

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Old Executive Office Building
Room 373
Washington, D.C. 20506

January 14, 1976

The Honorable Robert S. Ingersoll
Deputy Secretary of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Bob:

As you know, we are approaching final votes in the Senate on the Marianas Covenant. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services Committee have until January 27, 1976 to mark-up and submit their reports on HJR 549, as amended. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled its mark-up for next Tuesday, January 20 and the Armed-Services Committee is also likely to act next week.

The outcome of the vote in these two mark-up sessions remains uncertain but is sure to be close in both. In the Foreign Relations Committee the opposition is being led by Senator Pell, who is determined to defeat the Marianas Commonwealth Covenant outright and by Senator Percy, who advocates deferring approval until an agreement or agreements have been reached with the entire Trust Territory. Senators Byrd (Va) and Hart (Colo) remain the most vocal opponents of the legislation in the Armed Services Committee.

Our best intelligence on the views held by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicates the following line-up next Tuesday:

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>UNCERTAIN</u>
SPARKMAN	PELL	SYMINGTON
CHURCH	CLARK	MC GOVERN
MC GEE	BIDEN	JAVITS
HUMPHREY	CASE	PEARSON
SCOTT (PA)	PERCY	
GRIFFIN	MANSFIELD	

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We have had some reports that Symington and McGovern may vote "yes", and we are hopeful that Pearson's vote will also be affirmative. Senator Javits is on the fence and a real effort should be made to win him over. Although we put Senator Church in the yes column, his vote cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, we are trying to get Senator Jackson to talk to him again.

There have been several developments affecting the Covenant during the current Congressional recess. Senator Bennett Johnston of the Interior Committee visited Saipan January 1; he was followed on January 5 by a delegation of four Senators. Also, at our suggestion, the Marianas leadership has corresponded with Senator Percy inviting him to Saipan and urging his support for early Covenant approval; Peter Poole, of Percy's staff, is now on Saipan talking to Micronesian leaders about status issues.

Senator Johnston is likely to be the floor leader for the Covenant legislation when it reaches the full Senate in the event that Senator Jackson is not available. He is a strong supporter of the Covenant. His recent visit to the Northern Marianas was helpful in bolstering the morale of the leadership on Saipan and preparing them for a visit of Senators Hollings, Griffin, Culver and Baker. The visit of these four Senators appears to have improved prospects for passage of the Covenant by eliminating reservations held by Senators Hollings and Baker and strengthening Griffin's resolve to support the early approval of HJR 549. Senator Culver reportedly mellowed in his opposition during the visit and now recognizes complexities of which he was not previously aware.

While on Saipan, the Senators met Lazarus Salii and Representative Luke Taan of the Congress of Micronesia, who reiterated that the Congress of Micronesia was not opposed to the Covenant and had accepted the popular decision of the Marianas people to join in political union with the United States and to separate from the other districts as soon as possible.

All members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or their staffs have been briefed on the substance of the Covenant and made aware of the Administration position. I have personally briefed Chairman Sparkman, and Senators

Poll, McGee, Case, Javits, Percy and Griffin. Members of the Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations have briefed key staff members for each committee member except Mansfield, whose office indicated he would prefer to rely on briefings prepared by the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We have briefed the Committee's Chief of Staff, Pat Holt, Robert Barton who has staff responsibility for the mark-up session next week on the Marianas Commonwealth and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff.

The State Department (H), (EA) and (IO) have been helpful in opening doors and carrying out some consultations on their own especially with staff people. In November, just prior to the meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to mark-up the bill you wrote the Chairman and ranking minority member, Senator Case. You were also in touch with Senator Percy which I very much appreciated.

With only a few days left and faced with a close vote or a tie in both Committees, I believe we should make one last push. We will be trying to contact as many members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and their Administrative Assistants as possible in the next few days urging them to be present and vote yes or to give the Chairman their favorable proxy. I have requested the President to write to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Secretary Rumsfeld to contact Senator Percy. If you think it advisable I would appreciate it if you would write or call Senator Mansfield and possibly the Chairman and Senator Case drawing their attention to your letters to them of last November. You might also wish to indicate to Senator Javits the State Department's strong support for early approval of the Covenant.

Any other assistance you or others in the Department can provide, or any suggestions as to things we or the White House might do would be very helpful. I am sure.

With warmest best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Haydn

Ambassador F. Haydn Williams
The President's Personal Representative
for Micronesian Status Negotiations

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