



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

S/S 7424224

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GENERAL

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December 18, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Proposed Response to Letter to
the President

Mr. Paul^x Van Niewerburgh wrote a letter to
the President critical of Ambassador Williams'
conduct of the Northern Marianas political status
negotiations. A proposed response, which has been
cleared by the Office of Micronesian Status
Negotiations, is attached.

George S. Springsteen
George S. Springsteen
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Suggested reply.

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CENTRAL FILE



Suggested Reply

Mr. Paul Van Niewerburgh

P. O. Box 321

Nicholasville, Kentucky 40356

Dear Mr. Van Niewerburgh:

On behalf of the President, I would like to respond to your letter of November 26, concerning negotiations over the future status of the Northern Mariana Islands.

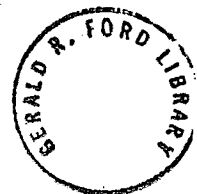
As you correctly point out, these negotiations are being carried out for the United States by Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, who is the President's Personal Representative. The negotiations with the Northern Marianas are being conducted separately from the talks with the rest of Trust Territory in response to repeated and determined requests by the people of the Northern Marianas over the past twenty years. The people of the Northern Marianas are represented by the Marianas Political Status Commission (MPSC), a body set up under the authority of the Marianas District Legislature. By mutual agreement the negotiations are aimed toward the establishment of a Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas under United States sovereignty, which at conclusion of the United Nations trusteeship would be a part of the American



political family. Any agreement will, of course, be subject to approval by all of the people of the Northern Marianas and by the United States Congress.

One of the issues being dealt with in the negotiations relates to basing requirements of the Department of Defense on the island of Tinian. The MPSC, including its two members from Tinian, has already agreed unanimously to United States acquisition of some 17,000 acres, or approximately the northern two-thirds of the island, for a multi-purpose base. The final nature and extent of U.S. military basing on Tinian will depend on a number of factors, including satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations, our defense needs, and the willingness of Congress to provide funds.

The newspaper article which you attached to your letter refers to a petition originating from Tinian, opposing U.S. plans and calling for an end to the talks. This petition, which was dated May 19, 1974, does reflect the views of a certain faction on Tinian which has been aiming for wider circulation of its opinions. However, the official view of the people of Tinian is reflected in the concurrence of their representatives on the MPSC which voted unanimously to meet the United States



requirements after the petition in question had been received. Moreover, a subsequent petition of May 29 by a numerically larger group of voters on Tinian, the "We Love America Committee", opposed the earlier resolution and called on the Marianas Political Status Commission "to negotiate and reach decisions in the many important areas of close association such as land needs, economic needs, political status and transition to and for the benefit of all the people of the Mariana Islands District".

It may be of further interest to note that a recent letter of November 13 addressed to Ambassador Williams and signed by the Speaker of the Tinian Municipal Council and by the Tinian representative in the Marianas District Legislature endorses the U.S. land requests on Tinian and the direction of current negotiations with the MPSC. A copy of this letter is attached for your information.

I am confident that the direction of our negotiations with the MPSC accords with the will of the people of the Northern Marianas, including Tinian. I can assure you that Ambassador Williams will continue to make every effort to discern and respect the wishes of the Northern Marianas.

Sincerely,

Roland L. Elliott
Special Assistant to the President

