

SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

SAIPAN, CM 96950

Telephone

6517/6572

Officers

June 25, 1985

Herman T. Guerrero, President
Vicente M. Calvo, 1st Vice President
David M. Cing, 2nd Vice President
Maria T. Pangellinan, 3rd Vice President
William B. Nabors, Convention Secretary
Juan T. Lizama, Floor Leader

Members

Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero
Alonzo Iglisomar
David L. Igitol
Rita H. Inos
Benusto R. Kalpat
Estevan M. King
Luis M. Limes
Jesus P. Mafnas
Paul A. Manglona
James M. Mendiola
Aniceto H. Mundo
Fellicidad T. Ogunoro
Karl T. Reyes
Joaquin A. Tenorio
Francisco Tomokane
William S. Torres
Ramon G. Villagomez
Ignacio Villanueva

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES

POLICY FOR LEGAL COUNSEL ASSISTANCE

The function of the Legal Counsel is to:

- (1) Render legal opinions on possible conflicts between proposed amendments and the Covenant or applicable provisions of the United States Constitution. These opinions shall be requested and rendered in writing.
- (2) Assist the Committees with specific questions about options available to deal with a particular issue. Legal Counsel will be available to sit with the Committees at ~~the~~ times provided the Committee requests the assistance at least a day in advance and furnishes counsel with a written statement of what is to be discussed, the goal of the Committee in addressing the issue, and examples of questions to be raised. Committee assistants will help prepare the requests.
- (3) Assist in the finalization of committee recommendations and reports. Initial drafts are to be prepared by the committees and committee assistants. A copy should then be submitted to counsel, who will review it and then discuss it with the committee one or two days following. Committee findings and work can be summarized in these reports.

None of the above is mandatory. Delegates make their own decisions about the issues. This policy is both workable and necessary. We do not have the luxury of the First Constitutional Convention which had a budget of \$500,000 paid by the Federal Government and which had different functions and responsibilities than we do. The Committee reports and recommendations will be sufficient record of the intent of the Convention. It should be noted that the legal status of the Analysis of the Constitution is uncertain and many believe parts of it are in error. Voluminous notes of committee work would waste scarce time of legal counsel and add little legal ~~ly~~ to an understanding of the Constitution and amendments.

It is also recommended that Committees:

- (1) Quickly dispose of proposals the Committee decides not to recommend as proposed amendments to the Constitution.
- (2) Of the proposals the Committee believes have merit as proposed amendments, concentrate first on those the Committee feels are most important to be presented to the voters for ratification. Time is short and the voters will only be able to digest a limited number of proposed amendments. Further, debate on some proposals will probably be extensive.