

1 Mangefel.

2 (MARIANAS CONSTITUTION APPROVED)

3 SAIPAN, Mar. 7 (MNS)---An overwhelming majority of the people
4 of the Northern Marianas who voted in Sunday's referendum approved
5 the draft Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

6 Resident Commissioner Erwin D. Canham reported an
7 affirmative vote of 93.3 percent. He added that approximately
8 58 percent of the voters turned out on Sunday out of the 6,554
9 registered voters in the Northern Marianas.

10 "The endorsement of the constitution by the people of the
11 Northern Marianas is emphatic and very gratifying. The turnout
12 of approximately 58 percent, Canham said "is good since the
13 issues of the Constitution were already voted in the covenant and
14 there were no political parties involved."

15 "I have transmitted the results to the American government
16 and will carry the signed copy of the Constitution to the U.S.
17 this week," he said. Canham and Budget Officer Ignacio Sablan
18 are leaving this week for budget hearings in Washington.

19 Canham said the number of voters opposing the Constitution came
20 to 258, with 19 of the votes voided.

1 The referendum on the Constitution was the seventh of ten
2 steps set by former Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams leading
3 toward full-fledged Commonwealth Government. The next step
4 will be approval of the Constitution by U.S. Government probably
5 later this year. The U.S. Congress will be given the opportunity
6 to review the constitution.

7 Following that will be the election and installation of the
8 Commonwealth government under the new Constitution, possibly
9 during the latter part of this year.

10 (THOUSANDS ATTENDED YAP DAY CELEBRATION)

11 YAP, MARCH 7 (MNS)---More than half of the population of Yap
12 proper showed up for the annual Yap Day Celebration held March 1st,
13 according to Yap Public Information Officer Willie Gorongfel.
14 Games, feasts and dances were among the main attractions of the
15 day's events.

16 The day began with a march of elders involved in the Old
17 Age Program dressed in colorful old Yapese attire. The group
18 marched from the old age program site to the celebration ground
19 by the hospital where the crowd was waiting. The same group of
20 Yapese old men and women also opened the ceremonies with their

1 the Yapese people in preserving this day for the Yapese people.

2 Main events in the afternoon included two baseball games
3 played by four teams and a men's sitting dance also performed by
4 the old age program participants.

5 Evening entertainment was topped by exotic music played by a local
6 band followed by free movies provided by the Coast Guard station
7 in Yap.

8 Yap District Day was established by the Yap District
9 Legislature to honor Yapese culture and customs as well as the
10 traditional Yapese way of life.

11 (LEGISLATURE'S SOCIAL COMMITTEE HEARINGS BEGIN)

12 SAIPAN, MAR. 7 (MNS)---Public hearings began this week on
13 Saipan for all Northern Marianas citizens who were forced to join
14 the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II, according to a
15 release from the Northern Marianas Legislature. The hearings are
16 being conducted by the Social Committee chaired by Senator Jack
17 Villanueva.

18 Those persons who served in the army were also taken to
19 Guam, the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, Indonesia and other areas
20 in the Pacific while serving in the Imperial Army, Senator Villanueva

1 said.

2 The Committee is mandated by a resolution adopted during the
3 recently concluded session of the Legislature to seek, among other
4 things, compensation for all Northern Marianas citizens who were
5 drafted into the army "under threat of death to themselves or their
6 families..."

7 Claims were filed under the Micronesian Claims Act of 1971
8 for compensation for service in the Japanese Imperial Army,
9 according to the resolution. "But all these claims were denied
10 on the basis that the Micronesian Claims Act of 1971 did not
11 include service in the Japanese Army," the resolution pointed out.

12 "...To allow this situation to go uncorrected would be an
13 injustice" on the part of those who served in the Japanese Army,
14 claims the resolution. The Committee is further mandated to seek
15 compensation from the Government of Japan.

16 Public hearings on Saipan will conclude on Friday (March 11).
17 The Committee will hold similar hearings on Tinian March 14 to 15;
18 and on Rota from March 17 to 19th, Senator Villanueva said.

19 (EAST-WEST CENTER ALUMNI REUNION)

20 SAIPAN, MAR. 7 (MNS)---The First Annual East-West Center