

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 25 (MNS)---THE COVENANT HEARINGS
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
THURSDAY (FRIDAY, SAIPAN TIME) TOOK ON ASPECTS OF A FULL FLOOR
DEBATE, ACCORDING TO A REPORT BY JIM HALL, RECEIVED VIA PEACESAT
(SATELLITE).

10
6,524
hearings

SENATE OPPONENTS OF THE COVENANT, NOT MEMBERS OF THE INTERIOR
COMMITTEE, MADE APPEARANCES IN ORDER TO MAKE STATEMENTS AND ASK
QUESTIONS. INCLUDED IN THIS GROUP WERE SENATOR CLAISORNE PELL
OF RHODE ISLAND; SENATOR HARRY BYRD, JR. OF VIRGINIA AND
SENATOR GARY HART OF COLORADO.

1975

PROponents OF THE MEASURE SUCH AS SENATOR MIRAM L. FONG
OF HAWAII, ALSO INSERTED A STATEMENTS INTO THE RECORD.
REPRESENTATIVE PHILLIP BURTON (D-CALIF.), CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS, TESTIFIED AT THE
HEARING IN PEPSON.

DURING THE DAY-LONG SESSION, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN THE
SENATORS WERE DEBATING EACH OTHER AND THE QUESTIONING BECAME
EXTREMELY SHARP.

SENATOR HART, A FORMER DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR LAWYER
AND MAJOR OPPONENT OF THE COVENANT IN THE SENATE, WAS SUCCESSFUL
IN PART BY THROWING A MINOR ROADBLOCK IN THE COVENANT'S PATH
THROUGH THE U.S. CONGRESS. HE FOUGHT FOR AND RECEIVED CONCURRENCE
THAT HEARINGS ON THE COVENANT SHOULD BE HELD BEFORE THE SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE BEFORE ANY ACTION IS TAKEN ON THE FLOOR

OF THE SENATE.

SENATOR BYRD, A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, ALSO APPEARED BEFORE THE INTERIOR COMMITTEE IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE POINT THAT THE MARIANAS COVENANT HAS DEFINITE MILITARY IMPLICATIONS AND THUS SHOULD BE HEARD BEFORE THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE.

SENATOR BENNET JOHNSTON TO LOUISIANA, ACTING CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, TAKING OVER AFTER SENATOR HENRY JACKSON OPENED THE HEARINGS WITH THE STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE COVENANT, AGREED WITH SENATORS BYRD AND HART'S VIEW THAT SUCH SPECIAL HEARINGS SHOULD BE HELD. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE COVENANT BILL WOULD NOT BE A MATTER OF SHAPED JURISDICTION--THAT IS, THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE WOULD NOT HAVE TO REPORT OUT THE BILL ONLY THAT INFORMATION HEARINGS WOULD BE HELD.

AS OF THURSDAY NIGHT WASHINGTON TIME, FRIDAY MORNING SAIPAN TIME, NO DECISION HAD YET BEEN MADE ON THE TIME AND DATE OF THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARINGS. THE MARIANAS DELEGATION WHICH WAS PACKED FOR DEPARTURE TOMORROW MORNING (FRIDAY MORNING WASHINGTON TIME) WAS PUT ON ALERT THAT ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARINGS MIGHT BE HELD AS EARLY AS THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK. A DECISION ON THIS IS BEING MADE THROUGH CONSULTATION BETWEEN SENATOR JACKSON AND JOHNSTON OF THE INTERIOR COMMITTEE AND SENATOR JOHN STENNIS OF MISSISSIPPI, CHAIRMAN OF THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE.

THE MARIANAS DELEGATION WILL SEND A NUMBER OF THEIR MEMBERS HOME TOMORROW (SAT.) REGARDLESS OF THE DECISION, BUT A NUMBER OF THE MEMBERS ARE DUTY BOUND TO REMAIN IN WASHINGTON TEMPORARILY.

SENATOR HART ALSO BROUGHT INTO THE INTERIOR HEARINGS SENATOR PELL WHO PROMPTLY ANNOUNCED WHAT HE CALLED HIS "STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE COVENANT." SEN. PELL SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THE BASIC REASON FOR THE COVENANT IS TO PROVIDE TERRITORY FOR MORE MILITARY BASES. HE WANTS THE MARIANAS DISTRICT TO REMAIN WITH MICRONESIA AND BELIEVES INDEPENDENCE SHOULD BE GIVEN WHEN THE UN TRUSTEESHIP ARRANGEMENT ENDS.

SENATOR PELL ALSO QUESTIONED EDWARD PANGELINAN AND THE MARIANAS DELEGATION IN GENERAL ABOUT HOW THEY MANAGED TO FINANCE THEIR TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON TO ATTEND THE HEARINGS. AFTER PANGELINAN AND THE GROUP CAREFULLY EXPLAINED HOW THE FINANCING WAS ARRANGED, SENATOR PELL INSERTED INTO THE RECORD A LETTER FROM ABEL OLOPAI, ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED CAROLINIAN ASSOCIATION, TO SENATOR HART STATING THAT HE (OLOPAI) WAS DENIED TRAVEL EXPENSES TO WASHINGTON BECAUSE HE HAD OPPOSED THE COVENANT.

SENATOR HART RAISED A NUMBER OF SENSITIVE ISSUES CONCERNING THE COVENANT AND THEN LEFT THE HEARING ROOM WHENEVER ANYONE FROM THE MARIANAS WAS TESTIFYING.

EMOTIONS WERE BEGINNING TO RUN HIGH BY THE TIME THE TESTIFY. ALMOST FIVE HOURS AFTER THE HEARINGS HAD BEGUN. HIS VOICE BREAKING AND STRUGGLING TO SPEAK, JOSE CRUZ OF TINIAN, RESPONDED EMOTIONALLY TO THE ALLEGATIONS OF SENATOR HART. HE TOLD AN ATTENTIVE, JAMMED-PACKED HEARING ROOM HOW THE MARIANAS HAD BEEN KICKED AROUND LIKE A FOOTBALL FOR 400 YEARS. HE DESCRIBED HIS OWN FAMILY BACKGROUND, THE EFFORTS OF HIS GRAND PARENTS TO LEARN GERMAN, AND HOW HIS FATHER WAS EXECUTED BY THE JAPANESE. CHOKING WITH EMOTIONS HE TOLD THE SENATORS: "WE03-024976

WANT TO BE AMERICANS TO ENJOY HUMAN DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS."

RESPONDING TO SEN. HART'S CHARGES THAT THE MARIANAS PEOPLE WERE BEING MISLED ABOUT AMERICA'S MILITARY INTENTIONS FOR TINIAN, CRUZ SAID THAT THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN ARE "WILLING TO SHARE OUR ISLAND FOR OUR OWN PROTECTION AND PROTECTION OF OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS." HE SAID WHATEVER ECONOMIC BENEFITS THE PEOPLE OF SAIPAN RECEIVE FROM THE COVENANT ARE USELESS WITHOUT SECURITY. HE TOLD THE COMMITTEE: "PLEASE GIVE US WHAT WE'RE ASKING; IT IS A MATTER OF LIVE AND DEATH."

AT THE CONCLUSION OF CRUZ'S REMARKS, ACTING CHAIRMAN JOHNSTON SAID: "MR. CRUZ, THE ONLY THING WRONG WITH YOUR STATEMENT IS THAT IT WAS NOT HEARD BY EVERY MEMBER OF CONGRESS."

SEN. JOHNSTON CALLED THE COVENANT A MORAL AND POLITICAL BOND AND PRAISED THE PATRIOTISM SHOWN BY THE MEMBERS OF THE MARIANAS DELEGATION.

SENATOR HART CAUSED ANOTHER STIR NEAR THE END OF THE EIGHT HOUR HEARING BY REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CALL AS A WITNESS DR. DONALD F. MCHENRY, AUTHOR OF THE STUDY "MICRONESIA-TRUST BETRAYED" WHICH WAS RELEASED ONLY THE NIGHT BEFORE THE HEARING.

HART THEN PROCEEDED TO ASK A SERIES OF LEADING QUESTIONS OF DR. MCHENRY, WHO TURNED OUT TO BE AN EQUIVOCAL WITNESS. HE FIRST STATED THAT IT WAS NOT HIS DESIRE TO TESTIFY AND THEY PROCEEDED TO GIVE LONG AND INVOLVED ANSWERS TO EVERY QUESTION.

WHEN DR. MCHENRY CONCLUDED HIS TESTIMONY, BOTH AMBASSADOR FRANKLIN HAYDN WILLIAMS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT, AND EDDIE PANGELINAN ROSE TO REBUT THE TESTIMONY. AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS RESPONDED WITH MORE THAN A TRACE OF IRRITATION IN HIS VOICE SAYING THAT IT WAS "ALRIGHT TO SAY WHAT SCHOLARS MAY WANT AND ALRIGHT TO SAY WHAT THE EXPATRIATES MAY WANT BUT WHEN ARE WE GOING TO ASK WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT?"

"IT'S THEIR FUTURE," SAID AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS, "AND THEY HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO FREELY CHOOSE WHAT THEY DESIRE."

WHEN EDDIE PANGELINAN TOOK THE WITNESS CHAIR, SENATOR HART ONCE AGAIN LEFT THE HEARING ROOM. PANGELINAN EXPRESSES SURPRISE AT THE INTRODUCTION OF DR. MCHENRY'S TESTIMONY AND DENIED MCHENRY'S CHARGES THAT THE MARIANAS PEOPLE WERE NOT INFORMED ON THE FUTURE STATUS OPTIONS OPEN TO THEM. HE SAID THAT THE MARIANAS DELEGATION HAS FREQUENTLY VISITED THE UN TRUSTEESHIP HEARINGS AND HAD HEARD THE PROBLEMS OF OTHER TERRITORIES AND HAD STUDIED THE OPTIONS FOR A YEAR.

HE STATED FLATLY THAT THE MARIANAS PEOPLE HAD MADE THEIR DECISION AND THEY WOULD "MAKE AVAILABLE OUR LAND AND OUR LIFE FOR AMERICA."

IN EARLIER TESTIMONY, SENATOR JACKSON SPOKE FAVORABLY ABOUT THE "HISTORIC" OCCASION. SENATOR FONG, IN ABSENTIA URGED PROMPT AND FAVORABLE ACTION ON THE COVENANT. SENATOR PAUL J. FANNIN OF ARIZONA SAID THE SENATE SHOULD "APPROVE THE COVENANT AS OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE HOUSE HAVE DONE." SENATOR JAMES MCCLURE OF IDAHO TOLD THE MARIANAS DELEGATION THAT ON THE BASIS OF THEIR TESTIMONY THEY WOULD MAKE "GREAT CANDIDATES FOR AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP." HE ADDED: "I FOR ONE, WANT TO WELCOME YOU" AND ADDED IN THE VERNACULAR "HAFADAI."

IN A LESS OPTIMISTIC NOTE SENATORS JOHNSTON AND MCCLURE SAID WHILE THEY FAVORED ACTION ON THE MICRONESIAN WAR CLAIMS SECTION OF THE COVENANT BILL, THEY FELT THE SUBJECT WAS NOT PARTICULARLY RELATED TO THE COVENANT AND THUS FAVORED A SEPARATE BILL WITH SEPARATE HEARINGS COMPLETE WITH WITNESSES.

AS THE LAST DAY OF THE HEARINGS CONCLUDED, THERE WERE MIXED FEELINGS AMONG THE MARIANAS DELEGATION. THE POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL HEARINGS WAS STRONG BUT AS OF THURSDAY NIGHT (WASHINGTON TIME) NO ONE COULD TELL WHEN THEY WOULD BE HELD.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE COVENANT WAS VERY EVIDENT DURING THE HEARING US WAS DETERMINED OPPOSITION TO IT. THE MICRONESIAN WAR CLAIMS SECTION LOOKS DEAD IN THE SENATE. FINAL APPROVAL OF THE COVENANT SEEMS MUCH FURTHER AWAY THAN IT DID JUST A FEW DAYS AGO.

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