

MARIANAS DELEGATION
P.O. Box 977
Saipan, M.I. 96950

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October 2, 1975

The Honorable Henry M. Jackson
United States Senate
137 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Jackson:

We, as the elected and appointed leaders of the Mariana Islands, wish to respond to a letter written to you by Mr. Robert Wenkam on September 15, 1975, in which Mr. Wenkam notes the concern of the Friends of the Earth to the "unseemly haste" to enact legislation granting U.S. Commonwealth status to the Mariana Islands.

We in the Mariana Islands have great respect for the environmental work of the Friends of the Earth and for the concern Mr. Wenkam has shown for our islands. However, we believe it is unfortunate that Mr. Wenkam has misinterpreted the public records surrounding the Mariana Islands political status negotiations. Mr. Wenkam's research should have shown that the Congress of Micronesia has never publicly opposed the separate status negotiations. The Mariana Islands have sought political union with the United States for over twenty-five years. This desire was recognized by the first political status commission of the Congress of Micronesia in its 1969 and 1971 report. The 1971 Report of the Joint Committee on Future Status (JCFS) noted "We recognize the aspirations of the people of the Marianas District to share in the benefits that independence bestowes on your (U.S.) great country by becoming more closely affiliated with the United States". The 1969 report noted that Micronesia would not oppose separate status negotiations by the Mariana Islands if the interests of the minority groups in the Marianas were protected. Mr. Wenkam's contention that the Congress of Micronesia (COM) is still opposed to the Marianas Commonwealth is at most outdated and for the most part false. The telegram dated September 8, 1975 and addressed to you (copy attached) from the presiding officers of the Congress of Micronesia will substantiate our view that the Congress has formally acquiesced to the desire of the Marianas.

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Mr. Wenkam notes that there is "substantial agreement that it is in Micronesia's long range best interests to stay together and not be divided". We should note that self-determination for the Mariana Islands does not preclude the continued close relationship the people of the Northern Mariana Islands have established with the remainder of Micronesia. Indeed, we anticipate continued close economic ties and continued friendship with the other districts. As leaders of the Mariana Islands, we find it difficult to understand just who it is who has made such a misjudgment. To Mr. Wenkam's remarks that there are differences between the Marianas District and the rest of Micronesia, we would also add the major and most crucial difference, and that is our political choice for self-determination. The people of the Northern Marianas desire a close and enduring political relationship with the United States of America. The leaders of the other districts do not share our desire nor the generosity of the United States to establish one commonwealth for all of Micronesia. There is no "substantial agreement" on our part that the long range interest of the Marianas would be protected by continuing to remain a part of the six Administrative Districts of the Trust Territory.

Under the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, the people of the Marianas are accorded the right to exercise their sovereign rights of self-determination. This, Senator Jackson, we have done last June 17, 1975, when 78.8% of our people voted in a free and democratic plebiscite in favor of the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

We disagree very strongly with Mr. Wenkam's statement that the plebiscite is questionable. The Marianas plebiscite was a landmark in the exercise of political maturity. 95% of the eligible voters were registered and out of which 93% cast their ballots. More important it was observed by a United Nations mission which later publicly admitted the orderly and fair manner in which the plebiscite was conducted. Furthermore, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth does not concern the political future of the other districts and we find it difficult to understand why Mr. Wenkam objects to the passage of the Covenant in the U.S. Senate on the basis that the other districts did not vote on it. The Marianas people negotiated the agreement themselves and such agreements will be binding only to the Marianas. It appears to us that a suggestion by Mr. Wenkam to give the opportunity to all the Micronesian people to vote is an excuse to indefinitely delay or undermine our people's desire to be a part of the United States.

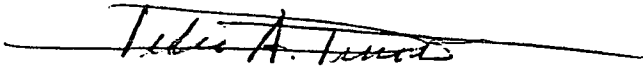
For the record, we wish to point out that contrary to Mr. Wenkam's statement, an official invitation was extended to the COM Presiding Officers to testify before the House Interior Subcommittee on H.J.Res. 549, but both officers failed to show up. We are certain that your Committee also invited the Congress of Micronesia.

Lastly, we would like to point out that we interpose no objection to the interest of the Friends of the Earth to extend beneficial legislation to the Marianas in the areas of conservation and environmental protection. However, we believe that this can be easily handled through other more convenient ways rather than through amendment of S.J. Res. 107. It is our hope that such a group as the Friends of the Earth and others concerned with our welfare would ask themselves first the following question: "What do the people of the Marianas want?", before making misleading statements on our behalf.

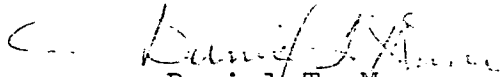
We hope this letter would be of some use to you in your consideration of S.J. Res. 107.

With our best regards,

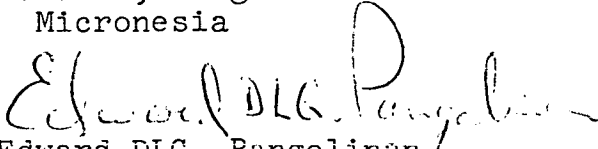
Very truly yours,



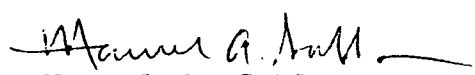
Pedro A. Tenorio
Senator, Congress of
Micronesia



Daniel T. Muna
Member, Marianas
District Legislature



Edward DLG. Pangelinan
Chairman, Marianas Political
Status Commission



Manuel A. Sablan
Member, Marianas Political
Status Commission

Attachment:
as indicated

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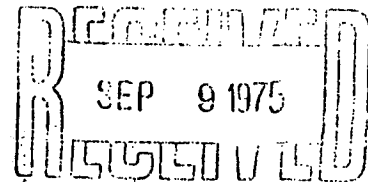
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SENATE INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



HON. HENRY M. JACKSON, CHAIRMAN

SENATE INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON DC

CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA HAS JUST BEEN FURNISHED BY TTPI
EXECUTIVE BRANCH A COPY OF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
LEADERSHIP OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT RELATIVE TO THE
MECHANICS OF TRANSITION OF MARIANAS DISTRICT FROM ITS PRESENT
STATUS TO COMMONWEALTH X MICRONESIAN CONGRESS

AND ITS LEADERSHIP HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE
PROPOSED TRANSITION INSOFAR AS ITS MECHANICS MAY HAVE
ADVERSE IMPACT AND RETROGRESSIVE EFFECTS IN THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE REST OF THE TRUST TERRITORY X WHILE MICRO
CONGRESS HAS ACQUIESCED TO THE POPULAR EXPRESSIONS OF THE
PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS IN OPTING FOR

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A COMMONWEALTH STATUS ITS

POSITION REGARDING MARIANAS TRANSITION DIFFERS MATERIALLY
FROM THAT BEING PROPOSED TO THE INTERIOR SECRETARY BY THE MARIANAS
LEADERSHIP TO WIT: MARIANAS PROPOSAL FOR SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION
PRIOR TO TERMINATION OF TRUSTEESHIP WITH DIVISION OF PRESENT
TTPI ANNUAL BUDGET ONE-SIDEDLY IN FAVOR OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT

PAGE-4/50

THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER DISTRICTS SERIOUSLY ABROGATES
THE OVERRIDING OBLIGATION OF THE UNITED STATES TO ADVANCE THE
WELL-BEING OF ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA X MARIANAS
SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION PRIOR TO TERMINATION OF TRUSTEESHIP WILL
GENERATE AND COMPOUND PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARIANAS
AND THE OTHER DISTRICTS PARTICULARLY

WITH HEADQUARTERS REMAINING

IN THE MARIANAS AND WITHOUT BUDGETARY PROVISIONS TO TRANSFER HQ
TO ANOTHER DISTRICT AND WITHOUT SPECIFIC STATUTORY PROVISIONS
CLEARLY PROVIDING FOR DELINEATION OF ADMINISTERING TTPI AND
MARIANAS X PERCEIVED DIFFICULTIES ARE QUESTIONS ON TAXATION, IMPORT
AND EXPORT, JOINT USE OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES X
IMMIGRATION AND

EMIGRATION, AND IN GENERAL CONFLICTING LAWS AND

THEIR APPLICATION X FINALLY, THE ENABLING LEGISLATION TO
APPROVE THE MARIANAS COVENANT SHOULD INCLUDE SAFEGUARDS OF THE
INTERESTS OF THE REMAINDER OF MICRONESIA AND THE CONGRESS OF
MICRONESIA

AND SHOULD SPECIFY GUIDELINES AS TO HOW MARIANAS WILL BE SEPARATELY
ADMINISTERED VIS A VIS

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THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE OTHER DISTRICTS X
THESE IMPORTANT MATTERS SHOULD NOT BE LEFT TO UNLIMITED
EXECUTIVE DISCRETION AS PROVIDED IN H. J. RES. 549 X IN THE INTEREST
OF ALL CONCERNED THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA IS REQUESTING AN
OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH YOU IN WASHINGTON AND TO TESTIFY BEFORE
RELEVANT

COLL ORD H. J. RES. 549

PAGE-8/47

COMMITTEES ON H. J. RES. 549 AND IMPACT OF MARIANAS
TRANSITION UPON THE REST OF MICRONESIA X BEFORE ANY FINAL ACTION IS
TAKEN ON H. J. RES. 549 X PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE TOSIWO
NAKAYAMA AND SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BETHWEL
HENRY, CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SEND X

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COLL ORD H. J. RES. 549 H. J. RES 549