

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION  
of the  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

VERBATIM JOURNAL (TRANSCRIPT)

Twenty-Fourth Day  
Wednesday, November 10, 1976

(1) The Constitutional Convention of the Northern Mariana Islands was called to order at 2:03 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 33 Delegates present. Delegates Olympio T. Borja, Daniel P. Castro, Francisco T. Palacios, Oscar C. Rasa, Manuel A. Tenorio and Joaquín S. Torres were excused. No Delegates were absent. A quorum was present.

Delegate Juan Tenorio: I move that those Delegates not in attendance be excused.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(4) ADOPTION OF THE JOURNAL

Delegate Juan Tenorio: I move that the Summary Journal of the 23rd Day and the Verbatim Journal Transcripts for the 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 Days be adopted by the Convention.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(5) COMMUNICATIONS

President Guerrero: I would like to announce that since Floor Leader Rasa is unavailable for today, I have appointed Delegate Juan Tenorio as Acting Floor Leader.

(6) COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Benigno Fitial: Your Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters is submitting Committee Recommendation No. 8, regarding "Local Government," to the Convention.

Chairman Felipe Atalig: Your Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources has completed their assignment and all Committee Reports will be submitted sometime this week. May I also add, that the participation of your Committee Members is highly recognized and the output of all the Committee Members is highly appreciated by the Chairman. Thank you very much.

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: Your Committee on Governmental Institutions hopefully will submit their Report and Recommendation on the "Executive Branch" by tomorrow or Friday.

Chairman Benigno Fitial: I want to report to the Convention that with the submission of Committee Recommendation No. 8 on "Local Government," this Committee has completed its essential task and we would like to offer our assistance to the other two Committees if deemed appropriate.

Chairman Felipe Atalig: On November 13 and 14, 1976, some members of your Committee are going to Tinian and Rota for the purpose of planning public hearings. At this time, the Chairman would like to recognize that Ramon Villagomez has been appointed to go to Tinian and Jose Borja and Manuel Tenorio will go to Rota. The appointment of Ramon Villagomez is subject to his acceptance.

(7) INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairman Benigno Fitial: At this time I would like to introduce Committee Recommendation No. 8, regarding "Local Government," from the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters to be placed on the calendar for First Reading.

(8) SECOND AND FINAL READING OF PROPOSALS - None

(9) INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS - None

(Delegate Manuel Tenorio entered the Convention Hall.)

(10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

(11) SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY - None

(12) GENERAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

President Guerrero: As shown on the Order of Business, we have one item to be discussed today by the Committee of the Whole. It is Committee Recommendation No. 7, regarding "Natural Resources," from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources.

Acting Floor Leader Tenorio: I move that the Convention resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole.

The motion was seconded and carried.

President Guerrero: I would like to call Delegate Gregorio Calvo from Rota to act as Chairman for today's Committee of the Whole.

The Convention resolved into the Committee of the Whole at 2:12 p.m.

The Convention reconvened in Plenary Session at 2:52 p.m.

Chairman Gregorio Calvo: Your Committee of the Whole has unanimously adopted Recommendation No. 7 from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources, regarding "Natural Resources."

Delegate Ramon Villagomez: I move that the Convention adopt Committee Recommendation No. 7, regarding "Natural Resources," from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(12) MISCELLANEOUS

Delegate Jose R. Cruz: A while ago, this Convention resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole and I was recognized by the Chair to speak. Before I started speaking, someone raised the point of "Rules." I did not have a chance to speak. I urge this Convention that when a newspaperman is here at the session, not to stir up a show to show that he is better than another Delegate, so that his name will be in the headlines of tomorrow's paper, especially when it comes from the Chairman of a substantive committee who doesn't seem to know the answer to a question, but can't stand to have another member answer the question.

I think this Convention should have respect and cooperation among all the Delegates. Everyone should have a chance to speak. I know that when the newspaperman comes here someone wants to show-off. We're here to frame the Constitution of the Northern Marianas, not at a beauty contest.

Chairman Felipe Atalig: The statement made by the Delegate from Tinian, is referring to the Chairman of the Personal Rights and Natural Resources Committee. I wish to register my concern at this moving statement and hope the Delegate from Tinian can see that there is no place for this kind of childish discussion in this Convention. For fourteen years he has been in a legislative body, therefore, he should be used to complying with the Rules and Regulations. Let the record show, Mr. President, that

my interference with his remark is in compliance with our Rule 34. I don't care if Joe Murphy was here, it had nothing to do with a newspaperman being here.

President Guerrero: I would like to urge all members of this Convention to use better discipline during any discussion, whether Committee of the Whole or Plenary Session. We are here to frame a constitution, not to fool around.

Delegate Esteven King: I would like to make a statement to any Delegate who may be Chairman of the Committee of the Whole in the future. The Chairman should recognize every speaker and give him a chance to speak. We are here to discuss and give our opinions. These opinions and different personalities are what will give us a workable Constitution. I am asking that the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole recognize any Delegate and give him a chance to express his opinions.

(13) ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Benigno Fitial: Your Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters will be meeting tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the Recommendation submitted today to prepare for discussion during Committee of the Whole.

Chairman Felipe Atalig: Your Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources will be meeting tonight at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: Since we are about ready to submit our Recommendation regarding the "Executive Branch of Government," we will not meet this afternoon, but will meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

President Guerrero: I would like to urge the three substantive committee to work hard to accomplish their assignments. You should try to submit all your Recommendations this week so the Convention can possibly proceed with public hearings next week.

Acting Floor Leader Tenorio: I move that the Convention recess until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

President Guerrero: Before we entertain that motion, I recognize Delegate Jose R. Cruz from Tinian.

Delegate Jose R. Cruz: I would like to amend the motion to recess until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

Acting Floor Leader Tenorio: I moved that we recess until 1:00 p.m. in order to allow us more time to work tomorrow afternoon. We are running out of time. We need to get moving in order to get finished with our Constitution. That is why 1:00 p.m. is to the advantage of the Convention.


Delegate Ramon Villagomez: According to our Rules of Procedure No. 42(c), the motion to adjourn is neither amendable nor debatable.

Acting Floor Leader Tenorio: I move that this Convention recess until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The motion was seconded and carried.

The Convention recessed at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Pedro M. Atalig  
Convention Secretary