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INFO RUEKOCIA/CIA

RUEFHQA/CSAF WASH DC

RUENAAA/CNO WASH DC

RUEADWD/CSA WASH DC

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FM HICOMTERPACIS SAIPAN MARIANAS ISLANDS

TO RUEHC /SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/JCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

RUEADWD/WHITE HOUSE

INFO RUEHISAA/CINCPACREP GUAM/TTPI MARIANAS ISLANDS

RUEHDT /US MISSION TO UN NEW YORK NY

BT

UNCLAS.

FROM STATUS LNG 130

PASS TO DEPT INTERIOR FOR USN (ACTION) AND OIA (INFO)

COMTWELVE FOR AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS

STATE FOR EA, IO/UNP, L/UNA

DEFENSE FOR USD/ISA

WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR WHITE

PASS JUSTICE FOR MARCUSE (JLC)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV TO

SUBJECT: MARIANAS PLEBISCITE--SEVENTH WEEKLY REPORT

REF: (A) STATUS LNG 1200

(B) STATUS LNG 130

(C) USUN 1010

1. SUMMARY: NO NEW CRITICISMS OF COVENANT HAVE APPEARED BUT OPPONENTS, NOW ORGANIZING INTO "FRIENDS FOR A BETTER COMMONWEALTH," HAVE BEEN ACTIVE ON RADIO, IN PRESS AND AT SOME MEETINGS IN REITERATING PREVIOUS OBJECTIONS. THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE IF ANY PUBLIC CRITICISM OF CLOSE AND PERMANENT RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. BUT RATHER UNWILLINGNESS TO RECOGNIZE THAT SUCH RELATIONSHIP INELUCTABLY REQUIRES ACCEPTING OBLIGATIONS, E.G., EMINENT DOMAIN. EFFORTS TO SEND COVENANT CRITICS TO UNTO SESSION APPARENTLY UNSUCCESSFUL. END SUMMARY.

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2. VOTER REGISTRATION BOARD (VRB) HAD UNTIL MIDNIGHT MAY 23 TO CONSIDER CHALLENGES OF THOSE WHO REGISTERED TO VOTE IN PLEBISCITE, WITH SOME 5,300 VOTERS REGISTERED, REGISTRATION IS IN GOOD SHAPE, AS REPORTED REFTEL (8) COVENANT OPPONENTS CHALLENGED 65 INDIVIDUALS FROM NORTHERN MARIANAS WHO HOLD US ALIEN REGISTRATION CARDS AND LIVE ON GUAM, SUPPORTERS CHALLENGED 155 PERSONS WHOM THEY BELIEVE NOT TO BE DOMICILED IN NORTHERN MARIANAS, VRB DENIED ALL CHALLENGES EXCEPT 12 PUT FORWARD AND DOCUMENTED BY COVENANT SUPPORTERS, ADDITIONAL 19 WERE DECLARED INVALID FOR TECHNICAL REASONS, APPEALS MUST BE MADE WITHIN THREE WORKING DAYS OF NOTIFICATION OF FINAL ACTION OR PUBLICATION OF VOTING LIST, WHICH HAS NOT YET OCCURRED, VRB REVERSED EARLIER STAND AND TOOK DECISIONS ON BASIS OF SIMPLE MAJORITY.

3. COVENANT "PRIMER" AND TECHNICAL AGREEMENT HAVE BEEN PRINTED BY PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER IN ENGLISH, CHAMORRO TRANSLATIONS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION MAY 29, QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOKLET SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE IN ENGLISH MAY 30, WITH CHAMORRO TRANSLATION TO FOLLOW SHORTLY, CAROLINIAN TRANSLATIONS DELAYED FOR LACK OF TRANSLATORS, BUT WILL BE COMPLETED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, ON MAY 15 PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER REQUESTED SERVICE OF TT DEPT OF FINANCE EMPLOYEE GUS TAGABUEL TO WORK AS CAROLINIAN TRANSLATOR BUT WAS TURNED DOWN BY TAGABUEL'S SUPERVISORS ON MAY 19, UNITED CAROLINIAN ASSOCIATION (UCA) ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN REQUESTED AND DOCUMENTS WERE GIVEN TO UCA PRESIDENT RABAULIMAN WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT HE WOULD RETURN USABLE TRANSLATIONS MORNING OF MAY 27. THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED AND DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO GO AHEAD WITH ENGLISH AND CHAMORRO EDITIONS.

4. RADIO AND TV TIME DURING WEEK USED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BY COVENANT OPPONENTS, WITH MPSC MEMBER JOE CRUZ ONLY EXCEPTION. OTHER SPEAKERS INCLUDED DINO JONES, ABEL OLOPAI, GUS TAGABUEL, JUAN DEMAPAN, BEN FITIAL, OSCAR RASA, AND DAVID S. SABLAN, AN ELDERLY LOCAL BUSINESSMAN NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE DAVID SABLAN WHO SERVE AS MASTER OF CEREMONIES WHEN THE COVENANT WAS SIGNED, ALL, INCLUDING CAROLINIANS, SPOKE IN CHAMORRO. THEMES REMAIN AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, REACTION TO DECISION TO LEAVE BALLOT UNCHANGED NOT YET APPARENT, BOGUS ISSUE RAISED EARLIER CONCERNING RIGHT OF CAROLINIANS TO HOLD LAND UNDER COVENANT HAS NOT BEEN PROMINENT RECENTLY.

5. PRESS COVERAGE OF PLEBISCITE-RELATED MATTERS INCLUDED REPORTS OF CONGRESSMAN BURTON'S LETTER TO COM SENATOR TENORIO IN PACIFIC DAILY

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NEWS (GUAM) AND MARIANAS VARIETY (SAIPAN). PLP HAS ALSO GIVEN COVERAGE, INTER ALIA, TO VOTER REGISTRATION CHALLENGES, ALFONSO RASA'S RESIGNATION AND DECISION NOT TO CHANGE WORDING OF BALLOT AS REQUESTED BY UCA, MAY 28 PUN RAN ARTICLES BY JOAN KING AND GUADALUPE BORJA, FORMER WAS INTERVIEW WITH DR. PALACIO: EXPLAINING HIS CHANGE FROM CAUTION ON THE COVENANT LAST YEAR TO PRESENT POSITION OF SUPPORT. BORJA ARTICLE REPORTS ROCK THROWING INCIDENT (.) INJURIES) AT MEETING OF SOME FORTY COVENANT OPPONENTS (VENING MAY 25. BORJA QUOTES OSCAR RASA AS SAYING 2,000 VOTERS WOULD VOTE AGAINST COVENANT AND POINTS OUT THAT MORE THAN 5,000 ARE REGISTERED. RASA : ALSO REPORTED AS SAYING ANTI-COVENANT GROUP WILL BE KNOWN AS " FRIENDS FOR A BETTER COMMONWEALTH" AND THAT MARIANAS WILL CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN COM "AS OBSERVERS." CRITICISMS WERE: RASA: "NO" VOTE IN PLEBISCITE DOES NOT MEAN REJECTION OF U.S. COMMONWEALTH STATUS, COVENANT "DOES NOT OFFER MAXIMUM BENEFITS TO PEOPLE," ANNUAL SUBVENTION OF \$14 MILLION WOULD NOT BE ADEQUATE TO OPERATE PROPOSED MARIANAS GOVT, MINIMUM WAGE WOULD BE ESTABLISHED NOT AT FEDERAL MINIMUM, FREE MEDICAL CARE NOT REPEAT NOT PROVIDED UNDER COMMONWEALTH. DINO JONES: NORTHERN MARIANAS NOW HAS "TWO RECOURSES, U.S. AND U.N. UNDER COMMONWEALTH, ONLY THE U.S." DENAPAN QUESTIONED WHAT SYSTEM MARIANAS WOULD HAVE IF SEPARATED FOLLOWING PLEBISCITE BUT U.S. CONGRESS REJECTED COVENANT, PITIAL CRITICIZED EMINENT DOMAIN, SABLAN ASKED "SHALL WE GIVE UP OUR LAND AT A CHEAP PRICE FOR THE AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP WE WANT SO DEARLY?" AND CHARGED U.S. WANTS "OUR LANDS TO STORE NUCLEAR ARMS."

6. MARIANAS VARIETY HAD ITEMS ON CONGRESSMAN HERMAN R. GUERREHO'S CRITICISM OF MICRONESIAN LEGAL SERVICES ROLE IN UCA REQUEST FOR BALLOT CHANGE, FAILURE OF UCA/MPSC EFFORT TO WORK OUT GUIDELINES FOR FAIR POLITICAL CAMPAIGN AND ARTICLE BUILT AROUND MAY 21. PRESS RELEASE BY DR. PALACIOS STATING THAT TERRITORIAL PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AGREED TO SUPPORT COVENANT. THERE WERE NO POLITICAL ADS IN VARIETY THIS WEEK. MICRONESIAN INDEPENDENT (MAJURO) CONTINUES IN USUAL FORM, WITH ARTICLES BY JOHN ROSARIO FITTI ON ACCEPTABILITY TO U.S. OF RESTRICTIONS ON LAND OWNERSHIP.

7. TRAVEL OF MARIANAS PARTIES TO UNCT SESSION STILL UNCERTAIN, BESPITE FACT THAT SESSION ALREADY UNDERWAY, MPSC DELEGATION OF FOUR INCLUDING CHAIRMAN PANGELIAN, TERRITORIAL PARTY PRESIDENT PALACIOS COM SENATOR TENORIO AND MPSC MEMBER OF JOE CRUZ DEPARTED SAIPAN EVENING MAY 23 FOR WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK, DISTRICT LEGISLATURE PRESIDENT BEN SANTOS AND SAIPAM MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT BEN

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CAMACHO (BOTH MPSC MEMBERS) DEPARTED EARLIER FOR WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS WAR CLAIMS AND AT LEAST SANTUS PLANNED TO ATTEND UNTC. IT APPEARS THAT OSCAR RASA'S REQUEST THAT HE AND SEVEN OTHERS BE ALLOWED TO APPEAR AT UNTC WAS MADE WITHOUT XULL CLEARANCE AT THIS END (REF C). AVAILABLE INFORMATION INDICATES NONE HAD DEPARTED FOR YORK AS OF EVENING MAY 27. STILL POSSIBLE THAT LIMITED NUMBER WILL ATTEND, BUT THIS MOST UNCERTAIN.

8. ON DIFFERENT SUBJECT, IT APPEARS THAT DSLEGATION FROM MILI (MARSHALLS) WILL NOT RPT NOT SEEK TO APPEAR BEFORE UNTC THIS YEAR, BERGESEN.

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