

Status change lacks legs to stand on

I am not surprised that our political leadership is not leading the way toward status change. There is nothing to which they, or any other group, can lead us. No one seems to have a publicly accepted philosophy of government sufficient to support a status change and certainly none that is internal to Guam.

The right to self-determination is generated by the United Nations Charter, to which the United States adheres when it is convenient. Our discussions over commonwealth status have made it abundantly clear that the United States, despite Guam's problems, finds it inconvenient to recognize anything but the status quo.

No one has suggested, apart from commonwealth and statehood, just what our new government would look like. Compare that to the 13 colonies before and during the American Revolution. They possessed the three pillars — or stool legs — necessary to sustain an evolving, independent government in the future.

The first was a serious dissatisfaction with Britain's policies. Except for land issues and the corrosive effects of being treated as not

part of the "people" of the American Constitution, there is really little to sustain enough dissatisfaction with the United States to support a major change in status, especially against their opposition. The second was a philosophy of government. While this evolved extensively from the time of the Declaration of Independence to the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution, and through the Civil War and New Deal, the basic philosophy has remained strong. I have heard of no positive philosophy of government expressed by any leader or group on Guam. The third pillar is/was the strong belief that the Creator endowed men with certain inalienable rights. They were not granted by governments, thus not subject to withdrawal by the government. Rather, the government was tasked with upholding and protecting these rights.

John Adams wrote that about 30 percent of the colonial population supported the revolution, 30 percent didn't care and the remainder supported staying with Great Britain. Not exactly a formula for unanimity. Still, enough of the founding fathers knew in what direction they were going to endow the Revolution with a complete purpose, not just of being free from Great Britain, but of forming

a new government and society in America. Where is that purpose on Guam?

Since all three legs are necessary for stability or status change, as well as for stools, I see no successful movement for status change until Guam can formulate a complete set of reasons, internally, for our status change.

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Murphy a defender of colonial status quo

It seems that whenever Joe Murphy runs into road signs exposing nationalists' expressions of freedom or sovereignty, he, in his frantic desperation to maintain the status quo, suddenly transforms into the "defender of democracy."

Ironically, this is the same individual who in past "Pipe Dreams" has alluded to the notion that "democracy" does not apply to a conquered people or those whose homelands are occupied, arguing that it would be totally "unrealistic" for the United States to return lands to the American Indians.

I am truly convinced that Murphy deserves

By Garry Trudeau