

April 1, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANAS FILE

Re: Telephone conference with Mr. Sasaki

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I spoke with Mr. Sasaki today and learned that his office has not yet received the Constitution from the Department of the Interior. He then outlined generally for me the customary processes for eliciting executive agency views, clarifying any difficulties that may arise, and preparing an issues paper for the director and, if necessary, the president. After I received this basic course in OMB procedures, the following transpired:

(1) I informed Mr. Sasaki of the need for some specific date and record of such date when the President received the Constitution within the meaning of Section 202 of the Covenant. I asked Mr. Sasaki whether he believed that receipt by him constituted receipt by the President and he said that he would consult his lawyers. I emphasized the need for clarifying this and for some formal recognition of such submission taking place so as to trigger the 6-month period. He may pursue this.


(2) I summarized briefly the concerns of the client for prompt approval, perhaps in as little as three months. I said that the Interior officials were sympathetic

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to this concern and seemed to believe that it was possible. I tried to urge Mr. Sasaki to provide the executive agency with a fairly limited time, say 30 days, for commenting on the draft Constitution. I pointed out that such a period was sufficient under the circumstances because the interested agencies had received a copy of the Constitution and the accompanying Analysis several months ago. He said he would consider this matter further.

(3) As was done in Ms. Siemer's letter of last January, I offered our assistance in the event any issues arose regarding the Constitution. He did not seem particularly interested, but said that he would call in the event any issues arose on which we could be helpful. I am not too optimistic that Mr. Sasaki will be informing us regarding the development of questions relating to the Constitution. We need other sources of information regarding the approval process.

Mr. Sasaki said that he would call me once it is decided when and how to submit the Constitution to the President.

 H. P. Willens

cc: Deanne Siemer  
Paul Koffsky