

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*Signed 1-17-76*

January 16, 1976

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT *WHS*  
SUBJECT: Presidential Letters in Support of the  
Northern Marianas Covenant

Having obtained approval of the full House on July 1, 1975 and the Senate Interior Committee on October 22, 1975, the resolution to approve the Covenant to establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States has run into opposition in the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. Opposition has come from liberals, such as Senator Hart, who believe the act is an exercise in imperialism; and conservatives, such as Senator Byrd, who oppose taking up the burden of an alien and distant people. There are also those such as Senator Percy who, while they do not oppose the Covenant as such, believe we should delay approval until we complete negotiations with the remaining districts of Micronesia.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is scheduled to take up the legislation next Tuesday, January 20, and there are indications the Armed Services Committee will consider it either Tuesday, January 20, or Wednesday, January 21. We believe a personal letter from you to the Chairman and ranking minority member of each of the two committees could make the key contribution to our effort to overcome opposition in these two committees.

Attached at Tab A are proposed letters for your signature to Chairmen Stennis and Sparkman as well as to Senators Thurmond and Case. The letters explain the need for early approval of the Covenant and urge their support.

The proposed letters have been cleared by Paul Theis' office.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letters at Tab A.

Max Friedersdorf concurs.



RECEIVED  
JAN 23 1976  
CENTRAL FILES

*NOTED  
TM*

*Original signed letters given to Max Friedersdorf on 1-17-76 for delivery. (orig of this memo, w/ xerax copy signed thro file to WSC- 1/17/76)*

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