

MICRONESIANS GET SELF-RULE PLEDGE

Hickel Says U.S. Will Speed Reforms for Islanders

By ROBERT TRUMBULL

Special to The New York Times

CHALAN KANOVA, Saipan, May 5—Walter J. Hickel, the man responsible, under President Nixon, for American government of Micronesia, pledged today that Washington would take immediate steps toward more self-government for the islands, the upgrading of local participation in administration and the payment of equal wages to Micronesians and Americans who do the same work.

The Secretary of the Interior, who is touring the Pacific Islands, where there has long been criticism of United States policy under the United Nations trusteeship, initiated in 1947, made his pledge in an address to Micronesian legislators and pan in World War II. Successive others.

The items discussed by Mr. Hickel have been among those most frequently mentioned by critics of the regime.

"The situation could not be worse, but I am optimistic that conditions will now change," Amata Kabua, President of the Senate in the Congress of Micronesia, an elected legislative body with limited powers, commented after hearing Mr. Hickel.

Commissioner Is Installed

The Secretary installed Edward E. Johnston, a 51-year-old Honolulu insurance executive and prominent Hawaii Republican, as the new High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. He succeeds William R. Norwood, a former newspaperman, also of Honolulu.

The more than 2,000 islands and atolls of Micronesia, of which about 100 are inhabited by 92,000 people, were taken by the United States from Japanese missions from the United Nations Trusteeship Council have charged Washington with neglecting the islanders' welfare.

Mr. Hickel, speaking under a broiling sun in a gymnasium whose roof was torn off by a typhoon last year, acknowledged some shortcomings of previous administrations.

"For years you have had little voice in your government," he said. "This is wrong. High Commissioner Johnston will move rapidly and decisively to bring more Micronesians into high ranking and responsible positions in the trust territory government."

Big Gap in Pay Rates

"Every effort will be made to eliminate any differences which may exist in pay schedules," he said. According to an official report, scales for Micronesian employees of the administration run from almost \$700 to \$10,300. Americans, many doing the same jobs, receive from \$3,600 to \$25,000, plus "hardship" allowances and other bonuses.

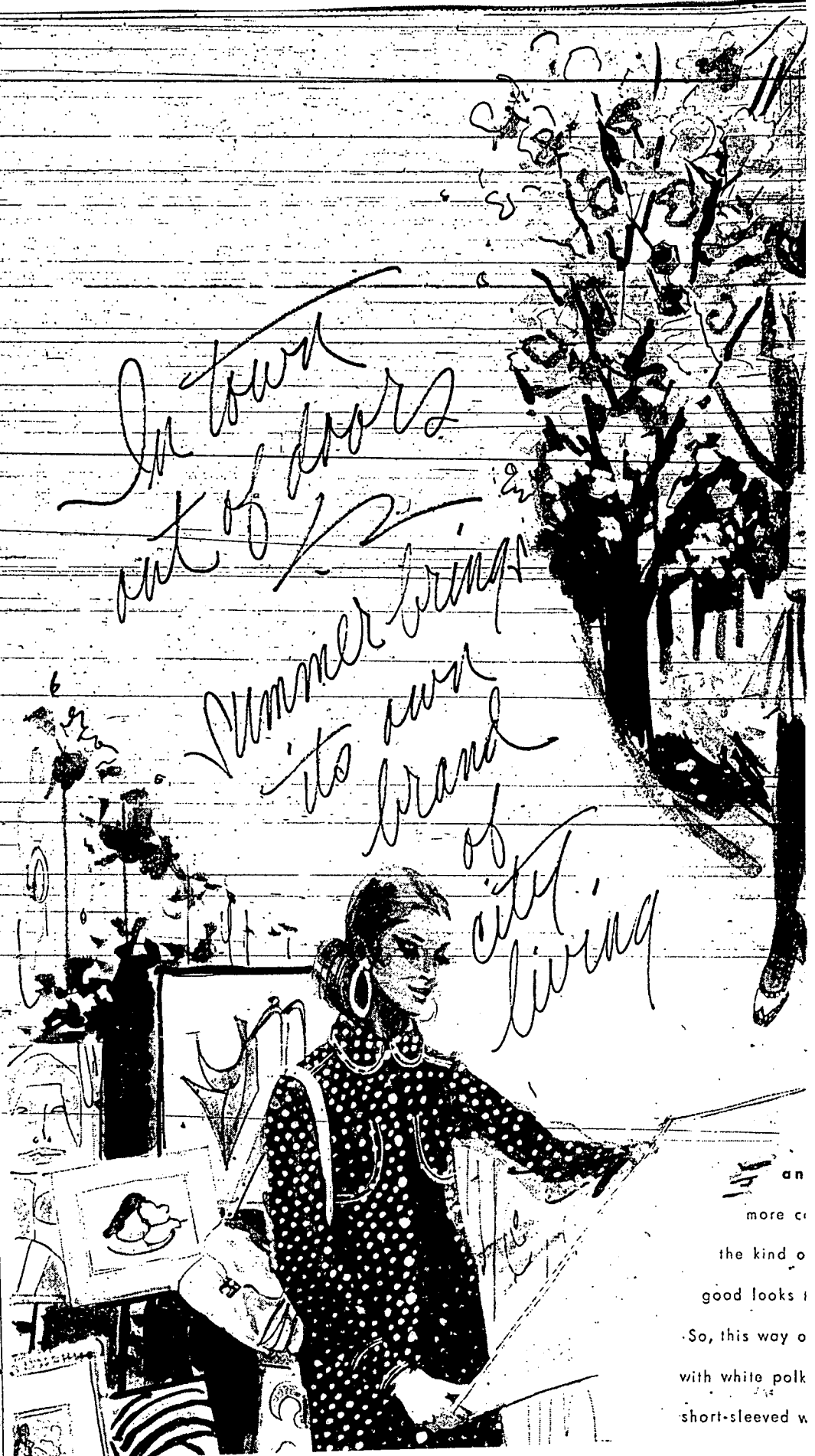
Mr. Hickel said the Nixon Administration would strive to make the economy more viable by expediting the development of roads, electric power and other projects to improve the economic base. Legislation will be introduced in Congress in Washington to allow duty-free imports of Micronesian products, he added.

To increase Micronesian participation in the development process, Mr. Hickel asked the Congress of Micronesia to form a budget committee and a planning group to work with American officials on future programs.

The steps proposed by Mr. Hickel "could alter the adverse image of the United States" among educated Micronesians, said Senator Lazarus Saliu, an influential member of the Congress of Micronesia from Palau.

"The United States is at last coming to grips with the situation," he added.

*In town out of doors
Summer brings its own brand of city living*



an
more c
the kind o
good looks i
So, this way o
with white polk
short-sleeved w