

Mr. President:

Too much good work has been done by this convention to permit a few irresponsible delegates to stop us from completing it. Last year, the people voted overwhelmingly to have a constitutional convention to address problems within our government and other issues that affect our daily lives. We have addressed those problems and issues in the many amendments we have proposed. I have already spoken on how important I believe certain of them, such as deficit retirement, are to improving our Commonwealth .

The people voted for a constitutional convention under article 18. Nothing in article 18 permits the delegates from Rota and Tinian to walk out and prevent this Convention from completing its work. Our rule 4 requires at least one delegate from each island for a quorum. That rule was adopted because the enabling act, Public Law 9-18 required it. I think that requirement in Public Law 9-18 is unconstitutional. All the legislature had to do was provide for a convention. It had no business deciding our quorum requirement. Only the Constitution and the people can tell us how we are to do our business. The requirement is frustrating the wishes of the people in voting for this Convention. It should not be used to prevent the people from voting on our work.

I therefore move under rule 62(c) to temporarily suspend the last clause of rule 4 until the delegates from Rota and Tinian show up. If you agree, this would enable us to complete our agenda. A quorum would be a simple majority of the delegates, or 14.

Note to Delegate Aldan. Rule 62(c) requires unanimous consent. However, counsel believe that a majority of the delegates can suspend that rule as well since they adopted it. If there is dissent, you may do the following:

Mr. President. I move to suspend rule 62(a), effective immediately, under the fundamental principle that legislative bodies must act by majority rule and any rule requiring a supermajority can always be changed by a majority of those who adopted it.

Note to Delegate Aldan. Once the quorum rule is suspended, you may wish to give notice of a motion to amend the quorum rule for the rest of the convention.

I also give notice under Rule 62(a) that at our next session, I will move to suspend the rules so that I may immediately move to amend Rule 4 to remove the last clause so that for the rest of the convention, the presence of a majority of delegates shall constitute a quorum.