
A LETTER FROM SAIPAN

We received a letter the other day from a Saipan resident, written in better English than some of the correspondence we get from hereabouts and elsewhere, including the mainland. It was properly punctuated, for one thing, which reminded us of the man who died reading a two-page letter that had only one punctuation mark—a period at the end—and forced him to hold his breath all the way.

If the writer is representative of a growing number of Saipanese in the island insofar as their command of a comparatively new and difficult language is concerned, American efforts to develop the American way of life among the people there would seem to have been successful, indeed. They've been under the U.S. flag for only 13 years.

The writer, however, seems to have a burning ambition to see his island more democratized. He says, among other things, that while the "local government publishes an informative bulletin, however such news fail to print other vital articles and is devoted primarily for printing articles that the government accomplished and failed to print those that it failed. In other words, it prints news as it pleases and no one is left to criticize them openly." Anyone can see that in a roundabout way, he's saying he wants freedom of the press and speech in Saipan. He also offered his services as a Saipan correspondent for this newspaper, and henceforth we won't be at all surprised if we never get another uncensored letter from him.

The main impression we get from this letter, however, is that the Saipanese—at least some of them—are developing the same aspirations which their kins in Guam had years ago as subjects of the United States. Perhaps this development is inevitable, because it is natural, and some day—no one knows exactly when—the people of Saipan might attain their goals. And when they do, we hope it will mean the re-unification of the Marianas Islands under one governmental administration, inasmuch as Guamanians and Saipanese are for the most part really the same people.

Maybe Secretary Seaton might be interested in the matter.