

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
of the
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

VERBATIM JOURNAL (TRANSCRIPT)

Twenty-Seventh Day
Saturday, November 13, 1976

(1) The Constitutional Convention of the Northern Mariana Islands was called to order at 10:19 a.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 29 Delegates present. Delegates David Atalig, Gregorio Calvo, Jose Cruz, Pedro Dela Cruz, Hilario Diaz, Benjamin Manglona, Prudencio Manglona, Vicente Manglona, Pedro Ogo and Francisco T. Palacios were excused. No Delegates were absent. A quorum was present.

President Guerrero: Mr. Secretary, for your information, the Delegates from Rota and Tinian who are not present are excused as they are attending a meeting in the Rota Delegation room.

Convention Secretary: Also, Delegate Francisco T. Palacios and Delegate Pedro Dela Cruz asked to be excused for very urgent business.

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that those members not present be granted leave of absence.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(4) ADOPTION OF THE JOURNAL

Floor Leader Rasa: I move that the Summary Journal of the 26th Day and the Verbatim Journal Transcripts of the 12, 16, 17 and 18 Days be adopted by the Convention.

The motion was seconded and carried.

(5) COMMUNICATIONS

Convention Secretary: A communication from the Chairman of the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters states:

Subject: Appointment of Delegates from Delegations to Conduct Public Hearings

In compliance with your verbal instructions for public hearings, the following Delegates from the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters have been appointed from their respective Delegations to conduct public hearings on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

Saipan: Delegate Jesus Villagomez and Delegate Oscar Rasa

Tinian: Delegate Juan Tenorio and Delegate Benigno Fitial

Rota: Delegate Luis Benavente and Delegate Esteven King

President Guerrero: Have the Chairman of the other two Committees submitted the names of the Delegates who will attend the public hearings on Saipan, Tinian and Rota?

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: I have the names, Mr. President, and I will submit these names to you right after this session.

(6) COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: On behalf of the Committee on Governmental Institutions, I have the honor to introduce Committee Recommendation No. 4. The Committee's Recommendation concerns the "Executive Branch of Government."

In brief, the Committee recommends that the executive branch be headed by a governor and a vice governor. These officials would serve four-year terms and would run on the same ticket. The article offered by the Committee also provides for a board of education, an attorney general, a public auditor, and a civil service commission. The legislature would have the power to establish additional departments and agencies. The governor would have the authority to reorganize the executive branch subject to a legislative veto if the reorganization would depart from existing law.

Among the governor's prescribed duties are the responsibilities to address the legislature at least once a year and to see that the laws are faithfully executed. The Committee's recommended article would also require the governor to consult with the chief executive officers of Saipan and the islands north of it, Rota, and Tinian, in preparing his proposed annual budget. The governor would also be required to detail to the legislature his response to the budgetary requests made by the chief executive officers of the islands.

The Committee has decided not to submit any proposal with respect to the issues of local government and the powers and title of the chief executive officers of the islands. The Committee believes that further discussion of these issues by the Convention or the Committee of the Whole should be deferred until the President's Special Committee advances its recommended compromise. Accordingly, Mr. President, the Committee respectfully requests that the Convention and the Committee of the Whole neither debate nor vote on these issues during the discussion of Committee Recommendation No. 4. The Committee's reasons for deciding not to propose constitutional language dealing with the lieutenant governor/mayor issue are fully discussed in an attachment to the Report that we submit today.

Mr. President, I ask that the Convention accept Committee Recommendation No. 4 and that it be calendared for early consideration by the Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

President Guerrero: The officers of the Convention, composed of the three Vice Presidents, the three substantive Chairmen, the Floor Leader, and the Convention Secretary, will meet right after this session to decide if this matter will be calendared for tomorrow's meeting.

(7) INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairman Jose P. Mafnas: At this time, I would like to introduce Committee Recommendation No. 4, regarding "The Executive Branch of Government," from the Committee on Governmental Institutions, to the Convention.

(8) SECOND AND FINAL READING OF PROPOSALS - None

(9) INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS - None

(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 for today, we have Committee Recommendation No. 9 from the Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters, regarding "Preamble," and Committee Recommendation No. 9 from the Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources, regarding "Miscellaneous Provisions," to discuss during the Committee of the Whole.

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

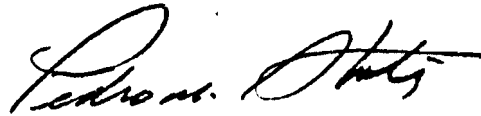
The motion was seconded and carried.

President Guerrero: May I call on Chairman Felipe Atalig to Chair today's Committee of the Whole discussion.

The Convention resolved into the Committee of the Whole at 10:30 a.m.

The Convention recessed while in the Committee of the Whole. Recess was called at 11:23 a.m., to last until 9:00 a.m. the following morning.

Respectfully submitted,



Pedro M. Atalig
Convention Secretary