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WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, TO
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT DESIGNATES ERWIN D. CANHAM TO SERVE AS
- PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER IN NORTHERN MARIANAS
REF: STATE MESSAGE 82931

AT NOON PRESS BRIEFING AT WHITE HOUSE TODAY APR 11 PRESS
SECRETARY RON NESSEN RELEASED FOLLOWING TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S
LETTER TO MR. ERWIN D. CANHAM OF BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS DESIG-
NATING HIM AS PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER:

BEGIN TEXT DEAR MR. CANHAM:

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO DESIGNATE YOU MY PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONDUCTING THE FORTHCOMING PLEBISCITE IN

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THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS ON THE COVENANT TO ESTABLISH A COMMONWEALTH WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. I DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ON THIS TASK, WHICH IS HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS PEOPLE, TO THE UNITED STATES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRUST TERRITORY AND TO THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE REGION.

AS PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSURING THAT THIS PLEBISCITE IS CONDUCTED OBJECTIVELY, IMPARTIALLY AND IN A MANNER WHICH WILL GUARANTEE THAT THE

PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS ARE ABLE TO EXERCISE FREELY THEIR RIGHT TO DETERMINE THEIR FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS.

IN DISCHARGING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES, PLEASE KEEP ME INFORMED THROUGH THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, WHO HAS THE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TRUST TERRITORY. THE SECRETARY WILL PROVIDE FURTHER GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO YOU IN THIS MISSION.

I WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS IN THIS HISTORIC UNDERTAKING.
SINCERELY YOURS, GERALD R. FORD. END TEXT.

FOLLOWING IS A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MR. CANHAM:

MR. ERWIN D. CANHAM, WHO HAS BEEN DESIGNATED BY THE PRESIDENT TO SERVE AS HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR SUPERVISION OF THE FORTHCOMING PLEBISCITE IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT, HAS A LONG AND DISTINGUISHED RECORD OF PUBLIC SERVICE. HE IS INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN FOR A WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDING ALMOST THIRTY YEARS AS EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR OF WHICH HE IS NOW EDITOR EMERITUS.

BORN IN AUBURN, MAINE, MR. CANHAM RECEIVED HIS B.A. DEGREE FROM BATES COLLEGE IN 1925 AND THE HONORARY DEGREE OF LITT.D. IN 1946. HE WAS A RHODES SCHOLAR AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND, FROM WHICH HE HOLDS BOTH B.A. AND M.A. DEGREES. INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE AWARDED HIM HONO-

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RARY DEGREES INCLUDE BOSTON, YALE, TUFTS, TEMPLE AND BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITIES, AND PRINCIPIA, LAFAYETTE AND BOWDOIN COLLEGES.

MR. CANHAM'S EARLY JOURNALISTIC WORK INCLUDED COVERING ANNUAL SESSIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS 1926-1932 IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND AND THE LONDON NAVAL CONFERENCE OF 1930. HE WAS HEAD OF THE WASHINGTON BUREAU OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR 1932-1939 AND SUBSEQUENTLY EDITOR AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF 1964-1974 OF THAT INTERNATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPER. HE HAS COVERED NUMEROUS NATIONWIDE POLITICAL SURVEYS AS WELL AS TRIPS OF AMERICAN PRESIDENTS. HE WAS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION IN 1948 AND UNITED STATES ALTERNATE DELGATE TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1949. HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION FOR INFORMATION AND OF THE U.S. NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO, 1948-1951. HE WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF BOSTON 1962-1967. HE SERVED

ON THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON CAMPUS UNREST IN 1970 AND IS A MEMBER OF THE BOARDS OF SEVERAL PHILANTHROPIC AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. HE CONTINUES HIS LONG-TIME WORK AS RADIO AND TV COMMENTATOR. HE IS A FELLOW OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS, THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLARS, AND PHI BETA KAPPA HONORARY SCHOLASTIC FRATERNITY.

MR. CANHAM HAS BEEN AWARDED CITATIONS BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF ENGLAND, FRANCE, GREECE, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA.

ON HIS MISSION TO THE NORTHERN MARIANAS, MR. CANHAM IS BEING ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE. THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE ON SAIPAN BY CO FLIGHT 641 AT 5:30 P.M. ON FRIDAY, APRIL 18.

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