

2/15/75

After approval of the Covenant by the U.S. Congress hopefully during the summer of 1975, the next step would be the planning for, the election of delegates, and the holding of a Marianas Constitutional Convention for the purpose of drafting a new constitution for the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands. This could be held in the late fall of this year or early in 1976.

This would be followed by steps 7 and 8—submitting the Constitution of the Marianas to the people of the Marianas for their approval and then to the U.S. Government for its approval. These two steps could be taken in the spring of 1976.

The next to the last step would be the election of your new government under your new constitution and the installation of a new government, which would make the Northern Marianas for the first time in 400 years fully self-governing under its own elected chief executive and legislature, and under its own laws and local courts.

This would also bring into force the financial provisions of the Compact, and upon the installation of the new government it would begin to receive the annual general grant for government operations, the funds earmarked for capital improvements, and the special non-repayable grant for a revolving economic development loan fund. Additionally, the Marianas as the newest member of the American family would then be eligible for grants for the full range of federal programs and services which are made available to the other Territories of the United States. This next to the last step could take place by the summer of next year or sometime during the fall of 1976.

Step No. 10, the last step will be taken when the Trusteeship over all the Trust Territory has been terminated. Present thinking places this date in 1980 or 1981. At that time, assuming all of the preceding steps have been taken, the President of the United States will proclaim the establishment of the full Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and all of the remaining provisions of the Covenant will then come into force.

These then are the ten remaining steps and a provisional timetable. I cannot emphasize too much that the most important of the remaining steps is the plebiscite. This will be the people's opportunity to decide for themselves whether they wish to become a part of the American family. The choice will be theirs. It will be a free one. People who oppose Commonwealth will be given a full opportunity to express their views as will those who favor the Covenant. In the end, it will be the will of the people that will prevail and the United States will respect and honor their choice whatever it may be.

The Covenant is not a perfect document. It does not include in it everything that everyone wanted. That would have been impossible. It does include, however, some very important basic guarantees that provide protection and opportunity for the individual and maximum local self-government and assurances against external interference in the internal affairs of your future government. It also provides for a protection against the loss of your lands by alienation, a provision which has

been singled out for special praise and support from members of the United States Congress.

Finally, it will provide that the basic human rights of all citizens of the Northern Marianas will be protected by the laws and strength of the United States. Our Bill of Rights will apply, guaranteeing freedom of religion, speech, assembly and press, as well as the full protection of the laws of due process and our judicial system. We are proud of our Bill of Rights. We know of no finer guarantee of human liberty and it is our Bill of Rights that inspired and became the model for the United Nations International Declaration of Human Rights.

In this regard it was William Allen White who said:

"Liberty is the only thing you cannot have unless you are willing to give it to others."

Our democracy is not perfect. It was Robert F. Kennedy who said:

"Democracy is never a final achievement. It is by nature an ever changing challenge, a call to untiring effort, to renewed dedication, to new goals to meet the need of each new generation."

He went on to say:

"We know full well the faults of democracy—the handicaps of freedom—the inconvenience of dissent. But I know of no American who would not rather be a servant in the imperfect house of freedom, than be a master of all the empires of tyranny."

As I look back on the year preceding the opening of the Mariana Talks and the more than two years since that date—and especially the long hours, days and weeks of questions and answers, discussions and debate, I am reminded of what another great American said at the end of the hot summer months of 1787 as the American Constitutional Convention was coming to a close. In addressing his colleagues, Benjamin Franklin said words that could have been written for these negotiations. He said:

"When you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudice, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests and their selfish views."

He went on to ask "From such an assembly can a perfect production be expected?" His answer was that given the frailties mentioned he was astonished with what the Convention had accomplished and that:

"I consent, sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good. I

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have never whispered a syllable of them abroad. Within these walls they were born and here they shall die. If every one of us returning to our constituents were to report the objections he has had to it, and endeavor to gain partisan support of them, we might prevent its being generally received—and thereby lose all the salutary effects and great advantages . . . among ourselves from our real and apparent unanimity."

Franklin concluded his exhortation by saying:

"Much of the strength and efficiency of any government in procuring and securing happiness to the people depends on opinion, on the general opinion of the goodness of the government as well as the wisdom and integrity of its governors."

On this last note I wish to pay my respects to the present and former members of the MPSC. They have labored hard and long in the interests of their constituents. They have sought and found agreement among themselves and understanding with us. They have been tough but fair opponents. They have won our admiration; they have served you well.

I can also say that much of the credit for the success of the negotiations is due to the professional skills of the Commission's legal counsel and its other advisers who maintained throughout the talks the highest standards of professional ethics and the confidence and integrity of a counsel-client relationship.

As I think of the help given me, I wish that all of those who have participated on the American side of these historic negotiations could be with us today. I owe them all a great deal. They did most of the hard background work that went into the U.S. decisions reflected in the Covenant. I wish that all of them could add their names to the Covenant and none more so than Mr. James Wilson, a distinguished American foreign service officer and the Deputy U.S. Representative for the Negotiations. Those on our side need no reminding of the major contributions he has made to every stage of these long and complex negotiations. They know full well the wisdom and devotion which he has brought to these talks and I wish publicly to acknowledge the vital role he has played and my debt to him.

As I end these remarks I would like to look ahead and say that if it be your will to join our family, a warm welcome awaits you. The American people have come from every corner of the globe—and represent every race, color and creed. This has given us a strength and vitality that we otherwise would not have. Now I would like to close with the same parting words I used in concluding my opening statement two years ago in December 1972. They are from a familiar American anthem:

"American, America, God shed his grace on thee  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea."

Thank you

## REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN

Ambassador Williams, Members of the United States Delegation, High Commissioner Johnston, District Administrator Ada, His Excellency Bishop Flores, Members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We are gathered here this afternoon on this historic and auspicious occasion to witness the conclusion of over two and a half years of serious and complicated Marianas status negotiations and the signing of the product of our solemn labor—the "Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America".

Professor George Santana, one of the most eminent American historians, once said that a group of people like ours can change their political status only through the following processes:

1. through conquest, and
2. through negotiations.

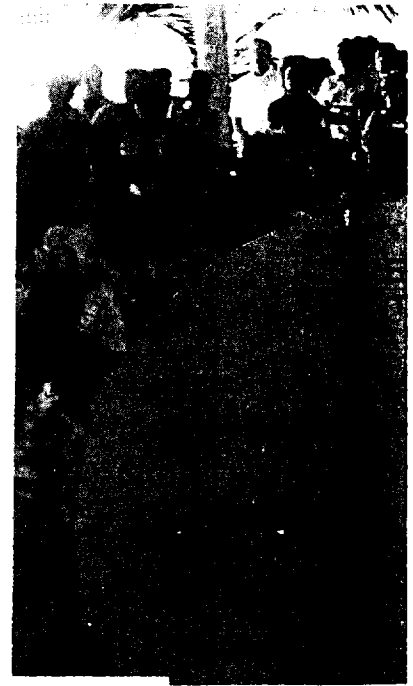
It is well to point out that over the course of 400 years of our history, the people of the Mariana Islands District have experienced the dominance of foreign powers in our Territory. By virtue of conquest, we saw the arrival of the Spaniards, then the Germans followed by the Japanese; and without any consultation and consideration, our lives, homes, land, culture and tradition were drastically and abruptly changed. Never was there an opportunity for our people to have the right to speak out on important matters which faced them, such as the nature of their government, the development of their economy and their future destiny. But this has now come to an end, for after a quarter of a century of American administration our people have come to know and appreciate the American system of government. The spirit of almost two hundred years of democracy, of a society which practices the theory that a government should be "of the people, by the people, and for the people", of the Bill of Rights, ensuring that every man is created equal under law and guaranteeing his human rights, of a country which has historically been a refuge for the oppressed and a land of opportunity for all people, was brought to the Marianas by the United States. For the first time in four centuries, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands now live as free men. The concept of democracy has become very important and significant to us. As a result, we have been very active in expressing our wishes as to the form our future government will take. And for the past 15 years or more the people of the Marianas, through their duly elected representatives, have on numerous occasions expressed both formally and informally to the government of the United States and to the United Nations, through petitions, resolutions adopted by the District Legislature and Municipal Councils and in referenda, the strong desire that the people of the Northern Mariana Islands become a part of the United States. As an outgrowth of this sentiment the Marianas representatives to the Joint Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia, during the Fourth Round



Ambassador F. Haydn Williams, Personal Representative of the President of the United States.



Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission.

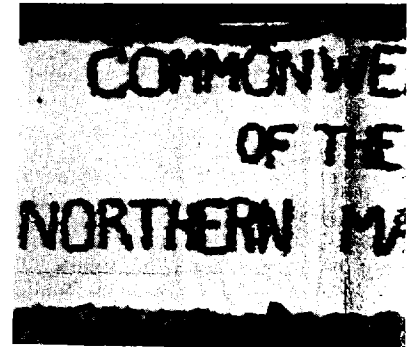


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Ambassador Williams with High Commissioner Johnston after ceremonies.

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Saturday, Feb  
Mt. Carmel Sch  
Susupe, Saipan,



AMBASSADOR  
F. HAYDN WILLIAMS    EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN    VICENTE N. SANTOS



The invocation was given by His Excellence Felixberto Flores. Pictur Coleman; Lt. Governor of Guam, Rudy Sablan; His Excellence Bishop Ambassador Williams; and Pangelinan.

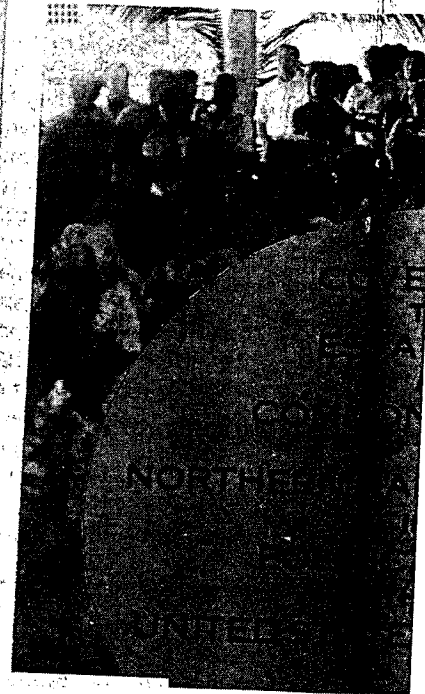




Ambassador F. Haydn Williams, Personal Representative of the President of the United States.



Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission.



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Ambassador Williams with High Commissioner Johnston after ceremonies.

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Saturday, Feb 1  
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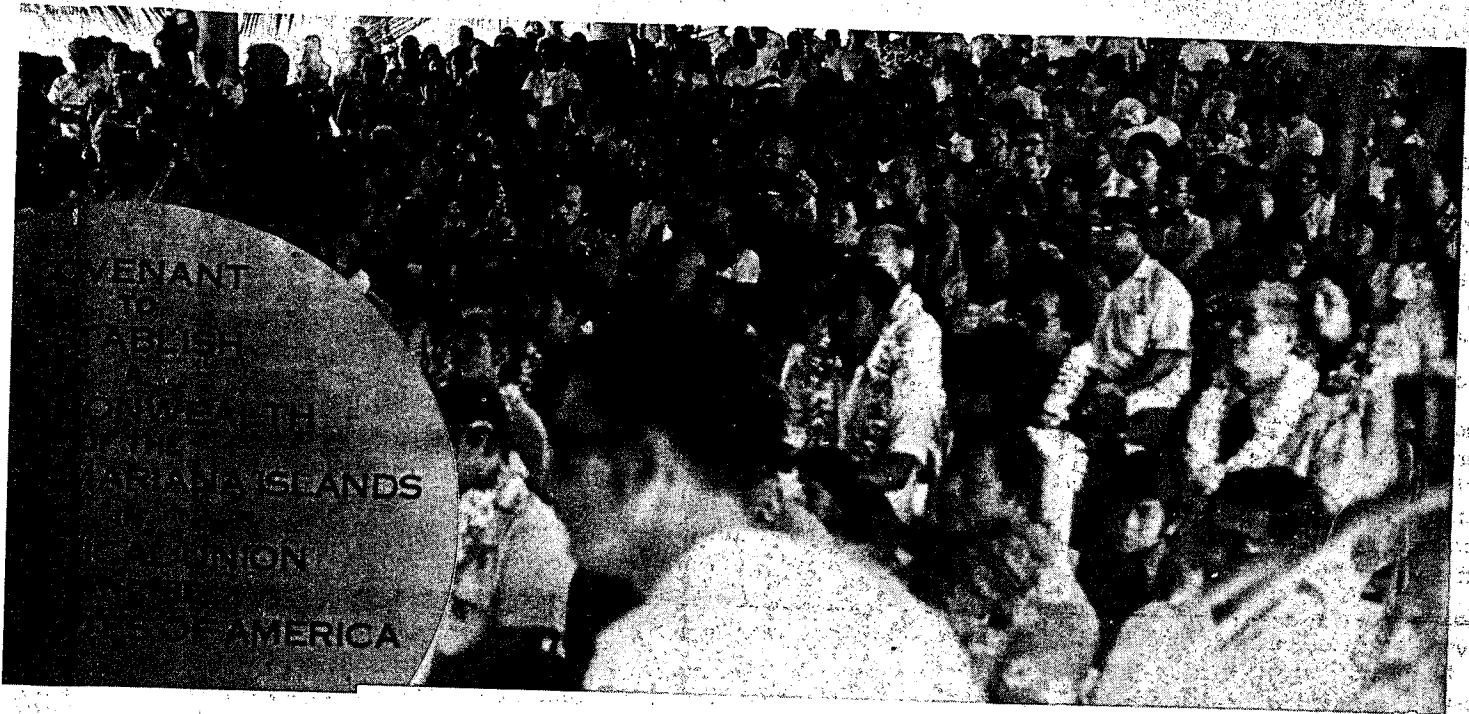


AMBASSADOR  
F. HAYDN WILLIAMS    EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN    VICENTE N. SANTOS



The invocation was given by His Excellence Felixberto Flores. Pictured are: Coleman; Lt. Governor of Guam, Rudy Sablan; His Excellence Bishop Ambassadors Williams; and Pangelinan.

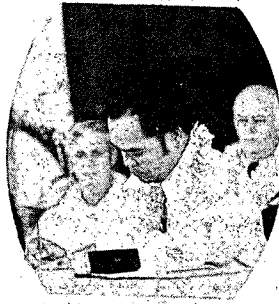




SIGNED

on

Friday, February 15, 1975  
 Carmel School Auditorium  
 Saipan, Mariana Islands



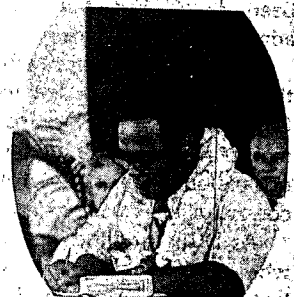
PEDRO A. TENORIO



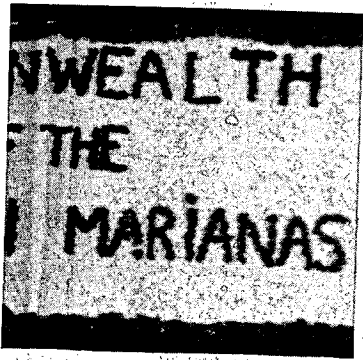
JOSE R. CRUZ



BENJAMIN T. MANGLONA



DR. FRANCISCO T. PALACIOS



JUAN L.G. CABRERA



DANIEL T. MUNA



BERNARD V. HOFSCHEIDER

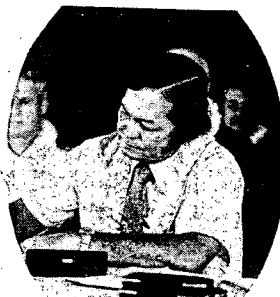


JOANNES R. TAIMANO

Flores. Pictured below are (l to r): Deputy High Commissioner Peter T. Excellence Bishop Flores; Deputy Representative James M. Wilson, Jr.;



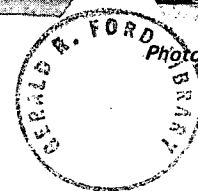
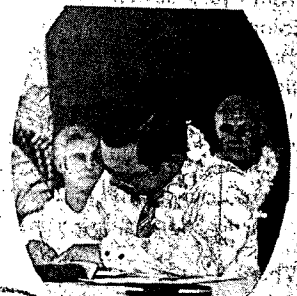
VICENTE T. CAMACHO



JOAQUIN I. PANGELINAN



MANUEL A. SABLAN



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