



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of the Associate Attorney General

Washington, D. C. 20530

March 20, 1980

The Honorable Carlos S. Camacho  
Governor, Commonwealth of the  
Northern Mariana Islands  
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950


Dear Governor Camacho:

As the Associate Attorney General, one of my responsibilities is the supervision of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In that capacity, I would like to offer you my formal apology for a misunderstanding that has resulted from a recent action of the INS concerning the legal status of citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands.

In addition to the apology, I want to convey to you my personal assurances that I am directing and supervising an immediate legal review of the situation. The Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice and my own legal staff are working with the INS to develop the means and methods by which this misunderstanding can be rectified as soon as possible. We will, of course, be working closely with the Department of Interior and its Office of Assistant Secretary for Territorial and International Affairs to consult with you, your Representative to the United States, the Honorable Edward Dlg. Pangelinan, and other members of your administration.

We all very much regret this inconvenience to you and to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and we hope you will be patient with us in our efforts to resolve this problem. I look forward to working with you, and I hope you will feel free to contact me directly if you should have any further questions or suggestions. Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

  
John H. Shenefield  
Associate Attorney General

cc: See Attached List

cc: Edward Dlg. Pangelinan ✓  
Representative to the  
United States

David Crosland  
Acting Commissioner  
Immigration and Naturalization  
Service

Wallace O. Green  
Acting Assistant Secretary for  
Territorial and International Affairs  
Department of the Interior

7211  
March 21, 1980

INS Directive with Respect to NMI

TO: All District Directors and Regional Commissioners

With reference to my letter dated January 30, 1980, re inspection of citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands is hereby rescinded. For immigration inspectional purposes only they will continue to be treated administratively as citizens of the United States. Our memorandum of June 12, 1979, which follows, explains guideline procedures. The General Counsel has determined that citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands remain aliens within the meaning of Section 101(a)(3) until the termination of the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement which is expected to occur some time in 1981. Until that time citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands will not repeat will not be eligible to file visa petitions under Section 204 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Those petitions previously approved should be recalled, revoked, and fees refunded. Those petitions not yet adjudicated should be returned to the petitioner and fees refunded. Central Office cable of January 5, 1978, relating to inspection of citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands remains in effect until further notice.

(Sgd) David Crosland  
Commissioner

Received by telephone from Office of Assistant General Counsel,  
INS, 3-25-80