuchi

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Barney Otter

Amabilos Iehsi

DISTRICT

osiwo Nakayama

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Osano Haruo

Salisto Refonopei

Ray Selik

Lambert Aafin

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The Honorable Gary Hart
The United States Senate
Capitol Hill
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Hart:

Although somewhat belated, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the warm and cordial reception you and your staff gave to me during my April 14 visit to your office. I certainly appreciate the time you took from your busy schedule to discuss an issue of vital concern to myself and to the people I represent in the Congress of Micronesia. The purpose of this letter is to seek your support, and that of your colleagues, when the issue of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands reaches the floor of the Senate.

Since our April conversation, the people of the Marianas went to the polls to determine whether it was the wish of the people of these islands to join in a closer political relationship with the United States. The turnout was overwhelming. In fact, approximately 90 percent of the registered voters cast their ballots at the plebiscite. The result of the vote was equally impressive. Over 78 percent of the votes cast were in favor of the Commonwealth Covenant.

As you will recall in our discussion, you indicated that you were not opposing the aspirations of the people of the Marianas, but rather, the method in which the Administration was handling the U.S. Congress in getting its approval of the Covenant. It is, therefore, my hope that whatever conflicts may arise between the Congress and the Executive Branch of the United States Government, they can be amicably resolved and will not be allowed to defeat the deeply-held wishes and desires of our people.

It has been my observation that those who are hesitant to support the Covenant take this position because of their desire to treat Micronesia as a unified entity. But the concept of unity is not logical. Micronesia is not an entity conceived by the

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The Honorable Gary Hart

Page 2

July 21, 1975

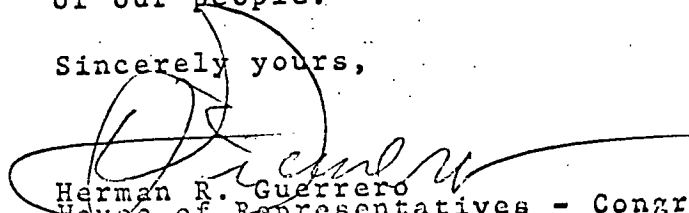
peoples of the various island groups which make up its territory, but an administrative unit created by foreign nations. Over the last 20 years, the people of the Marianas have expressed their continuing desire to join in closer political relationship with the United States. This feeling was manifested in the June 17 plebiscite; and the firmness of the decision was further amplified by the fact that only about 5 percent of the Marianas voters participated in the Trust Territory-wide referendum on July 8 of this year.

One of the primary reasons for the desire of the Marianas people to join the American political family is the observation that the United States has demonstrated through its heritage and institutions that the people of all races, creeds and colors can live together in peace and harmony. Never in the history of the Marianas have our people enjoyed greater democratic self-government nor individual integrity than we do today under the American administration. The democratic process in the United States gives protection to every human being. The people of the Marianas believe in this kind of protection and, therefore, in order to insure continuing protection of our fundamental rights, are seeking to associate ourselves with the United States in a permanent relationship. I truly hope you will help us accomplish this end.

I would have liked to have met with you personally during this crucial period when the Senate is actively studying the Covenant, in order to more adequately express to you the sincerity of the desires of the people of the Marianas, but pressing business here in Saipan and with the Congress of Micronesia has made such a visit impracticable. I do urge you, however, to feel free to contact me at any time, or any member of the Marianas delegation presently in Washington, on any question you may have in regard to the Covenant.

Again, thank you for your time and attention given to me in the past. I hope that this letter will assist your appreciation of the hopes and aspirations of our people.

Sincerely yours,


Herman R. Guerrero
House of Representatives - Congress of Micronesia

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The Honorable Gar. art
Page 3
July 21, 1975

HRG:ma

cc: Chairman, Interior Committee, U.S. Senate
Chairman, Armed Services Committee, U.S. Senate
Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. Sen.
Congressman Philip Burton, House of Rep., U.S.
Congress

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