

Hi Marcus

Saipan, 13 February 1977

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Dear Howard:

To keep you posted let me report that at a dinner party on Friday at the Loftus', Erwin Canham reported that the Chamber of Commerce had petitioned him that day to postpone the referendum for 30 days arguing insufficient time for public discussion. Joe Steen (siz?) was one of the initiators of this movement. We had heard some rumors of unhappiness on the part of the businessmen, propelled principally by their fear of new tax burdens.

Mr. Speaker Guerrero (Herman R., I believe) also is mumbling against the Constitution, the ~~xxxxx~~ rumor being that he would like to retain the status quo and his Speakership.

Canham was inclined against the postponement but seems very sensitive by criticism by McHenry, UN Trusteeship Council et. al. He mentioned the fact that the Constitution had not been translated into Carolinian yet. (Since the verbatim transcript of the ConCon is still being transcribed, the translation delay hardly is surprising but a little pressure should get the job done to meet that argument for postponement).


Loftus and I raised all the points on why postponement would serve no useful purpose. I don't know how serious the Chamber petition is or whether Canham is inclined to postpone. I stick to my earlier prediction that the vote will be strongly in support of the Constitution (even Joe Cruz admits that it will pass heavily in Tinian despite his continued opposition. I chatted with him on a flight to Tinian).

I'm scheduled to leave Saipan on Thursday, and I'll cable if anything urgent occurs (this assumes blithely that this letter will arrive before I do). Neal Solomon returned today and is in good fettle and will start some drafting on Monday (codes of conduct and that sort of thing for a start).

Cheers,

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As ever,


Howard N. Mantel