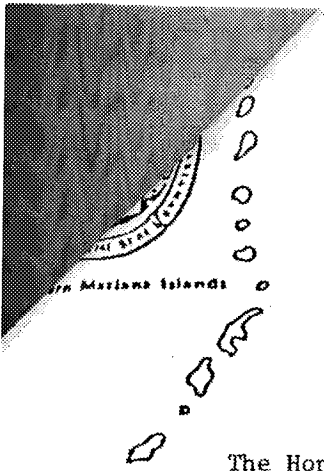


OFFICE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

Phone (202) 466-4990 Telex: Marimeis 64487

March 23, 1978



The Honorable Harold Brown
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Dr. Brown:

With the enactment of Public Law 94-241 approving the Covenant to establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in political union with the United States of America, and the signing of Proclamation 4534 by the President on October 24, 1975 (copies enclosed), proclaiming the effective date of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands, the people of the Islands achieved self-government on January 9, 1978. Between this date and the termination of the United Nations Trusteeship which is expected before 1981, the citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands are to be considered interim citizens of the United States and are entitled to all the privileges and immunities of such a citizen pursuant to Article III, Section 304 of P.L. 94-241.

We believe that one of the greatest privileges of a citizen is to serve in the armed forces of the United States. This is especially true for the people whose islands occupy such a prominent place in the military history of the United States and which continue to play a vital role in our national defense. It would be illogical and unfair to the American people as a whole if our young people should be denied the opportunity to participate in our common defense.

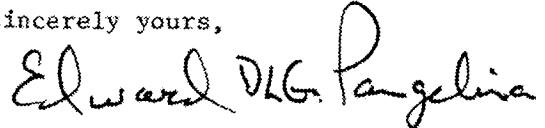
Unfortunately, the law and regulations regarding enlistments in the armed forces do not, as presently written, clearly permit enlistment of citizens of the Northern Marianas. (See 10 USC sections 505, 3253, and 8253, and Title 32 C.F.R. sections 571 and 888).

Generally, the privilege of enlistment is accorded to citizens of the United States or to aliens who have been admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Naturalization Laws. We believe that the term "citizen" in the statutes should be interpreted to include interim United States citizens of the United States such as the citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands. It should be noted that the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service has ruled that for immigration purposes the people of the Northern

Marianas are to be treated as citizens of the United States. It would be anomalous if a person, for all intents and purposes a citizen of the United States, were denied the privilege of military service when an alien is given that opportunity.

We respectfully request your assistance in clarifying this situation and look forward to an early date at which our young men and women may join in the defense of our great Union.

Sincerely yours,



Edward DLG. Pangelinan
Representative to the U.S.

Enclosures

xc: General Counsel, Department of Defense