

November 14, 1976

REPORT OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS  
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention has now completed four of its seven allotted weeks. The Convention has divided itself into three committees dealing with substantive issues and a Committee on Organization and Procedures charged with the management of the work of the Convention.

Each of the substantive committees has submitted recommendations to the full Convention. Each recommendation consisted of proposed constitutional language and of a report explaining why the proposed language was recommended. The Committee on Governmental Institutions has submitted recommendations with respect to the judicial branch of government, the legislative branch of government, the executive branch of government and the representation of the Northern Marianas before agencies of the United States government. The Committee on Personal Rights and Natural Resources has made recommendations concerning personal rights, eligibility to vote, elections, initiative, referendum, recall, public lands, eminent domain, natural resources and land alienation. The Committee on Finance, Local Government and Other Matters has submitted recommendations pertaining to the preamble, taxation and finance, education, corporations, constitutional amendment, local government, and the oath to be taken by Commonwealth employees.

The Committee of the Whole, consisting of all the delegates to the Convention, has given initial approval in principle to proposed constitutional articles on these topics. The Constitutional articles approved in principle by the Committee of the Whole are attached.

None of the decisions that the Convention has made is final. Each article adopted in principle on first reading will be subject to further scrutiny by the Convention after the completion of public hearings. The Convention urges the people of the Northern Mariana Islands to express their views on the proposed constitutional provisions. The Convention will conduct simultaneous public hearings on Saipan, Rota and Tinian on November 17, 1976 in order to receive those views. In addition, any person may submit comments in writing addressed to Pedro M. Atalig, Convention Secretary.

On behalf of the Convention,

Lorenzo I. Guerrero, President