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dispatched by the UN Trusteeship Council. The plebiscite resulted in a 78.8% vote in favor of the Covenant, with 95% of the registered voters participating. We regard this UN-observed act of self-determination as a major step in the fulfillment of our obligations as Administering Authority.

The Covenant is presently undergoing review by the United States Congress. On July 21 the House of Representatives gave its approval to the Covenant, in H.J. Res. 549, by voice vote without any objection, following unanimous approval by the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and its Subcommittee on Territorial Affairs. The Covenant is now before the Senate for its consideration and approval.

Further information concerning the proposed Northern Marianas Commonwealth and U.S. negotiations on the future political status of the other districts of the Trust Territory can be obtained from Ambassador F. Baydn Williams, the President's Personal Representatives for Micronesian Status Negotiations, and the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations, Washington, D.C. 20240.

The U.S. considers that the establishment of effective nuclear weapon free zones in appropriate regions of the world could be a useful complement to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other measures in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. In assessing any specific regional arrangement we would take into account the extent to which that arrangement meets the following criteria:

- The nuclear free zone should be sponsored by states in the area concerned;
- It should include all states whose participation is deemed important;
- It should not disturb necessary security arrangements;
- It should provide adequately for verification of compliance.

In addition to these criteria, the U.S. believes that a nuclear weapon free zone should not permit its parties to develop an indigenous nuclear explosive capability for any purpose, peaceful or military, since in our view the development of such a capability would not be compatible with the objective of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

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As for the inclusion of the waters of the Pacific within such a zone; the U.S. could not accept the imposition of a special legal regime over any portion of the high seas or restrictions on transit and overflight.

As for your constituent's questions concerning the Trident submarine and missile system, this subject falls under the purview of the Department of Defense. I have therefore forwarded your communication to Mr. John M. Maury, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, Washington, D.C. 20301, for further reply.

I hope you will call on me if you believe we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

SW
Robert J. McCloskey
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

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