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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Old Executive Office Building  
Room 373

Washington, D.C. 20506

January 15, 1976

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General Brent Scowcroft  
Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs

Max L. Friedersdorf  
Deputy Assistant to the President  
for Legislative Affairs

The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Brent and Max:

As you know, we are approaching the final votes in the Senate on the Marianas Covenant. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services Committee have until January 27, 1976 to mark-up and submit their reports on HJR 549, as amended. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled its mark-up for next Tuesday, January 20, and the Armed Services Committee is also likely to act next week.

The outcome of the vote in these two mark-up sessions remains uncertain but is sure to be close in both. In the Foreign Relations Committee the opposition is being led by Senator Pell, who is determined to defeat the Marianas Commonwealth Covenant outright, and by Senator Percy, who advocates deferring approval until an agreement or agreements have been reached with the entire Trust Territory. Senators Byrd (Va) and Hart (Colo) remain the most vocal opponents of the legislation in the Armed Services Committee.

Our best intelligence on the views held by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicates the following line-up next Tuesday:

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YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

SPARKMAN

PELL

SYMINGTON

CHURCH

CLARK

MC GOVERN - NOT THERE - YES

MC GEE - NOT THERE

BIDEN

JAVITS

HUMPHREY

CASE

PEARSON

SCOTT (PA)

PERCY

GRIFFIN

MANSFIELD

We have had some reports that Symington and McGovern may vote "yes", and we are hopeful that Pearson's vote will also be affirmative. Senator Javits is on the fence and a real effort should be made to win him over. Although we put Senator Church in the yes column, his vote cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, we are trying to get Senator Jackson to talk to him again.

The vote in the Armed Services Committee appears to be shaping up as follows:

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

JACKSON

★ BYRD (VA)

SWENNES

★ TOWER

★ HART

SYMINGTON

GOLDWATER

★ SCOTT (VA)

★ MC INTYRE

THURMOND

CULVER

★ NUNN

CANNON

★ LEAHY

★ BARLETT

TAFT

★ = SUBCOMMITTEE

The Department of Defense is concerned that McIntyre, Nunn and Taft may now be leaning against the Covenant and Symington is very uncertain. If these votes were to go against the Covenant it would be defeated in the Armed Services Committee.

There have been several developments affecting the Covenant during the current Congressional recess. Senator Bennett Johnston of the Interior Committee visited Saipan January 1; he was followed on January 5 by a delegation of four Senators. Also, at our suggestion, the Marianas leadership has corresponded with Senator Percy inviting him to Saipan and urging his support for early Covenant approval; Peter Poole, of Percy's staff, is now on Saipan talking to Micronesian leaders about status issues.

While on Saipan, the Senators met Senator Lazarus Salii and Representative Luke Tman of the Congress of Micronesia, who reiterated that the Congress of Micronesia was not opposed to the Covenant and had accepted the popular decision of the Marianas people to join in political union with the United States and to separate from the other districts as soon as possible.

All members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or their staffs have been briefed on the substance of the Covenant and made aware of the Administration position. I have personally briefed Chairman Sparkman, and Senators Pell, McGee, Case, Javits, Percy and Griffin. Members of the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations have briefed key staff members for each committee member except Mansfield, whose office indicated he would prefer to rely on briefings prepared by the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We have briefed the Committee's Chief of Staff, Pat Holt, Robert Barton who has staff responsibility for the mark-up session next week on the Marianas Commonwealth and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff.

We have made a similar effort on the Armed Services Committee and I have personally briefed the Chairman and Senators Jackson, Byrd (Va), Hart (Colo), Thurmond, Tower and Bartlett. Additionally, the Department of Defense has briefed key Senators and staff personnel have been briefed by the Department of Defense and my office.

I have written Secretary Rumsfeld asking him to urge Senator Percy to drop his amendment and support the Administration's request for early Senate approval of the Covenant. I have also asked him for Defense's help in moving Senators Stennis, Bartlett and Taft over to the yes column. Secretary Kleppe has already written both Committees expressing his support and urging speedy approval of the Covenant but I am asking him and Kent Frizzell to make a special effort with Senator Pearson of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator Bartlett who sits on both the Armed Services and Interior Committees.

With only a few days left and time running short we are mounting a final push and we need your help. We will be contacting and consulting with as many members of the two committees and their staffs as possible over the next few days.

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urging the members to be present to vote yes or if not to give the Chairman their favorable proxies. We still need informed and enthusiastic support from the Republicans and at least one Republican champion on each committee who is willing to take on the opposition in the mark-up sessions. I hope Senator Griffin will fill this role in the Foreign Relations Committee and either Tower or Goldwater in the Armed Services. Anything the White House can do in this regard will be important. It would also be helpful if the White House could reinforce my request to Secretary Rumsfeld to talk with Senator Percy as soon as possible.

A special White House effort to win over the following Senators could make a great difference in the outcome of the vote early next week. They are: Senators Case, Javits, Pearson, Bartlett and Taft, all of whom are in the no or the uncertain column. An effort to assure Senator Scott's (PA) presence and his assistance with the other Republicans on the Foreign Relations Committee would be helpful too. I would also appreciate the good offices of the White House in arranging a meeting for me with Senator Goldwater in advance of next Tuesday's vote. Finally, if the President in addition to his letters to the two Chairmen could call Senator Mansfield it might be possible to swing the key vote of the majority leader in favor of the Marianas Covenant. This could be of great importance to the final vote of the full Senate.

The Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations has provided you with talking points as to why early approval of the Covenant is important. The greatest threat now is posed by the Pell-Percy-Byrd-Hart coalition which will in all probability argue for an indefinite postponement of action on the Covenant. Such action would be in no ones interest.

In closing I would like to report again that while I know it is unfair and without basis in fact, nevertheless, Senators and Committee staff members have said and continue to say that the Covenant is in trouble because of the lack of strong and convincing support for its passage from the Defense Department and because it seems to have a relatively low priority in terms of White House backing. I do hope that these false impressions can be corrected over the next several days.

Sincerely yours,

*Haydn*

Ambassador F. Haydn Williams  
The President's Personal Representative  
for Micronesian Status Negotiations