



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

OMSN Room 3356

Official File of

April 10, 1975

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PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the United States as Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands has undertaken an obligation under the Trusteeship Agreement and under Article 76 of the United Nations Charter to give the peoples of the Trust Territory the right to choose freely their own political future; and

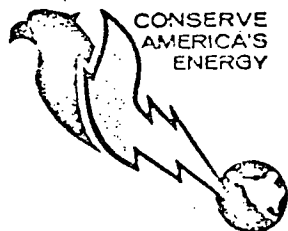
WHEREAS, by act of May 19, 1972, the Marianas District Legislature established the Marianas Political Status Commission and prescribed its duties to include negotiations with the United States Government on the future political status of the Mariana Islands District; and

WHEREAS, on February 15, 1975 the Marianas Political Status Commission and the Personal Representative of the President of the United States signed a Covenant which if approved by the people of the Mariana Islands District and the Congress of the United States, would, upon termination of the Trusteeship Agreement between the United States and the United Nations, establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, this signing marked the conclusion of negotiations between the two parties after more than twenty years of efforts by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands through public petition and referendum to achieve political union with the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Covenant was unanimously approved on February 20, 1975 by the Marianas District Legislature; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 126-1975 the Marianas District Legislature on February 28, 1975 formally requested the United States as Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to set a date for and call a plebiscite in the Mariana Islands District relative to the Covenant;



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NOW THEREFORE, I, Rogers C.B. Morton, Secretary of the Interior, by virtue of the powers vested in me under Executive Order 11021 of July 1, 1962 and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, do hereby call for a plebiscite to be held on Tuesday, June 17, 1975 throughout the Mariana Islands District to provide an opportunity for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands to decide, pursuant to their right of self-determination, whether they wish to become a Commonwealth of the United States in accordance with the terms of the Covenant signed on February 15, 1975.

The plebiscite will be held in a fair and impartial manner under the supervision of a Plebiscite Commissioner appointed by the President of the United States.

The ballot to be presented in the plebiscite shall be as follows:

Yes - I vote for Commonwealth as set forth in the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America.

No - I vote against Commonwealth in political union with the United States as set forth in the Covenant recognizing that, if Commonwealth is rejected, the Northern Mariana Islands will remain as a district of the Trust Territory with the right to participate with the other districts in the determination of an alternative future political status.

In recognition of the historic importance of this act of self-determination, I declare that the day of the plebiscite shall be a public holiday in the Mariana Islands District and the High Commissioner shall give administrative leave to all Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands Government employees in said district.

Observers from the United Nations and the Congress of the United States will be welcome to witness the plebiscite as well as the Plebiscite Education program, the registration of voters, and other pre-plebiscite activities. Such observers will be provided all necessary assistance.

I have today issued Secretarial Order No. 2973 which defines the authority and procedures for holding the plebiscite for the Mariana Islands District in accordance with the responsibility of the United States as Administering Authority under the Trusteeship Agreement of July 18, 1947 between the United Nations and the United States of America.

APR 10 1975

Rogers C. B. Morton
Secretary of the Interior

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