

*C. Morris*

April 5, 1977

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20300

Dear Mr. President:

It gives me great pleasure to formally transmit to you the Constitution of the future Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This Constitution was adopted by a popularly elected constitutional convention on December 5, 1976 and ratified by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands on March 6, 1977. I have also enclosed the certification of the results of the constitutional referendum. As you can see, the Constitution received an approval margin of 93.2%.

According to the terms of the Commonwealth Covenant (Public Law 94-241), the time has now arrived for the United States Government to review the Constitution. The purpose of this review will be to determine whether the Constitution is consistent with the Covenant, and those provisions of the Constitution, treaties and laws of the United States to be applicable in the Northern Mariana Islands. From the date you receive this letter, the United States Government has a period of one hundred eighty days in which to perform this review. No action by the United States Government during this period is deemed as approval according to Section 202 of the Covenant. I understand that the Natural Resources Division of the Office of Management and Budget is prepared to coordinate the review process at your request.

The approval of this Constitution by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands marks another milestone in their progressive achievement of self-government in political union with the United States. Approval of this Constitution by the United States Government will bring about the installation of elected constitutional government in the Northern Mariana Islands for the first time in the recorded history of those islands. The Department of the Interior is presently assisting the people of the Northern Mariana Islands plan and prepare for this historic event.

The people of the Northern Mariana Islands have requested that the original copy of their Constitution which I am transmitting be returned to them for their archives after the review is completed.

This Department is at your service and that of the Office of Management and Budget to assist in any way during the review of the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution.

Respectfully,

CECIL D. ANDRUS  
SECRETARY

Enclosures: The Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Analysis of the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution  
(adopted by the Convention on December 6, 1976)  
Certified results of the Constitutional referendum  
Letter of transmittal to the Secretary of the Interior  
from the Resident Commissioner of the Northern  
Mariana Islands.

cc: Secy File  
Secy Reading File  
OTA - 1 hold copy

JDBERG:on 4/5/77