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OFFICE OF THE PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER

Mariana Islands District

Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Erwin D. Canham
Plebiscite Commissioner

Post Office Box 185
Capitol Hill Rural Branch

June 20, 1975

The Honorable Stanley K. Hathaway
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Sir:

Herewith is my report and supporting materials on the plebiscite in the Northern Mariana Islands held on June 17. I am also enclosing a letter I have sent to President Ford.

The results, as of course you knew long since, were that 3,939 or 78.8 percent voted in favor of the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth in political union with the United States of America and 1,060 voted against. The total number who voted was over 93 percent of those registered in the special registration program we carried out. I submit that these results are a remarkable tribute to the political education and interest of the people of the Northern Marianas, a tribute likewise to the vigor of the campaigning, and evidence of the efficacy of the measures we administered in conducting the plebiscite.

We had the great benefit of a visiting mission from the United Nations Trusteeship Council. It consisted of James Murray, United Kingdom; John Melhuish, Australia; and Bertrand de Lataillade, France. They conferred extensively with me, discussed matters with various Marianas political leaders and individuals, observed the campaign activities and political education materials, and kept a sharp eye on voting procedures and counting of the ballots.

Along with these results I am including a chronology of my activities as Plebiscite Commissioner which is a skeletonized report. I will be glad to expand on any of these items if desired.

With the chronology, I have added supporting documents: guidelines for use of radio and television with the actual use of these media; minutes of the Advisory Committee and the Voter Registration Board set up under Secretarial Order No. 2973; copies of the various booklets we published

as part of the Plebiscite Education program in Chamorro and Carolinian; and material relating to proceedings in the Special Plebiscite Appellate Court.

I will be delighted to provide any other information you or your department or the State Department may require. I will be at your disposal if I can be of service when the Covenant comes before the Congress.

To serve as Plebiscite Commissioner has been a most rewarding experience: lively, challenging, and a happy one in my new friendships in the Marianas.

Sincerely,

Erwin D. Canham

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