

October 29, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Proposed Executive order entitled "Relations with the Northern Mariana Islands"

Herman Marcuse, Office of Legal Counsel, Department of Justice (633-2055). Justice has no objection to the form of the proposed Executive order. As a matter of policy, Justice is concerned that it would be counterproductive to issue the Executive Order now. There will be additional negotiations with the NMI concerning revisions of the Covenant. The NMI believe they should be treated more like a sovereign entity and less like a territory, so that the designation of Interior as the lead agency may aggravate relationships. Justice believes that Interior should reconsider whether, in fact, it is in Interior's interest to have the Order issued at this time. In the final analysis, however, this is a strategic decision for Interior to make.

John F. Cooney
Deputy General Counsel



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