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SAIPAN, C.M. 96950

July 8, 1985

The Honorable Lorenzo I. Guerrero
Chairman, Committee on Finance
CNMI 2nd Constitutional Convention
Saipan CM 96950

Dear Hon. Guerrero,

It is an honor to present our opinion on the subject of gambling which was scheduled to be heard publicly today but due to prior business commitments, we were not able to be present at the hearing.

Gambling could be a primary source of revenue for the government. Legislations and controls are necessary to ensure that the government receives its full share of the gambling revenue. It is very doubtful whether or not the present system has the necessary staff and the technical knowhow to properly monitor these gambling video devices.

The revenue anticipated is nothing compared to the damages gambling will do to our island and our moral values.

As evidence indicates, gambling is directly related to the influx of organized crimes and prostitution. Family ties tend to disintegrate as a consequence. Lands are sold just to satisfy a person's vice only to lose the proceeds to the one-man bandit.

Man's desire is unsatiated. His wants for vice is no exception. The lifestyle of persons are changed because of his indulgence to gambling. Lotteries, poker and slot machines are some forms of gambling, no matter how you look at it (forget about the legal or technical aspect), which give poor odds to the players. They attract people even those who can least afford it, into a web of financial catastrophe.

From experience, we noted that employees' theft and shoplifting are more predominant with the advent of slot machines and lately, the poker machines. We were able to catch employees' theft by observing the employees' change in lifestyle in playing poker machines after working hours. Further, during these same periods, there seems to be a slower collection of receivables on some individual accounts. It maybe just a coincidence but businesses are somewhat affected. Addicts would channel some funds which would have been otherwise used for more worthwhile projects to this leisurely activity.



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Our experience further indicates that young adolescents have been discovered tampering with just video game machines during daylight so they could have extra money and/or play the machines. Their craving for something beyond their decent means transform their otherwise honest self into a self-serving tool just to satisfy their whims regardless of the consequences. Crimes, vandalism, torts against properties and even against persons usually follow.

Is this a preponderance of westernization as brought about by our political affiliation? There is nothing wrong in changes provided we adopt only those which are beneficial to us without inflicting irreparable jeopardy to our island's moral values.


The result of the island's referendum wherein casino gambling was voted against should speak loud and clear of the moral traditions and style of life the CNMI populace prefers, thus rendering the matter of gambling (casino) a dead issue. To do otherwise would constitute an irresponsible display of indifference of our society's clearly stated moral yardstick.

We say NO to all kinds of gambling in the commonwealth, and we urge all concerned to do the same. Citizens may properly indulge moderately, but we must adopt a policy against the imminent and grave dangers of uncontrolled indulgence.

We sincerely hope that all Con-Con delegates, cognizant of their duties and responsibilities to their constituents and not to just a vested few, truly serve the purpose of their election to office by voting NO to the gambling proposal.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to be heard on this important issue.

Sincerely,


ANNIE T. SABLAN
General Manager