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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford  
Edward Pangelinan, Chairman of Northern  
Marianas Political Status Commission  
Senator P. A. Tenorio, Northern Marianas  
Senator  
James M. Wilson, Jr., Deputy Representative  
for Micronesian Status Negotiations  
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant  
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, March 19, 1975  
4:15 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

Pangelinan: We are very pleased to have the opportunity to exercise our rights under the UN Trusteeship Council and have a plebiscite.

President: We are pleased at this development and we trust that the plebiscite will be favorable. Where are you two from?

Tenorio: We both are from Saipan.

President: What are the Islands in the Northern Marianas?

Tenorio: Saipan forms Tinian and Rota.

President: What is the population?

Tenorio: About 14,000. Most of the people live on Saipan.

Wilson: They live in a very beautiful place. I was in Tinian and saw the plaques during World War II.

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DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5  
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines  
By HR, NARA, Date 10/7/99  
~~TOP SECRET - XGDS (S)~~  
CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

Pangelinan: Those of us are very pleased you have given us your attention, and of all the countries of the world we want to join with you. We are very proud to be part of your political system.

President: We are very pleased. Do you expect any trouble with the plebiscite?

Tenorio: There are some dissident groups but we think it will be okay.

Wilson: But you will have to work at it because the other Marianas will oppose it as hurting them.

Tenorio: Yes. But we know what we want and we must make sure only our plebiscite counts.

Pangelinan: You should know the Senator is from one party and I from the other.

President: Have you been in the United States?

Pangelinan: I went to George Washington University.



THE WHITE HOUSE


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MEETING WITH TWO NORTHERN MARIANAS  
POLITICAL LEADERS -- MR. EDWARD PANGELINAN,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS  
POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION,  
AND SENATOR P. A. TENORIO

Wednesday, March 19, 1975

4:15 p.m. (10 minutes)

The Oval Office

From: Henry A. Kissinger 

I. PURPOSE

To demonstrate the importance we attach to the recently concluded Commonwealth Covenant with the Northern Marianas, and to Micronesia generally.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS & PRESS ARRANGEMENTS:

- A. Background: On February 15 we signed an agreement with the Northern Marianas making them a commonwealth of the U. S. This is the first U. S. territorial addition since 1917. It is also the first time in history that a trusteeship territory has asked to merge with the administering metropolitan state.

The Marianas broke away from the other five districts of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) in early 1972, in order to negotiate a closer political union with the U. S. than that desired by the other five districts. The Northern Marianas over the past quarter century has consistently pressed for such a closer relationship with us.

The Commonwealth Covenant must now be submitted to a plebiscite, which we plan to hold before next July. The agreement must also be submitted to our Congress, where some opposition to the agreement has begun to develop. In a Senate vote March 17 on a budgetary authorization of \$1.5 million for transition costs in the Northern Marianas, Senator Gary Hart mobilized 39 votes against the authorization -- which nevertheless passed. Almost all of the 39 came from



HR 1017199

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liberal Democrats, who contended that the U. S. no longer has strategic interests in Asia and the Western Pacific. There is also some opposition in the Northern Marianas to the Commonwealth Covenant, and leaders in the other five districts have not yet given up their effort to bring the Northern Marianas back into their fold.

Your meeting with Messrs. Pangelinan and Tenorio will have a beneficial impact on preparations for the plebiscite.

Pangelinan has been one of the leading advocates of commonwealth within the U. S. political union, and Mr. Tenorio has just been elected as a senator to succeed Pangelinan in the Congress of Micronesia. They are good friends of ours. Both have been here to testify at the Jackson Committee hearings on our administration of the TTPI.

- B. Participants: Messrs. Pangelinan and Tenorio, General Scowcroft, and Mr. James M. Wilson, Jr., Deputy Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations.
- C. Press Arrangements: Photo opportunity. The call will be announced routinely, and the press will be briefed following the meeting.

### III. TALKING POINTS

1. I appreciate the long-standing desire on the part of the people of the Northern Marianas to associate themselves with the U. S. in a closer political relationship.
2. I am extremely pleased that we have successfully concluded this Covenant of Political Union, which is the result of serious but amicable negotiations between your Political Status Commission and Ambassador Williams, my Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, and Mr. Wilson, his deputy, on our side.
3. On behalf of the American people, I want to express our conviction that the Covenant gives us the framework for an enduring and mutually beneficial relationship.

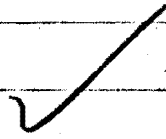


4. I want to assure you in the clearest terms possible that the U.S., as a Pacific power, has vital interests in Asia and the Pacific, and that it intends to continue to play an essential role in helping preserve the peace and stability of the region.



P/Northern Marianas Politicians

19 Mar 75



P We are pleased to have a opportunity to express our  
rights under the U.K. & Trusteeship compact.

P We are pleased at this display and we trust  
that a plebiscite will be favorable.

Where are you from

TB We both from Saipan

P What area islands in N.M.

TB Saipan former Tinian & Rota.

P What is population

TB Great if you want of people live on Saipan.

M Tinian live in a very beautiful place. I  
was in Tinian & some places. (WW II)

P These are very pleased you have given  
us your attention of all countries of  
world we want to join w/ you. We very  
proud to be part of your pol system.

P We are very pleased. Do you & put trouble  
w/ pleb?

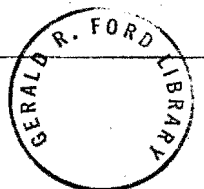
TB There are some resident groups but we  
think it will be ok

M But you will have to work at it because  
other Marianas will oppose it as hurting them

TB Yes. But we know what we want & we  
must make sure only our pleb will vote

P You should know a Senator from a party  
& I from a other.

P How many in US?



Pa I want to George Washington Amos.

