

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
of the
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

VERBATIM JOURNAL (TRANSCRIPT)

Fiftieth Day
Monday, December 6, 1976

(1) The Constitutional Convention of the Northern Mariana Islands was called to order at 10:00 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 31 Delegates present. Delegates Carlos Camacho, Jose Cruz, Juan DLG. Demapan, Jose Mafnas, Benjamin Manglona, Prudencio Manglona, Pedro Ogo and Leon Taisacan were absent. No Delegates were excused. A quorum was present.

(Delegate Limes moved that those Delegates not in attendance be excused. The motion was seconded and defeated.)

Floor Leader Rasa: Mr. President, I move that we suspend the order of business temporarily and proceed to item 9, "Introduction of Resolutions."

The motion was seconded and carried.

Floor Leader Rasa: Mr. President, I would like to introduce Resolution No. 16. The vote for passage will take place later in the day.

President Guerrero: Would the Convention Secretary please read the Resolution.

Secretary Atalig. Yes, Sir.

RESOLUTION NO. 16

A RESOLUTION

Adopting the "Analysis of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

WHEREAS, the legal consultants to the Convention have prepared an "Analysis of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands"; and

WHEREAS, the Convention has considered the Analysis; and

WHEREAS, the Analysis describes the provisions of the Constitution and discusses the intention of the Constitution in adopting those provisions, but does not itself have the force of law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Constitution adopt the "Analysis of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands" and direct that it be available to the Northern Marianas people along with the Constitution for their consideration in determining whether to approve the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be attached to and printed with the "Analysis of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands."

(10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None.

(11) SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

President Guerrero: Under our Special Order for the day we have the adoption of our Section by Section Analysis of the Constitution. In order for us to have our detail by detail discussion, do I hear a motion for adoption?

Floor Leader Raza: I move that we adopt the Section by Section Analysis.

The motion was seconded.

Delegate Torres: Now, on page 9 of the Section by Section Analysis, why is the attorney general authorized to issue warrants? Why are we allowing the legislature to provide that he issues warrants, I mean? Couldn't he be neutral or be cast from the case? He's the one that would be prosecuting the case. I am somewhat puzzled by the attorney general being included as one who could issue warrants.

Mr. Willens: I think the only point we're making here, Delegate Torres, is that this is not resolved firmly in the Constitution. It will be left up to the Legislature to spell out the process for seeking an issue of warrants. I agree that the United States practice of utilizing judicial officers or magistrates who operate under the court's jurisdiction is the way to do it. This is just an indication that the Constitution leaves this as a problem for the legislature to resolve. With respect to the attorney general, you will remember that there was a strong feeling that the attorney general be separated from the police and law enforcement activities, although it is true that he would be prosecuting. He would not be in charge of day to day investigation, though, as it would be run by the department of public safety. So, theoretically, at least, he would have sufficient neutrality to serve this function should the legislature decide to do so. I would recommend, however, that the legislature limit the issuance to judicial officers.

Delegate Torres: On that same page, "if the facts are knowingly falsified, the witness may be prosecuted for perjury or sued..." If that witness is a government official, would he be personally liable or would the government be liable?

Mr. Willens: Actually, I think there has been a recent change in the law. I read an article in the Guam newspaper about it within the last few weeks. I think the thrust of this decision is that the people are going to be personally liable due to this kind of malfeasance. The government might well be held liable unless the....although that depends on whether it's a civil rights act or something of that sort that gives a cause of action for a public officer to deprive someone of his civil rights. That's the statutory basis for actions in the United States. I think you can certainly say that an individual is going to be responsible for his acts, certainly, and subject to lawsuits. And the government might well be held liable.

Delegate Torres: On page 10, Howard, the provision relating to wiretapping and eavesdropping. Don't you think this is too lenient? We have a provision providing the right of privacy and, yet, at the same time, this is a very broad grant of power. We are practically authorizing any law enforcement officer of the government to seek and obtain a warrant for wiretapping. Do you think, perhaps, that it might be better if we restrict it to the top law enforcement officers of the law enforcement division? Such as the attorney general and the assistant attorney general.

Mr. Willens: I think it would be useful to restrict it. I agree with you and think it is a matter, again, for legislative implementation. I think you would probably have a law that is like the Federal law that is now in effect, requiring that the attorney general personally authorize each such interception so that it is not done frequently in the regular course of business by law enforcement officials. That is something for you to spell out in legislation and I think it should be restricted. Don't forget, though, Delegate Torres, that this whole section 3(b) is a limitation on government action--of a kind that other Constitutions don't have. This is a desirable

protection of the citizens to prevent electronic eavesdropping and to subject it to the same requirements as the issue of warrants that we have for the other kinds of search and seizure. It does require judicial control on this kind of law enforcement activity and the legislature will be free--or, indeed, the attorney general will be free as a matter of executive responsibility--to direct that all such permits or requests be funneled through his office.

Delegate Torres: Mr. President, may I proceed?

President Guerrero: Yes, please proceed.

Delegate Torres: Some of the Delegates may have questions on this section. I intend to go all the way. I have questions all throughout and maybe some of the Delegates will want to ask questions.

President Guerrero: Why don't we stop at this point, then, and see if any other Delegates have similar questions. From page 1 to page 9, are there any further questions? (There were none.)

From page 10 to page 20, are there any questions? Delegate Villagomez.

Delegate Ramon Villagomez: Howard, during Committee of the Whole it was explained by you or by Deanne that under double jeopardy, if the case is filed in the Commonwealth court it cannot be filed in the federal court. In the section by section analysis you have changed your position. Now you are saying that if the case is filed first in the island court, it can again be filed in the federal court. Is there any authority for that?

Mr. Willens: I don't like to think that we have changed our position. But you cannot impose any restrictions on the federal government in the execution of criminal prosecutions. That is beyond the authority of the Convention or the Commonwealth. All we can do in the Constitution is impose restrictions on your government, the Commonwealth government, and you have adopted a provision that prevents the Commonwealth from prosecuting someone for a crime that has already been prosecuted by the federal government. What we have said, of course, is that if it is not exactly the same crime involved, we have no problem. We had a discussion on that.

Delegate Ramon Villagomez: Doesn't the U.S. Constitution imply that the double jeopardy section of the Constitution prevents the federal government from trying a person for the same crime and the same facts?

Mr. Willens: Yes.

Delegate Villagomez: That is not the explanation that Deanne gave us. My understanding is that if the charge is different--even if in the island court the person is charged with burglary and in the federal court the person is charged with grand larceny--then the federal court can prosecute because it is a different charge under the same facts and the same case. But if the charge is the same, such as burglary in the island court and burglary in the federal court, then it would constitute double jeopardy.

Mr. Willens: That as a matter of general statement is true. I agree with that. The problem is that it is never the same charge. The definition of federal crimes almost always carries with it some different ingredient than a state charge.

Mr. Solomon: For example, Patty Hearst went on trial in federal court and now she is on trial in state court.

Delegate Villagomez: For what crime, bank robbery?

Mr. Solomon: Yes, she already has received 200 years in federal court and now she's being tried again in state court.

Mr. Willens: We discussed this in the briefing papers. The Supreme Court decisions are clear that the federal government can prosecute after a state conviction under federal law. But after the Supreme Court interpreted the Fifth Amendment in that way, the Congress passed a law forbidding federal prosecution after a state proceeding of those specified offenses, including involvement of interstate carriers and their officers. In other words, Congress as a matter of restricting the Justice Department has concluded that the federal government should not prosecute after a state or commonwealth has prosecuted. So, except for that particular law and the crimes defined in that law, the federal government still remains free to prosecute under a federal law for an act that has become the subject of a state or commonwealth prosecution.

Delegate Palacios: The Commonwealth has a law that says it is a crime to rob a bank and the federal government has a law that says it is a crime to rob a bank. My understanding is that after the Commonwealth has found that he is not guilty, the federal government could not come back and should not be allowed to come back and try that person again for robbing a bank. The Commonwealth court had already found out that he was not guilty, maybe because of some judicial mistake in handling the case. Does this stand true, then, in the explanation?

Mr. Willens: Well, if the crime for which the individual is being charged is identical in all respects--the very same act and the very same crime as defined by law--then the federal government could not bring the second prosecution if the person had been acquitted in the first prosecution. But what we have been discussing here is the fact that the crimes are often slightly different. If someone comes in and robs a bank on Saipan, that could be a violation of your local Commonwealth law and, also, the bank is insured by the federal government. That would also make it a violation of the federal law. Technically, the federal government could bring a second prosecution under those circumstances but, as a matter of course, they do not usually do so. What they would generally do in a case like that is try the federal case first. The prosecutors can work it out between themselves as to who brings the first prosecution because they realize that if the first prosecution is not successful, probably there will not be a second prosecution. It depends on a case by case circumstance. What you have done is absolutely defensible. You have said that as a matter of Commonwealth law you will prevent the Commonwealth government from prosecuting someone who has already been prosecuted and acquitted by the federal government for a crime that is a crime under both federal and Commonwealth law. Take your bank, for instance. Your Constitution provides that if the federal government prosecutes for bank robbery and the person is acquitted, the Commonwealth government will not be able to try that person again for the same crime.

Delegate Palacios: What if the Commonwealth prosecutes them first?

Mr. Willens: I would think that if it is not covered by this law, the federal government has a legal right under the federal Constitution to prosecute the person again. But they typically do not do that because of the double jeopardy rule and because they think it is not fair. But because they have that legal right and because the Supreme Court has interpreted the Constitutional provision, usually the United States federal prosecutor and the commonwealth prosecutor will talk after the crime has been committed and decided who has the responsibility for investigating the matter and prosecuting.

Delegate Olympio T. Borja: If the attorney general dismissed a case either with prejudice or without prejudice, without a trial, could that defendant then be brought to trial by the federal government for the same offense?

Mr. Willens: It makes quite a difference whether it is with prejudice or without prejudice. There comes a point very early in criminal prosecution

where criminal jeopardy attaches. That means if the district attorney after that point dismisses a case it is tantamount to acquittal. The person does not have to be fully tried and acquitted before he has the benefit of double jeopardy. That protection attaches at an earlier point. If one prosecutor dismisses the charges, the others are often bound by that decision. It is not easy to dismiss a case and then subsequently refile it in federal court. It can be done up to a point but it involves other complications like the right to a speedy trial and so forth. If the prosecutor files a charge and it sits for six months it certainly wouldn't be fair to file it again later in another court. It would be against the right to a speedy trial.

Delegate Torres: I'm going to go back a little bit. On Section 3, third paragraph, page 7. Howard, isn't this somewhat of a departure from the U.S.... isn't it rather vague about this visitor here?

Mr. Willens: Are you on page 7?

Delegate Torres: Yes, the constitutionally protected areas with respect to search and seizure. That suggests the lawfulness of a search or seizure when property is in view. What about the visitor and his standing on this?

Mr. Willens: I don't know that this addresses the question as to who really has standing. It is a complicated question. You have to have some kind of interest in the area being searched before you can object to the introduction of that evidence in a case against you. I, frankly, don't know exactly what the law is on that.

Delegate Torres: Now, this category of people--would they be exempted or would they have that right. For instance, a mere guest or social visitor?

Mr. Koffsky: The guest has to be on the premises, say, by invitation.

Mr. Willens: There is no intention here, Delegate Torres, to depart from the general precedents of the U.S. law with a definition of the area or the persons who are eligible....The effort here is to incorporate all the language and interpretations of the United States Constitution in respect to this.

Delegate Torres: On page 19, then. Now, these sections allows a murder or lesser included offenses....For instance, a person is charged with a crime. Then all lesser included offenses would be merged into that.

Mr. Willens: That's right. You are not in anyway depriving yourself of that kind of protection or the prosecutor that kind of flexibility for what the crime can bring. But, again, within the law you should not prosecute for murder and if there was acquittal then go back and prosecute for manslaughter.

Delegate Torres: Yes, and then burglary would not mean that he would be charged with attempted burglary.

Mr. Willens: If he actually committed burglary, then that is right. You could not charge him with attempt, as I understand the law, and with burglary.

President Guerrero: If there are no further questions to page 20, shall we move then from page 21 to page 40. Delegate Igitol.

Delegate Igitol: I have one clause here that I do not understand and I would like to ask you to explain it to me, Howard. On page 32, line 6, where it says "special laws that apply to particular individuals or entities..." Could you explain that, please?

Mr. Willens: Yes. A special law would be a law that the legislature passed whereby an individual or a particular corporation is involved and the certain regulation applies only to a certain group of people. It is a law that does not apply to everyone equally. A local law applies to a particular locality. A special law applies to special individuals or entities and not everyone of the same class. It's okay to pass a law for corporations involved in a particular kind of business like the selling of real estate. But if you were to pass a law regulating all corporations engaged in the sale of real estate....but if you passed a law that applies only to some corporations engaged in the sale of real estate, that would be a special law. Sometimes that is prohibited but you have given the legislature the flexibility to pass that kind of law if they think there is a reasonable basis to do it.

Delegate Torres: On page 19, Howard, starting with "The legislature may define Commonwealth residency in a manner that permits persons.....who are out of the Commonwealth temporarily for business, education.....to be considered as residents." Now, the way I read this is that the legislature had the discretion whether to consider them as residents or not. I may be mistaken but I thought we had specifically provided that this category of people should be considered as residents.

Mr. Willens: You don't have a constitutional provision that compels that result. What you have is both a requirement of residency of domicile. What we are trying to demonstrate here in this analysis is that the legislature does clearly have the flexibility to define residents in such a way that will cover these people. I think it's a useful statement of your intent because, otherwise, people might feel that using both words "residency" and "domicile" you had intended to give "residency" a very narrow interpretation. A narrow interpretation of residency would require that a person physically be in the Commonwealth in order to be a resident there. Of course, many of you had a concern, as we all did, that temporary absences should not be allowed to control this issue. For that reason we decided that a statement like this in the analysis would be useful.

Delegate Torres: Now, can the legislature, under this language, provide otherwise--that these people are not residents?

Mr. Willens: They can under article VII, the last section, I think. The "Eligibility to Vote" article where they are given the authority to define residency and domicile for the purposes of defining eligibility to vote. Yes, it's article VII, section 3, which says, "The legislature shall implement section 1 (which is eligibility to vote) by providing a criteria by which domicile and residency shall be determined for voting purposes....." So the legislature does have a grant of authority here and they could take a narrow view of residency or they could take a broader view. This paragraph on page 39 reflects your intention that this residency be defined broadly to cover these people that are temporarily out of the Commonwealth.

Delegate Olympio T. Borja: Howard, on page 21, regarding bail bonds. I understand that the bail bond is primarily a guarantee that the person will return to stand for trial. What if the attorney general, knowing that a certain defendant will break the law again once he is released on bail, gets the courts to set the bail bonds at \$10,000, knowing that the defendant and his family couldn't make that kind of bond. If there anything that can be done to lower the bond?

Mr. Willens: You're raising a question of preventive attention, very controversial under the Constitution of the United States. In a way, preventive attention is a way to keep people in custody while they are awaiting trial because of the concern that they may be dangerous to the community. There is a federal statute authorizing preventive attention but it is a very limited kind of provision and thought to be, possibly, unconstitutional. Really, you are not able to keep people in custody because of your concern that they may be dangerous to the community. In other words, in your case, you could not set a bond at \$100,000 because you wanted to make certain the person could not make the bond so that he would stay in jail until he was tried.

Delegate Olympio T. Borja: Okay, but what if you set the bond at \$5,000 and he left the island, not to return before his trial was set. The bail bond wouldn't just continue to be in effect. What could be done to get him back?

Mr. Willens: You have to find a way to get him back to the jurisdiction. One advantage to an island community is that you have a way to keep him from leaving. As a matter of law enforcement machinery, you will be able to tell the airport and immigration people and the people at Charley Dock that they are not to let Joe Blow leave the island. You'll have a way, in fact, to guarantee that people are available for trial.

Delegate Olympio T. Borja: And if he did get away, we could always try to get another government to send him back.

Mr. Willens: That's right. You could always try extradition to get someone back.

President Guerrero: Are there any questions now from page 41 to page 80?
Delegate Villagomez.

Delegate Jesus Villagomez: Just a minor question. On page 55, the first line, I found a personal pronoun here and it's the one and only personal pronoun I found in the analysis.

Mr. Willens: Yes, there are a few references to gender here and I'll have to justify each and everyone of them to Mrs. Selmer back there. You can be sure of that.

Delegate Torres: On page 52, Howard, section 6. Local laws, Howard, if they are those passed by the majority of the representatives from the island, does the governor have to approve these bills?

Mr. Willens: Yes, the Constitution is written in such a way as to make those Commonwealth laws and every Commonwealth law has to be approved by the governor. So, even though they have the discretion to pass the law by the majority of representatives from the island, it is still a Commonwealth law and still subject to approval by the governor. It is still subject to veto power and if there is a veto, has to be overridden by the entire legislature. It is a way of providing necessary controls over the enactment of local laws by less than the entire legislature. This is going to be a very tricky area of law for you to work out and there's no way for you to do it except on a case by case basis.

Delegate Torres: So, take for example, Tinian with 4 members in the legislature. It would take 3 of their 4 members to enact a law for Tinian. If the governor vetoes that law, then the entire legislature must override that veto.

Mr. Willens: Yes, and that's important because they may be passing a law on something that really isn't local. They may be placing a call on Commonwealth funds. They may be going contrary to Commonwealth law. That's why you need the governor and the entire legislature involved as much as possible.

Delegate Torres: Okay, page 56, section 7(b). This is the deadline for bills. I may be mistaken but I thought counting of days did not include the date of receipt.

Mr. Willens: "Forty days from the date of receipt," so you would start counting the next day. That way, if he gets it at 4:30 on an afternoon the day is not wasted because counting doesn't start until the next day.

Delegate Torres: What if it is transmitted to the Executive branch from the Legislature and never gets there for two or three days?

Mr. Willens: I think the way the actual constitutional language is worded... It says "transmitted" and I think "transmitted" will be viewed as "received by the governor."

Delegate Oscar Rana: On page 57, line 4, it says "when signed by the presiding officer of the house". What if the presiding officer refuses to sign the bill?

Mr. Willens: I would think you could mandate him to fulfill that responsibility. If he doesn't fulfill his responsibility, he can lose his job.

- (10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None.
- (11) SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY - None.
- (12) GENERAL ORDERS OF THE DAY - None.
- (13) MISCELLANEOUS

Delegate Vicente M. Manglona: Mr. President and distinguished delegates:

As a spokesman for the Tinian delegation, I would like to express my sadness at the absence of our fellow delegates from Rota and Tinian. With all of us, they labored hard from the beginning of the convention until the forty-fifth day when they elected to leave the convention for reasons that are not very clear to me. I am thankful that they contributed as much as they did toward the success of this Convention. I regret that they could not have waited just five more days and participated in the signing of our historic document, the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands.

We who are present can rejoice in the completion of the final draft of our Constitution. I am proud to say that it is the best possible document that a large number of delegates, each having his and her own briefs, ideas, opinions and aspirations, could produce. If our Constitution had to reflect all the wishes and desires of each of the delegates, we could never have finished the task of writing our Constitution. But through the democratic process of discussion and compromise we did so despite the limited time given us.

There is a saying which goes like this: "You cannot please everyone." This is true of our Constitution. Each one of us, I believe, has some reservations about certain provisions in the Constitution. But we should not jeopardize our Constitution because it does not satisfy every one of our countless wishes and desires. No product made by man can be perfect. Because of my firm belief in democracy, I accept the concept that "majority rules."

Therefore, I urge each of you, my fellow delegates, to fight for ratification of the Constitution we have framed. Do not let our efforts become meaningless. Let us harvest the fruits of our labor by ensuring that our Constitution is accepted by our people in the coming referendum. Let us begin working towards that notable goal now.

In conclusion, I am grateful and thankful for the opportunity bestowed on me to participate in the memorable work of forming a Constitution for our people. I thank you.

Delegate Gregorio Calvo: Mr. President, I'd like to make a speech on behalf of the Rota delegation--those of us who remain.

My fellow delegates:

As we reached the final day of our Convention, I can't help but feel a revival of the American history in action right in this convention when the thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia to draft the great American Constitution.

Many similar things and issues confronted both the delegates to the Philadelphia convention and this convention within the last 50 days. Perhaps not consciously but as humans, we all share similar causes, feelings and aspirations in formulating a constitutional government that will work for our people. I will not take your time to dwell in American history, however, if you will permit me, I would just take a moment of your time to share with you some of my observations of what has happened during this convention.

Some of our tasks in formulating our constitution were relatively easy; others were more difficult to handle, such as those issues that pertain to geographical dislocal, philosophies or ideologies. The difficulties which concerned me most, however, were the political issues and the dichotomy of majority rule versus minority rights.

Many of us have compromised our principles; others refused to be swayed. We witnessed some of the Rota and Tinian delegations walking out of this

convention in frustration and anger. Were those of us who remain right to have accepted a compromise that perhaps defied their principle? Those who stayed behind, should they leave the convention in indignation, too? Should they refuse to sign the constitutional document because they did not subscribe to everything in it? Et cetera, et cetera.

Questions like these are very simple to answer if one has a very weak principle of conduct--or a very strong one. To the man of weak principle, compromise is an easy path so long as one gains even a little in the bargain. To the man of rigid morality, the answer is equally obvious--it is better not to agree at all than to agree to an imperfect bargain. Both of these types we have witnessed in this Convention.

However, lying between the simple extremes of unprincipled politics and rigid morality is a domain of action that has been called ethics of responsibility. By this, I mean an attempt to weigh the consequences of each alternative as intelligently as possible, and then to choose the best available. Acting according to the ethics of responsibility, a political leader cannot enjoy the luxury of rejecting an imperfect compromise, even a highly imperfect compromise, so long as that compromise represents the best possible alternative presented--as may be the case here.

Irresponsibility, in my view, consists not in making concession, but in making unnecessary concession--not in making imperfect bargain, but in failing to make the best possible bargain--not in adhering strictly to principles, but in holding rigidly to one principle at excessive costs to other principles. One may be irresponsible, then, not merely from a want of principle but from a want of intelligence and knowledge of the real world we live in. In the ethics of responsibility, it is important not only to know what one wants but also to know exactly what one must do to attain it, and what it will cost, not merely in monetary terms but in other values such as in this case--the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands.

My fellow delegates, I want all of you to know that I do not condone the walkout of my colleagues from Rota, however, their actions perhaps were dictated by a very rigid principle of morality. Those of us who remained were forced to adhere to the ethics of responsibility, and we look back with no regrets.

We want a Constitution, a Constitution for the Northern Marianas. We want to be part of it, and we're proud to have contributed to the making of this Constitution.

In parting, I want to remind everyone of you that our task does not end here. We must sell this constitutional document to our people and we all must bear the responsibility of seeing that what we have produced here must and will work for our people not just for today but in the many, many years to come.

On behalf of the Rota delegation and the people of Rota, we wish to thank each and every delegate in this convention for the consideration and support you have given us in accommodating some of our concerns.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Delegate Hilario F. Diaz: 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 intelligently 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.

Delegate Olympio T. Borja: Mr. President and distinguished fellow delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

At this time I would like to add my remarks to those other distinguished Delegates who have spoken, or who will speak at this, the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention for the Northern Mariana Islands.

As we all know, the product of our nearly two months of labor was signed yesterday, Sunday, December 5, 1976 at the Mount Carmel Auditorium. And while it is not yet that time, I can think of no better "Christmas present" to give to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands than a brand-new Constitution for the people, by the people, and of the people.

In fact, Mr. President, considering the events that have taken place at the Mt. Carmel Auditorium--the beginning of negotiations for the Covenant, signing of the Covenant, and the signing of the Constitution, I respectfully suggest that the Mt. Carmel Auditorium ought to be renamed the "Constitutional Hall" of the Northern Mariana Islands, just as our meeting place ought to be renamed the "Constitutional Chambers" in recognition of the historical event which has taken place here.

The signing of the Constitution has been one of the most important steps in the logical sequence of event which saw the Congress of the United States of America approve our Covenant, and the people of our islands mandate us with the responsibility of creating the best possible kind of future government for them. This historical event represents the sixth step in the process of becoming a part of the American political family as outlined by Ambassador Williams over one year ago. Now we have only four steps remaining: ratification of the Constitution by our people, approval by the U.S. government, installation of our Commonwealth government, and termination of the Trusteeship within the next five years.

It is my hope--as I am sure it is the hope for all of us--that the completion of this Constitution will enable us to implement full constitutional government in about one year with elections for the Commonwealth legislature and executive branch next year and actual installation of those officials and operation of the government by early 1978.

In this connection, Mr. President, I would like to express my hope that the Resident Commissioner and his staff with the legislative branch of the Northern Mariana Islands, will soon create a group to conduct a political education program to fully inform our people concerning provisions of the Constitution, so that their vote on this document will be--in the best democratic tradition--a fully informed one. Likewise, we know the Northern Mariana Islands government will give this project its highest priority.

Mr. President, I am also constrained to note that despite the time limitations of our 50-day session, and because of the plain hard work and untiring efforts of the delegates, our staff and consultants, we have produced this document for our people. While time limitations and organizational efficiency made it impossible for the general public to participate fully in the constitutional process through hearings on crucial articles and provisions of this Constitution, I am pleased and gratified to note the many letters received by the Convention and its committees outlining the public's concern and the fact that these concerns have been taken into account in our final product.

Perhaps it is useful for the historical record to note that 60 or 90 days should be provided for such an important event as a constitutional convention, instead of 50 days. Be that as it may, one of our accomplishments in this period has been to create provisions allowing for amendment of the Constitution through the initiative and referendum process, so that any possible shortcomings it may have, or any changes that are necessitated by future circumstances and events, can be provided by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. This is a process by which the people can influence their government as amply evidenced by the 26 amendments made to the original U.S. Constitution since its inception.

All of the foregoing are, of course, preliminary and preparatory remarks to underline the importance of what we have done here. This is the first time in our recent history, the first time in centuries, that we, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, have been able to exercise the God-given and democratic right to make our own Constitution, to provide for our own autonomy, our own home rule and provide for our own locally elected public officials in both the legislative and executive branches of our government, and also to provide--for the first time in our history--legislative override to the veto by the executive branch.

Mr. President, in order to emphasize this point, I wish to say that this is not simply the end of an era, but the end of a millinum. For the first time in our history, we, the people, will control and decide our Northern Mariana Islands affairs.

Mr. President, I have no doubt that our future generations will consider this document and this convention as truly historical events. Undoubtedly, some will take for granted the rights and privileges guaranteed by our Constitution. But I want to state for the record that I have strong emotions when I contemplate what we have done here and what it represents. Many of us here, for example, can recall what we term as "Japanese times." Some of our older citizens can also recall the German and Spanish times--and some, if not all of us, can recall times when we were no more than serfs on our own land, a part of political feudal lands of other nations. It is for these reasons that I use the term "historic" and that the term has so much meaning for me, for all of us, regardless of our affiliations, regardless of our home island, regardless of our cultural backgrounds.

But in noting the historical significance of this moment, I would be remiss if I did not also note for the record my personal reservations about certain aspects of the legal foundations for our future government. First, Mr. President, I have reservations concerning the inclusion in the provisions of the Constitution on salaries accorded to publically elected officials and some of the provisions provided in the public land such as on homesteads and Marianas Public Land Corporation. While it is at this time not a crucial issue, I still strongly believe that it was an issue better left to the wisdom and action of the future legislative branch, and I think that time and circumstances will prove the accuracy of my belief.

Second, Mr. President, I have reservations concerning the provision which limits introduction of an appropriation or revenue measure to the future house of representatives. Surely at one time there was a valid reason for establishing a similar provisions for the Congress of the United States, but equally certain is the fact that past years of experience in the United States indicates that this restriction is no longer a necessary and critical one--simply a matter of tradition.

Despite these reservations, I am in full support of this Constitution and shall endeavor in the future to act in accordance with not only the legal provisions but the spirit and intent of this major accomplishment of self-government for the Northern Mariana Islands. In this connection, I am pleased that despite the very valid objections and concerns of my colleagues in this convention, we have finally and successfully arrived at an agreement which is satisfactory to all concerned.

My only regret is that a few of the delegates chose to indicate their disagreement with the provisions of this document by ceasing their participation in the constitutional process, rather than exercising their right under public mandate to put forth their best efforts to influence other members to accommodate their positions and opinions and even though sincere and honest concessions were made by this Convention to accommodate their positions and demands.

I am absolutely certain that--as I said earlier--the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States of America will be proud of each of us as a result of the product of this Convention. I am further certain that just as the people of the Northern Mariana Islands have reacted warmly to the favorable consideration of the U.S. Congress, which approved the Covenant, that provided for this Convention, the people of the U.S. through their elected representatives, will promptly and favorably consider and approve this document.

In this regard, let me say that I know we all share the expectation that a smooth transition from our present status to our Commonwealth will be foremost in the minds of our government and the U.S. government.

Mr. President, I wish to conclude by expressing first to you my deep gratitude and high esteem for the professional manner in which you have acted as the presiding officer for this momentous convention. Surely the people of the Northern Marianas and we, the delegates, owe you an everlasting debt of gratitude. Likewise, we all owe the vice presidents, committee chairmen, delegates, professional consultants and staff, our profound thanks and *dangkulo na si yuus maase* for their hard work and personal sacrifices in making this a successful convention. I would also be remiss if I did not also extend my heartfelt thanks to the Speaker and members of the Northern Mariana Islands Legislature and the Office of Transition Studies and Planning for their excellent assistance to this convention.

Also, I should say that we have the deepest appreciation and most sincere admiration for the financial and spiritual assistance provided by the people of the United States in initiating, supporting and realizing the dream of this Constitution.

Prior to closing, Mr. President, I should also like to offer two further comments on our work here. The first concerns our friends and neighbors in Micronesia. Certainly our experience in the Micronesian Constitutional Convention was an invaluable experience in conducting and concluding this convention. Furthermore, in return, I think our Micronesian friends and brothers and sisters on Guam can gain valuable insights into their future progress, by reviewing the work of this Convention. I, for one, am committed to insuring that friendly and harmonious relations will continue not only with Micronesia, but with our brothers and sisters on Guam.

Finally, Mr. President, I want to again stress the importance of the successful conclusion of this meeting. Despite the doomsayers who have publicly predicted that this convention would fail, we have demonstrated again to the world and to ourselves that the democratic process does work, that politics is the art of compromise, and that the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, after all, are unified in their desire and their quest for a better future for themselves and their generations to come as a responsive and responsible part of the American political family.

Therefore, Mr. President, let us consider this not the end of our efforts, but a beginning point for our efforts as a self-governing Commonwealth.

May God bless this convention, and may we all live to see the fruit of our labor and our cherished and long-desired dreams become a living reality in the

near future as we gratefully create our future government and join our future fellow Americans.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Delegate David Q. Maratita: Today marks the culmination of a 50-day work which the people of the Northern Mariana Islands have entrusted us in bringing about a Constitution for the new Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

On December 5 we signed the Constitution attesting to the fact that it will be the supreme law of our new Commonwealth. The Constitutional Convention has done its work in spite of what appeared to be some obstacles facing each delegate during the process of formulating this historic document.

I must say that the Constitution, in its pure sense, is not a perfect document that will satisfy all of our people. I, myself, have some reservations with some of the provisions but, nevertheless, my objections should not be an overt action to destroy our overall efforts in this convention. We must remember that when the Covenant was also placed before the people it received some objections by those who expressed that some of the provisions were unacceptable. The Covenant as we all know has been approved by an overwhelming majority of our people. I would wish that the Constitution when put before the people for ratification will equally receive even better support from the majority of our population, with the help of all of us delegates.

As we depart from this convention hall, we hope not to forget that our task of delegates would not stop on December 6. While the law officially limits our convention to fifty days, I feel that we will still have the moral duty to explain in some manner to our people the implications of the Constitution and its provisions prior to ratification. We should hope for the day after the effective date of the Constitution as the final acclamation of our task when the people will for the first time enter into a new chapter in their quest for self-government--the new Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

I bid each delegate farewell as we call this day off and look forward to meeting with you again in the days ahead as fellow citizens in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands under the protection of the very Constitution which we all shared in framing.

Delegate Manuel Tenorio: "We the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom ordain and establish this Constitution as the embodiment of our traditions and hopes in political union with the United States of America."

Mr. President and fellow delegates of this Convention, yesterday, December 5, 1976, marks a significant event in the cornerstone of our history--the momentous signing of the Supreme Law of this island nation. Today, December 6, 1976, we assemble in this memorial hall to conclude the task of this convention as mandated by law. We rejoice to this very day and thank the Almighty God for His guidance throughout the most difficult ordeal brought upon this body and for the perseverance of the delegates in their pursuits of upholding the very principles of democracy it has been mandated to design.

Mr. President and honorable delegates of this convention, tomorrow lies before us perhaps the most difficult task to be confronted by members of this honorable body. The task of advancing to our people of this island nation, the very principles and concepts of this document that this body for the past 50 days have arduously ventured to design some with reservations and some without.

Mr. President, as a participant in this formulation of our Supreme Law, I rise to ask the indulgence of every member in this hall to actively participate in sowing the seeds of our product to the minds and satisfaction of our citizens in this island community. I ask upon the blessings of the Holy Spirit to show us the way and to enlighten the hearts and minds of our people, in their decisions toward the ratification of this Constitution.

Mr. President and fellow delegates, in conclusion, I am proud to say that

this convention has accomplished its mission and though far from perfect, the Constitution gives to the governed the maximum protection possible in the eyes of this convention and pray also that it is in the eyes of the Almighty God.

I thank you, Mr. President.

Delegate Pedro J. Igitoll Mr. President: Although this is the final session of the Constitutional Convention, our work is just beginning. We have adopted a Constitution. The document that we signed yesterday is the product of diligent effort, difficult compromise, and a profound desire to respond to the needs of all of the citizens of the Commonwealth. The Constitution would create a workable government in which geographic and ethnic minorities have a voice in shaping policy and a role in implementing that policy.

The Constitution must be adopted before our people can benefit from the new Commonwealth government. Beginning today, let us all dedicate ourselves to explaining the value and the importance of the Constitution. Our responsibility does not end with the drafting of a document. Rather, the people of the Northern Marianas sent us to this convention to secure constitutional government for them. We must discharge that responsibility and only with the approval of the Constitution first by the Northern Marianas people and then by the United States government will our task be completed.

Mr. President, every delegate has contributed to the deliberations of this Convention. Every delegate has learned from other delegates. Every delegate has benefited from the kindnesses of fellow members of this Convention. I express my appreciation to all of my colleagues for the privilege of having served with them in drafting a Constitution and for the equally valuable privilege of serving with them in the coming months to secure the approval of our work.

Mr. President, there may have been times when speeches and remarks delivered on the floor of the convention sounded a bit bitter and harsh. I am sure those were meant only to express the speaker's views and feelings towards certain proposals and were not meant to hurt anyone. I hope that when we leave this chamber today, the ill-feelings that we may have had are left behind in this chamber to be "preserved" as convention materials and not to be used to further our grudges.

Finally, Mr. President, lest I forget, I wish to extend my warmest personal regards and appreciation to the legal consultants and their staff for their guidance in the formulation and drafting of the constitutional document. May I venture to say that they will be long remembered by each of the delegates and by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. I certainly wish them "good luck and Godspeed" back to their loved ones.

It is only fitting that I also convey my thanks and appreciation to all the convention staff for their endless support throughout the 50-day convention.

And, lastly, Mr. President, my family joins me in wishing each and everyone a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Thank you.

Delegate Ramon Villagomez: I don't have a prepared speech, Mr. President, but I would like to say something.

To you, Mr. President, and my fellow delegates, the consultants and staff, I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity of working with you and formulating a Constitution. Thank you, and a very merry Christmas.

Mr. Howard P. Willens: Mr. President and Delegates:

I rise for the last time as your counsel to speak my mind. I do so on behalf of my partners, especially Deanne Seimer, and my associates--Paul Koffsky, Neal Solomon, Mark Weisburd and Bob Major. We thank you for the opportunity to be of service and to share this extraordinary experience with you. You have kept us busy and free of boredom during these past 50 days, to say the least. What more can a lawyer ask?

We congratulate you for successfully completing your assignment in 50 consecutive days. No constitution in recent United States history was ever prepared in such a short period of time. It was possible only because of your dedication to the work and your commitment to finish. I hope you remember these hectic days next year as your neighbors on Guam try to write a constitution over the seemingly leisurely period of 120 days.

But you have done more than just produce a constitution in 50 days. You have produced a great Constitution. Let me tell you why--as your friend and counselor. Let me give you ten good reasons why this Constitution should be overwhelmingly approved by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

1) The Commonwealth Constitution complies fully with the Covenant and the U. S. Constitution. With respect to the Covenant, you have accepted the limitations it imposed upon your decisions. You have done so with grace and good humor--even though there are some provisions of the Covenant that many of you disagree with.

With respect to the U.S. Constitution, you have listened to our advice carefully and have acted accordingly. You have resisted the temptation to burden your own Constitution with provisions of questionable legal status under the U.S. Constitution--despite the urgings of many special interest groups that you do so.

If there are lawyers or others in the Northern Marianan or the United States who feel that this document does not comply fully with the Covenant and the U.S. Constitution, I urge them to come forward, to state their views clearly, openly, and to hear our defense of your work. I and my colleagues would welcome such a debate.

2) The Commonwealth Constitution creates institutions of government that can serve the people effectively, efficiently and economically. The legislature, executive and judicial branches of government created in your Constitution are relatively simple and uncluttered. They impose no unnecessary restrictions on the exercise of legislative, executive and judicial power.

In drafting these provisions, you have learned from past errors in other parts of the United States and have incorporated the best of the contemporary learning in the field. At the same time, you have included provisions in these articles that reflect your special needs and circumstances, just as you have created some institutions such as the Marianas Public Land Corporation unique to the Commonwealth.

3) The Commonwealth Constitution protects the civil liberties of the people. The Constitution that you have prepared does more than just incorporate the traditional guarantees found in the U.S. Constitution--essential as these may be. The Commonwealth Constitution articulates new and important protections--against electronic eavesdropping, capital punishment, invasions of privacy, destruction of the environment and callous treatment of the young. Your Constitution is a humane, generous and creative document in these respects, and you are entitled to be proud of it.

4) The Commonwealth Constitution protects the natural resources of the Northern Marianas. The provisions of the Constitution dealing with land alienation, public lands and uninhabited islands reflect an appreciation of your island environment and your limited natural resources. You will be criticized for these provisions, which will be challenged as unconstitutional or timid or both. I hope you will defend these provisions with pride. They reveal a desire to learn from the mistakes of others and a recognition that short-term economic gains may bring long-term social and cultural losses.

5) The Commonwealth Constitution recognizes the financial limitations of the Northern Marianas. The Constitution throughout reflects your awareness that the new Commonwealth has limited funds and must use those wisely. Your decisions regarding the salaries of your future government officials, the size of the lower house, the use of the U.S. District Court for local judicial matters, the elimination of existing agencies of local government--all demonstrate your sensitivity to the problem and your commitment to the goal of eventual self-sufficiency.

6) The Commonwealth Constitution respects the interests and needs of the separate islands in the Northern Marianas. How best to reconcile the competing demands of the separate islands has been an issue that has been with you since the opening day of this Convention. The Constitution reflects a series of compromises on this issue which can be defended, individually or together. This is so with respect to your decisions regarding:

- the size of the senate;
- the powers of the senate;
- the powers of the mayors;
- the control of public services by the governor;
- the commitment to equitable and decentralized services;
- special guarantees to Rota and Tinian regarding decentralized services; and
- the size of the lower house.

There will be those on Saipan who will say that you gave too much power to Rota and Tinian. There will be those on Rota and Tinian who will say that they got too little power. To both groups of critics I suggest you say: we did our best on each of these issues, we believe that the government institutions defined by the Constitution are workable, and we invite the critics to pitch in and try to make the new government a success.

7) The Commonwealth Constitution respects the needs and aspirations of the Carolinian minority. The Constitution recognizes that there is a Carolinian minority on Saipan that complains of past discrimination and fears future discrimination. Whether these fears are real or imaginary is really not important. Contrary to some criticisms already voiced, the creation of an executive assistant to the governor to address Carolinian concern does not represent any admission that there has been discrimination against the Carolinians in the past. This constitutional provision offers a means to provide assurances of non-discrimination, to substitute facts for fears, to guarantee participation in the government to a valued part of the Northern Marianas family. Is it not better to acknowledge this concern and provide an institutionalized way to deal with it than to deny that any problem exists?

8) The Commonwealth Constitution respects the sovereignty of the people and the imperfections of their representatives. Your provisions on initiative, referendum and recall reflect your awareness that the people as a whole ultimately must judge the performance of their elected officials. The same is true of the constitutional provisions dealing with constitutional amendment. At the same time, you have recognized the frailties of individuals--as in the provisions for a public auditor, limiting legislative salary increases, and the Marianas Public Land Trust.

9) The Commonwealth Constitution provides a basis for growth and change in the future. You have produced a document that is truly limited to fundamentals--as defined by this Convention in light of your perception of the needs and hopes of your people. It is a short document--a little over 11,000 words in length. By modern standards, this is very short indeed. In fact, it is shorter than two of the most highly regarded constitutions in recent American history--those of Hawaii with 15,000 words and Alaska with 12,000 words. This means that you have not unduly encumbered your future government but have provided a Constitution which can endure and retain vitality in the decades ahead.

10) The Commonwealth Constitution can be and should be approved promptly by the United States. This, after all, was your principal objective--to produce a document which, for all these reasons, will be approved by the United States. I am optimistic that the United States will do so--but only after the people of the Northern Mariana have expressed their views about the Constitution in a referendum. It would be a tragedy after all this effort if this Constitution is not approved--causing still more delay in realizing the political and economic benefits of the Covenant.

These are the ten reasons I would give in support of the Constitution. I hope you share my views and will commit yourselves to the political education job ahead. We wish you every good fortune.

Delegate Felipe Q. Atalig: Mr. President and fellow delegates:

This historical task of framing a Constitution for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas has ended. It is indeed a short and arduous journey, filled with sorrow, joy and feelings of ecstasy as one endeavors and accomplishes the enlightening dreams of his people. The long hours of debates, studies and consultations were never regarded as obstacles to the achievement of our intended objectives, but rather as personal sacrifices that each delegate was willing to make for the betterment of our people and islands.

We have accomplished the important task assigned to us 50 days ago. This history of our Constitution will be written in the history books of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Our children will read the story and be proud of it. This document is another milestone in the history of our people.

I submit to you, Mr. President, that I am proud that in the near future the children of the Northern Marianas will remember Felipe Q. Atalig as the James Madison of the Northern Marianas.

One of the most important roles of this convention was to bring our people together. This was done through recognition of article 3, section 18, in our Constitution. We should continue to accept the Carolinians of the Northern Marianas descent as brothers and sisters along the same vein of recognition and acceptance that the United States exemplifies for all the people of the Northern Marianas and others who are politically under the realm of jurisdiction.

Finally, Mr. President, I want to extend to you personally my congratulations and sincere appreciation for the excellent manner in which you have presided over and directed this convention during the past 50 days.

Delegate Juan S. Demapan: Mr. President and fellow delegates:

Today we celebrate the final day of our formulating a people's Constitution, a Constitution that, in short, embodies our traditions and hopes of our Commonwealth in political union with the United States of America. We are all actually in the midst of history--a history which we should all be proud of.

The formulation of a Constitution is not an easy task. The 50 days that we have spent here could give ample examples of some of the most turbulent encounters of human differences of opinion. But fortunately the final road has been rather calmed because we all believe that only in unity will there be strength. And that strength is more than proven with our signing of our Constitution.

So let the word be spread from this place and time throughout the Northern Marianas that a special document has been formed. Special in itself because never before in our confused and disjointed history have we been given the opportunity to write our own verse of what it means to be human and to be living under the flag of freedom. This special document is a tribute to the people of all the Marianas today, tomorrow and the future.

In final, let me proudly say that I am confident that we have all done our best in this convention. So let's all join hands from here and take pride in our efforts to help our people help themselves. Our long dreamed of Commonwealth in political union with the United States of America has only just begun. Thank you.

Delegate Esteven M. King: Mr. President and fellow delegates:

I have a few comments to say about our Constitution.

1) Our Constitution will establish the three government branches: executive, legislative and judicial, and define their powers.

2) Our Constitution definitely defending the true democratic system of government power, must be retained and exercised by the people, either directly or indirectly, though a system of representation, however provided, fair election for those individual representatives.

3) Our Constitution displaced no other people; wishes no other home than the Marianas; having known war, we hope more for peace; having been divided, we wish best unity; having been ruled, we seek more freedom and liberty; having been criticized because of minority, we wish more to be recognized by the majority.

4) Our Constitution, with it, the changing life style of the young people as well as the old ones in regard to clothing, the songs they sing, words they speak and their stubborn insistence on being recognized by the adult society growing impact of our cultural revolution.

5) Our Constitution would make our people proud and their country's "Marianas Flag" of the new government will soon be flying high in the air of every municipality; it tells of a variety of goals and objectives to promote the Marianas socially, economically, educationally and politically.

6) Our Constitution, during the 50 days of rough impact and the signing of the Constitution yesterday, marks a great event in every island in the Marianas which the people strengthen the government by supporting it by their cooperation and sacrifice. But we now--or will--be proud to say we have a Constitution of our own, called "The Northern Marianas Constitution."

Let us be glad and proud of our history. I will no longer call you "delegates," but I will call you "heroes."

Mr. President and fellow delegates, as God created all humankind equal but with different talents, and told us to apply all those important talents among each other. I have acquired a strong feeling that we have accomplished this in our task to establish our workable Constitution.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you, Mr. President, Hero-Delegates, all the good consultants, and all the Con Con staff, and also to O.T.S.P.

President Cuerrero: I would like to now make my last remarks before this Convention. Fellow Delegates:

We observe today a beginning as well as an end. Over the last 49 days we have considered a broad range of issues. We have discussed and we have debated; we have persuaded and we have compromised. Our activities have produced a Constitution. Our Commonwealth is closer to reality. We have concluded an important chapter in the history of the Northern Marianas.

We must remember, however, that conclusion of this chapter is also the introduction to the next. As we adjourn today we take our work to the people. In the next several months our constituents will carefully review the Constitution. They will vote in a plebiscite whether to approve the documents. The decision of the plebiscite will determine the success of our efforts.

Accordingly, beginning on this 50th day of our Convention, let us resolve to put aside our differences. Each of us has compromised much in achieving the adoption of the Constitution. But we have all gained more than we have lost. We have framed a constitutional government that will be efficient in its organization, responsive to its people, and protective of each citizen's rights. We should--we must--be proud of our work. We must demonstrate our pride and our confidence in the wisdom of the Constitution by explaining its provisions to our neighbors and urging them to support its approval.

The Resolution calling for the Legislature to establish a Committee in Support of the Constitution is designed to create the means for persuading the people to support the Constitution. I hope that each of you, fellow delegates, that supported the passage of the Resolution will actively join in the task of that Committee.

Fellow Delegates, I cannot close without expressing to all of you my heartfelt gratitude for the honor of having been elected your President. During the last seven weeks you have supported fully my efforts to promote the progress of the Convention. I look forward to joining with the Delegates of this Convention in taking the Constitution to the people. I am confident of their verdict. Thank you.

Delegate Herman Q. Guerrero: Fellow Delegates:

Because of the fact, even hectic, pace at which we have worked during the past 50 days, the time may seem to have passed quickly and we may tend to underestimate our achievement. We should not do that. Many generations of our people will be proud of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A major part of our work is completed, and now another responsibility challenges us. The opportunity for self-government is a great and notable opportunity. Our ancestors may have dreamed of one day having the responsibility for the protection of their own freedom, but would they believe that today we are a few small steps away from that achievement? It is important that everyone in our Marianas community understands that the Constitution we have written is a great achievement for all of our people.

We must bring this message to our people. We must encourage them to embrace the opportunity of self-government and to accept the responsibilities it imposes. We must work hard so that our people understand the meaning and content of our Constitution and overwhelmingly adopt the Constitution for themselves and their children. As part of my continuing duty as a Delegate to this Convention, I pledge that I will support the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands before the people and urge all of you, my fellow Delegates, to accept the same obligation.

Our work has begun. It must continue. Thank you.

Delegate Benigno Fitial: I have no prepared speech, Mr. President. I just want to extend my sincerest appreciation to the delegates for the outstanding job they have done, and to the legal consultants for the excellent assistance they have given us, to the staff for their fine support, and to you, Mr. President, for your outstanding performance and leadership in directing the Convention these 50 days. I would like to distribute a song and ask that each one of you join me. It is a farewell song for the Convention.

President Guerrero: May I ask that we wait and sing the song as the very last thing today. There are a few things to be done first.

Delegate Francisco Palacios: Fellow Delegates:

I am grateful to God, for the wisdom and courage the Delegates have manifested in the formulation of this Constitution.

I am forever humbled for the opportunity our people accorded me to participate in the drafting of this Constitution.

The supreme task hereafter, for all of us Delegates to this Convention, when this proposed Constitution become a foundation of our government, is to make it function in our daily life.

I thank you.

President Guerrero: At this time I would like to call upon the President and the General Manager of the Inter-Continental Hotel to present the Resolution we have just adopted on behalf of the Hotel. I am sure you all know Mr. David Sablan and Mr. Jerry Johnson---Mr. Sablan and Mr. Johnson, will you please come forward?

On behalf of this Convention, I am proud to present to you the Resolution we have adopted on behalf of the Hotel.

Mr. David Sablan: On behalf of the holding Company, the management of the Company, the holding Company being Pacific Micronesia Corporation, the managing Company is Inter-Continental Hotel, Inc., I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation for selecting Saipan Beach Inter-Continental Inn as the site for drawing up the Constitution for the Northern Marianas. I hope you have enjoyed the area, despite

the heat we have had on several occasions. I know the hotel was not designed for a Constitutional Convention, but we tried our very best to meet your needs and to make the drafting of the Constitution a possible and successful one. Thank you.

President Guerrero: If there are no further speakers, I would like to ask Delegate Fitial to lead us in singing the song he has requested earlier.

Delegate Fitial: Mr. President, this is not a new song, it has been on the island for so long. The meaning of the song is very touchy and I find it very appropriate to be sung at this time. I ask that the Delegates and also the staff join me in singing the song.

(The lyric of the song follows.)

I. Gi todo lugat mascha mano
Guine gi hilo tano
Man akihothit-pat manachago hit
Utafan hagoflie --

Chorus:

Pues adios astake
Pues adios astake
Man alie hit talo adios
Pues adios astake
Pues adios astake
Man alie hit talo adios

II. Gi todo i tiempo na man, hi hita
Guine gi hilo tano
Man afamulik hit yan man agoflie hit
Sin no que de rasa

(Repeat Chorus)

President Guerrero: I would like to request the following Delegates to remain after we adjourn sine to discuss some important matters. We will meet in my office. They are: Delegates Olympio T. Borja, Herman Q. Guerrero, Ramon Villagomez, Francisco Palacios, Juan P. Tenorio, Vicente M. Manglona, Gregorio Calvo, Pedro M. Atalig and Floor Leader Rasa.


Delegate Fitial: Mr. President, I would like to ask Delegate Palacios if he is serious about the gathering tonight at his place?

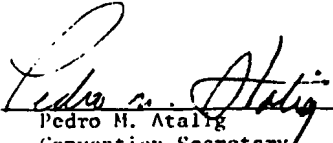
Delegate Palacios: Yes, all the Delegates, legal consultants, and staff are invited to a get-together tonight at Palacios Beach in Garapan at 7:00. Please come and make sure you bring along your swimming trunks or bikini because we will all go swimming.

Floor Leader Rasa: If there are no business to be discussed, I would like to move that the Convention adjourn sine die.

There being no objection from the Floor, the President declared the Convention adjourn sine die at 3:50 p.m.

APPROVED:


Lorenzo I. Guerrero, President
Northern Marianas Constitutional
Convention


Pedro M. Atalig
Convention Secretary