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Marianas Dispute

In the debate over the creation of a new U.S. commonwealth for the Mariana Islands, two ridiculous arguments are being voiced by the opposition in the Eastern U.S.

One is that something is being sprung on the Congress by surprise. Quite the contrary, the negotiations extended over several years, and were publicized throughout. The 1975 plebiscite was well-publicized in advance and also scrutinized by outside observers who attest to its fairness. Our East Coast friends simply weren't paying attention, and now want to blame the negotiators who sought their attention but couldn't get it.

Equally wild is the charge that we will be extending the U.S. borders 4,000 miles west from Hawaii. We will be advancing them 200 miles north from Guam, a U.S. possession since 1899, that has been governed as an unincorporated U.S. territory since 1951.

For more on the Marianas, see the article on the opposite page.

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