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REMARKS OF HILARIO F. DIAZ
BEFORE THE FINAL SESSION OF
THE NORTHERN MARIANAS
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
DECEMBER 6, 1976

Mr. President and fellow delegates:

On behalf of the people of Tinian, the Tinian Delegation and myself, I wish to take this opportunity on the last day of our Convention to say a few words regarding our Constitution.

When we gathered here on the first day of our Convention, I was enthusiastic to begin our task. I was optimistic that our efforts would produce a Constitution. My enthusiasm and optimism, however, were limited by concern that we would be unable to compromise our differences in an atmosphere of good will.

My optimism was justified. We have completed the most difficult task in the history of the Northern Mariana Islands. Our Constitution will benefit the Marianas people, however, only if it gains their approval and, later, their loyalty.

If the Constitution should produce any discontentment among our people in the future, then I pray that further generations will remedy the cause of the discontentment. This generation has done its best to draft a document free of major defects.


Mr. President and fellow delegates, from the beginning to the end of our Convention today, whenever our President called on us to rise for a moment of prayer, I recited these words conscientiously and devotedly:

"Oh Holy Spirit, we ask Thy Goodness and most gracious guidance to come into our minds and hearts and help us to think intellegently and equitably on issues for our Constitution, deliberate and discuss them thoroughly and adequately and decide upon them properly for the good of our people and our islands in the Northern Marianas."

Mr. President, I know for a fact that the Constitution we have just adopted is not perfect, but I do know that it is a worthy document that should not be underestimated by an individual, Let history alone be the final judgment of our success.

Lastly, Mr. President and fellow delegates, I would like to express our most heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation for all the kindnesses extended to us during our 50 days here on Saipan.

Thank you again and Si Yuss Maase to one and all.



Hilario F. Diaz
Constitutional Convention
Delegate from Tinian

CHANGES FOR STYLE,
CONSISTENCY AND CLARITY
RECOMMENDED THE CONSULTANTS

ARTICLE XIII: EMINENT DOMAIN

Section 1: Eminent Domain Power. The Commonwealth may exercise the power of eminent domain as provided by law to acquire private property necessary for the accomplishment of a public purpose.

Section 2: Limitations. Private property may not be taken without just compensation. Private land may be taken only if no suitable public land is available for the accomplishment of the public purpose.

Section 3: Statutes of Limitations. The legislature ~~may~~ shall study whether to repeal any statute of limitation currently in force in the Commonwealth with respect to land in order for the Commonwealth to provide compensation for past transactions. Such compensation to be provided by the Commonwealth shall be in priority with respect to the distribution of public lands but shall not affect any right in property that vested pursuant to the repealed statute of limitations.