



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

September 30, 1977

Memorandum

To: Tim Kraft, Appointments Secretary to the President
From: Secretary of the Interior
Subject: White House Ceremony concerning the Northern
Marianas Constitution

A Presidential Proclamation either has been or soon will be sent by the Department of Justice to the White House on this subject. We understand that the Proclamation, accompanied by a recommendation that it be signed by the President either on October 22 or as soon thereafter as possible, will state that the Constitution of the Northern Marianas meets the tests prescribed by the Northern Marianas Covenant, enacted by the Congress in March of 1976 (P.L. 94-241); that it is now deemed approved, 6 months having passed since it was transmitted by the Secretary of the Interior to the President; and that it will become effective on January 9, 1978 -- the foreseen inauguration day of the popularly elected Governor of the Northern Marianas.

I strongly recommend that a ceremony be arranged. The United States has not acquired new territory (which, as a practical matter, is what is involved here, although the action will not be completed until the unknown future date when the Trusteeship Agreement is terminated) since 1917, when the Virgin Islands were purchased from Denmark. The enthusiasm of the people of the Northern Marianas for their new association with the United States is enormous, and quite worthy, I suggest, of the President's personal acknowledgment.

If you are able to arrange a ceremony, it would be helpful to the planners in my office if you could supply us with a number of invitees in order that we can make arrangements which would allow for proper travel time. As we see it, the group would include six to eight from the Northern Marianas, about a half dozen members of Congress who were instrumental in the passage of the legislation and an appropriate number from the Executive Branch. The total should not exceed 25 to 30 participants.

cc:
Under Secretary
C. Parrish
ES
/ Ruth Van Cleve
Billie
Wallace Green

(Sgd) Cecil D. Andrus

CECIL D. ANDRUS

CDA/je/cz/9/30/77