

SEP 19 REC'D

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Dear Dr. Williams,

Here is the clipping you requested. Sorry it stops so abruptly. There were 4 more grafs which wound it up better, but this is one of the problems of making up a daily paper. Cut it to fit.

Cheers!

Betty Peach

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SEP 19 1975

U.S. territory in Pacific split on future role

By BETTY PEACH

Independence means different things to different people in the Marianas, the curving string of 16 islands in the Pacific, says President Ford's personal emissary to Micronesia.

Dr. Franklyn Haydn Williams said islanders speak about 15 different dialects, so the current plodding pace of negotiations aimed at making the territory a United States commonwealth creates some misunderstandings.

"In talking with a member of the Congress of Micronesia, I learned that when he spoke of independence, he was talking about total independence of his island from a neighboring one.

"He did not mean a government for Micronesia as a whole, independent from the U.S. Trust Territory government," said Williams, who was visiting San Diego yesterday.

In opting for commonwealth status, the 15,000 residents of the Northern Marianas, which stretch in an arc for 450 miles north of Guam, will be breaking with the other 110,000 residents of the scattered Trust Territory.

Williams, who holds the rank of ambassador, is a deputy assistant secretary in the Defense Department's International Security Affairs Unit, and is the U.S. representative to the Congress of Micronesia, headquartered on the island of Saipan.

Williams also is president of the Asia Foundation, a C.I.A.-funded organization based in San Francisco. He has been involved in Micronesia negotiations since 1967, and especially instrumental in negotiations with the Northern Marianas since 1972.

The offer of commonwealth status to the Marianas represents a switch in policy. Previously, the official U.S. government line had favored a "free association" of the whole of Micronesia, all 2,100 islands encompassing 3 million square miles of Pacific Ocean, as a self-governed commonwealth with the United States.

There are as many suggestions for the changes in government as there are islands, Williams said.

This is one of the reasons that the U.S. government, which has managed the Trust Territory under an agreement with the United Nations since 1947, is proceeding cautiously.

He said that U.S. citizenship, which commonwealth status insures, appeals to an overwhelming majority in the Northern Marianas.

He said the government would be modeled along lines of the government of Guam, actually a member of the Mariana Islands geographically, but separate politically.

Principal purpose of having the Northern Marianas as a legal part of the United States is to provide the military with bases in the far Pacific.

With American forces being squeezed out of Southeast Asia, and increasingly unpopular in The Philippines, the leaders of the Defense Department seek an alternative.

One of the provisions of the covenant with the Northern Marianas is for a 100-year lease for \$20 million for land on Tinian that could serve as military bases. There is a good harbor at Saipan which the Navy would use. Large airfields would relieve pressure on crowded Guam 100 miles south.

Williams said he thinks the islands have great potential, much of which was not recognized by the millions of Americans who saw service there in World War II.

Williams is one who paid little attention then. As a Navy lieutenant there he had one principal thought. Get home.

"Like everybody else, I counted my points toward getting out of Ponape and back to the United States. The islands had little appeal then."

But the Japanese, who had colonized the area before the war, and who were repatriated afterward to Japan, would jump at the chance to colonize again, Williams said. As it is, they visit some of the islands by the thousands as vacationers.