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Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Guam)

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President met today with High Commissioner William Norwood and other officials of the Government of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Commissioner Norwood and his associates came to Guam at the President's invitation to brief him on conditions and prospects in the Territory, which is administered by the United States under the supervision of the United Nations. The Territory consists of more than 2,000 islands in the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall groupings.

Today's discussion centered on economic and social progress. Commissioner Norwood gave the President a detailed account of recent advances in such critical fields as health and education. He also discussed the important role in these efforts being played by the Peace Corps, which has nearly 500 Volunteers now at work in the Territory.

The President also congratulated Mr. Norwood and his colleagues on the quickening pace of political development reflected in the formation of the Congress of Micronesia, and in the increasing numbers of Micronesians who are assuming responsible positions in the Government.

The President expressed the full support of the American people for these encouraging developments. He urged Commissioner Norwood to press forward with the Government's consideration of an economic development plan for the Territory. He cited as evidence of U.S. support the recent Senate passage of the Administration-proposed bill lifting the ceiling on financial support to the Territory. He expressed confidence that the House would also act favorably.

In thanking Commissioner Norwood for his presentation, the President said:

"Although I very much regret that time won't permit a personal visit to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, I believe that Commissioner Norwood's impressive analysis has given me a vivid sense of the progressive spirit now at work in Micronesia. Under his inspired leadership, I am confident that the people of the Trust Territory can look forward to new victories in the never-ending battle against poverty, ignorance, and disease.

Mr. Norwood has the support of every American in this noble cause."