

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
of the
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

VERBATIM JOURNAL (TRANSCRIPT)

Twenty-Third Day
Tuesday, November 9, 1976

(1) The Constitutional Convention of the Northern Mariana Islands was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

The Honorable Lorenzo I. Guerrero, President, presided.

(2) A moment of silent prayer was observed.

(3) The Convention Secretary called the roll. There were 35 Delegates present. Delegates Jose R. Cruz, Daniel P. Castro, Olympio T. Borja, and Luis Limes were excused. No Delegates were absent.

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that those Delegates not in attendance be excused.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(4) ADOPTION OF THE JOURNAL

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that the Summary Journal of the 22nd Day be adopted.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(5) COMMUNICATIONS - None

(6) COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Felipe Atalig: The Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources has completed Committee Report No. 7, regarding "Natural Resources," and this will be introduced for the First Reading on today's agenda.

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: The Committee on Governmental Institutions is still deliberating on the "Executive Branch."

Chairman Benigno Fitial: Your Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters has completed deliberation and has adopted the constitutional language for the provision on "Local Government." This will be finalized and presented tomorrow to the Convention.

President Guerrero: At this time, the Organization and Procedures Committee would like to report that the Order of Business for today does not show the scheduling of Committee Report and Recommendation No. 5, regarding "Public Lands," for consideration of the Committee of the Whole for First Reading today. This should be inserted in your Order of Business under item 12, "General Orders of the Day."

(7) INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairman Felipe Atalig: I would like to introduce Committee Recommendation No. 7, regarding "Natural Resources," from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources. I would like this to be placed on the calendar for First Reading.

(8) SECOND AND FINAL READING OF PROPOSALS - None

(9) INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS - None

(10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Convention Secretary: The Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources has recommended re-referral of Delegate Proposal No. 26 to the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters and Delegate Proposal No. 21 was re-referred to the Committee on Governmental Institutions.

President Guerrero: The Committee on Organization and Procedures will reassign those Delegate Proposals to the appropriate standing committee sometime this afternoon.

(11) SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY - None

(12) GENERAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that the Convention resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole in order to consider Committee Recommendation No. 5, "Public Lands," Committee Recommendation No. 6, "Eminent Domain," and Committee Recommendation No. 7, "Oath of Office."

The motion was seconded and carried.

President Guerrero: I would like to call Delegate Pedro Dela Cruz from Rota to Chair the Committee of the Whole for today.

The Convention resolved into the Committee of the Whole at 2:18 p.m.

The Convention reconvened in Plenary Session at 4:45 p.m.

Chairman Dela Cruz: Your Committee of the Whole has adopted all three recommendations. Regarding Committee Recommendation No. 5, it was adopted as amended.

President Guerrero: As stated in our Rules, all amendments have to be submitted in writing, so I suggest that the Committee Chairman get that amendment in writing and submit it to the Convention Secretary.

Chairman Dela Cruz: I move that the Convention adopt the Recommendations, as adopted by the Committee of the Whole. These are Committee Recommendation No. 6, "Eminent Domain," from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources, Committee Recommendation No. 7, "Oath of Office," from the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters, and Committee Recommendation No. 5, as amended, on "Public Lands" from the Committee on Personal Rights & Natural Resources. The amendment to Committee Recommendation No. 5 is as follows:

Committee Recommendation No. 5: Public Lands

Section 5(a) The Corporation shall make available some portion of the public lands for a homestead program. No person shall be eligible for more than one agricultural and village homestead. No person shall receive title to a homestead for five years after the grant of a homestead or shall be able to transfer title to a homestead within ten years of receipt thereof provided, however, that these requirements shall be waived for persons who have established a continuous residence on public lands for at least 20 years as of the effective date of this Constitution. Other requirements for eligibility for the homestead program and the nature of the interest in land to be transferred by the Corporation shall be as provided by law.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(13) MISCELLANEOUS

President Guerrero: There is a resolution being passed around for signature that will be sent to President-Elect Jimmy Carter. I suggest that all the Delegates sign where required and return this to the Convention Secretary.

(14) ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Benigno Fitial: Your Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters will meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Atalig: Your Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources will meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: Your Committee on Governmental Institutions will meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.


President Guerrero: There will be a meeting of all Convention officers, including the three Vice Presidents and the Chairman of the three substantive committees immediately following this session.

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that the Convention recess until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The motion was seconded and carried.

The Convention recessed at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Pedro M. Atalig
Convention Secretary