

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 26, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR MIKE CARDOZO

FROM: JEFFREY FARROW 

SUBJECT: Northern Mariana Islands Commission on Federal  
Laws

Attached is the Interior opinion I mentioned Saturday. It argues that the special nature of this Congressional advisory body permits the President to appoint a Member of Congress to the panel.

As I indicated when we spoke, I believe it imperative that we find a way to name Phil Burton to the commission. For all practical purposes Burton is the "Father of the Commonwealth". He is intent on finishing the job of creating this new territory and, I am confident, will find a way to do so. His leadership on Northern Marianas issues -- as well as those affecting all insular areas -- is widely recognized on the Hill.

If you conclude that the President cannot appoint a Member of Congress to the commission as presently established, I would recommend our suggesting amendment of the commission's charter to facilitate a Burton appointment. Of course, such a solution would be less preferable since it would delay functioning of a commission needed to resolve a number of outstanding and complex aspects of the U.S.-N.M.I. relationship.