

JAN 20 1976

12  
615

Taken from Bob Turner (224-9106)

cg  
Statement by Senator Robert P. Griffin (Assistant Minority Leader  
of the Senate)

Today's action by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and approving the "Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States" is most gratifying.

Earlier this month I had the privilege of visiting the Marianas and meeting with many political and civic leaders. The warm reception I received, and the articulate expressions of support for the Covenant I heard, leave no doubt in my mind that the Foreign Relations Committee's decision was a wise one. The people of the Marianas have clearly expressed their support for the terms of the Covenant, and my visit to the islands has left no doubt in my mind about their ability to progress from Trusteeship status to free and democratic self-government.

With regard to the other peoples of the Pacific Trust Territory, I am confident that they, too, will soon choose their future status. Whatever their decisions, I look forward to a future of close cooperation and friendship between the United States and all of the Micronesian peoples.

03 - 023255