

June 12, 1975

NRD/Cardwell

Single option legislative proposal to obtain approval by the Congress for the Mariana Islands Commonwealth Covenant

Messrs. Hyde, Sitrin, Sanders, McOmber, Crabill

I. Timing: A major new element is a request made to Ambassador Williams yesterday by House Interior Subcommittee Chairman Phillip Burton (D, Calif.) that the legislative proposal be transmitted to the Congress by the President in time for congressional action on it to be completed before the July 4 recess. To try to meet this request, the Deputy Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, Charles Schmitz, has just requested all agencies on the interagency working group to provide their final comments on a single option described below together with a draft Presidential transmittal letter, to the Ambassador's office as early as possible tomorrow, June 13.

Their idea is to have the legislative package ready for Presidential signature and transmittal as soon as they receive the certified results of the June 17 plebiscite by telex from Saipan.

I told Mr. Schmitz that it would not be possible in my view for OMB to give formal clearance for this legislative package by tomorrow. However, I indicated it might be possible, depending on other priorities, for OMB to give a qualified approval for the legislative package subject to a subsequent formal request by the Ambassador for such clearance and his receiving a formal clearance.

II. Single option:

A. Mr. Schmitz handcarried at 11:30 this morning a revised option B, copy attached.

B. This option is fundamentally different from option B which I circulated this morning in that the revision explicitly provides for:

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES