

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER
MESSAGE CENTER

UNCLASSIFIED

25315

THE ROLL CALL, SEVEN SENATORS VOTED AGAINST THE BILL AND ONLY FIVE IN FAVOR, SO THE BILL WAS DEFEATED.

(HOUSE ACTIONS)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 27 (MNS)--- A TOTAL OF SEVEN SENATE BILLS PASSED FINAL READING IN THE HOUSE MONDAY NIGHT, AND WERE SENT ON TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. THE HOUSE ALSO ACCEPTED SENATE AMENDMENTS ON A NUMBER OF HOUSE BILLS, THEREBY SENDING THEM ON TO CONSIDERATION BY THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AS WELL.

THE SENATE BILLS APPROVED WERE: A MEASURE DECLARING CERTAIN PUBLIC LAND IN SOKEHS MUNICIPALITY, PONAPE, TO BE AVAILABLE FOR AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEADS (SB 180); A BILL MAKING THE NEW MAJURO AIRPORT AN OFFICIAL PORT OF ENTRY (SB 183); A MEASURE TO PREVENT CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY PROHIBITING ANY MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA FROM ACQUIRING ANY INTEREST IN PROJECTS, PROGRAMS OR SERVICES FUNDED BY APPROPRIATIONS OF THE CONGRESS (SB 172); A BILL TO REDUCE FROM TWO YEARS TO THREE MONTHS THE TIME IN WHICH THE HICOM SHALL ISSUE DEEDS OF CONVEYANCE FOR QUALIFIED HOMESTEAD APPLICANTS (SB 135); A LIMIT TO WHOLLY-MICRONESIAN-OWNED SHIPPING COMPANIES THE GRANTING OF EXCLUSIVE FRANCHISES FOR SHIPPING BETWEEN AND AMONG THE ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS OF THE TT (SB 169); A BILL REQUIRING THAT STANDARD FEES BE CHARGED TO PRIVATE FARMERS FOR THE USE OF YAP AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT (SB 93); AND A GENERAL FUNDING BILL FOR PROJECTS IN PONAPE DISTRICT (SB 85).

HOUSE MEMBERS ALSO APPROVED SENATE CHANGES IN THE FOLLOWING BILLS: A BILL TO REQUIRE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION AND LODGING EXPENSES OR FACILITIES TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES (HB 85); A MEASURE APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE NEW MAJURO AIRPORT, TO ENABLE THE DISTRICT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE CONTRACTOR AND SURPLUS MATERIAL TO LENGTHEN THE NEW STRIP IMMEDIATELY TO ITS MAXIMUM LENGTH (HB 57); A BILL APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE NEW DISTRICT FISHING AUTHORITIES (HB 98), PART OF THE PACKAGE OF FISHING LEGISLATION THAT RANKS AS ONE OF THE MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SESSION, AND ANOTHER BILL IN THE SAME PACKAGE, THAT PERMITS FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS TO ENTER CERTAIN PORTS IN THE TT FOR THE PURPOSES OF RESUPPLY, AND SETS UP THE FISHING AUTHORITIES AS THE AGENTS FOR SUCH RESUPPLY (HB 93).

(HOUSE ADOPTS ONE STATUS RESOLUTION)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 27 (MNS)---THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA ADOPTED A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION EARLY TUESDAY MORNING (FEB 27) THAT WOULD EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS IS THE "SOLE" AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT THE NEGOTIATIONS ON FUTURE STATUS FOR ALL

PAGE 3

UNCLASSIFIED

00111100

03-413402

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER
MESSAGE CENTER

UNCLASSIFIED

25315

SIX DISTRICTS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY. THE MEASURE IS AIMED AT
THE SEPARATE STATUS TALKS NOW UNDER WAY BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE
MARIANAS ISLANDS DISTRICT.

BT

#7711

ANNOTES

OTHER SECTS DISTR ON RECEIPT

HRB 470

PAGE 4

UNCLASSIFIED

00111100

NNNN
271930Z

03-413403

UNCLASSIFIED

25395

SECSTATE PASS TO DEPT INT/SEC INTERIOR/DASTA DSN
TIPI NO 147

AS IT TURNED OUT, THE RESOLUTION WAS JUST ABOUT THE ONLY ITEM OF LEGISLATION PROPOSED ON FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS WHICH RECEIVED APPROVAL THIS SESSION. ANOTHER JOINT RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE DIRECTED THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS TO DRAFT A CONSTITUTION FOR MICRONESIA THIS YEAR, WAS ADOPTED IN THE SENATE AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF DEBATE AND MANEUVERING, BUT IT NEVER CAME TO THE FLOOR IN THE HOUSE.

THE LATTER MEASURE WAS, IRONICALLY, OPPOSED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE, SENATOR LAZARUS SALII (PALAU). "THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT IS BETTER TO DO NOTHING," HE SAID DURING DEBATE ON THE MEASURE, AND HE CLEARLY FELT THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE TIMES. HIS COMMITTEE'S BILL TO SET UP A MICRONESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FAILED TO WIN HOUSE APPROVAL, WITH THE RESOLUTION OFFERED AS A SORT OF COMPROMISE. BUT SALII FELT IT WAS NOT A GOOD COMPROMISE, AND ARGUED AGAINST ITS ADOPTION.

SENATOR ARAYA KABUA (MARSHALLS) LED THE FIGHT FOR ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION, SAYING THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WOULD BE A GOOD "TEST BALLOON" TO SHOP AROUND THROUGH THE DISTRICTS, SOUNDING OUT PUBLIC OPINION ON IT. SENATOR ANDOM AMARAICH ARGUE, HOWEVER, THAT HIS JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HAD DELIBERATELY TRIED TO KEEP THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS OUT OF DIRECT INVOLVEMENT WITH THE DRAFTING OF CONSTITUTION. "THEY ARE NEGOTIATING WITH THE UNITED STATES FOR THE END OF THE TRUSTEESHIP," THE TRUK SENATOR SAID, "AND SHOULD BE LEFT TO CONCENTRATE ON THIS."

THE SENATE'S ORIGINAL ACTION ON THE JOINT RESOLUTION WAS TO FILE IT. BUT A FEW HOURS LATER, SENATOR KABUA MOVED TO RECONSIDER AND WAS UPHOLD. FOLLOWING CONSIDERABLE DEBATE, THE MEASURE PASSED BY A NARROW SEVEN TO FIVE VOTE. IT DIED, HOWEVER, IN THE HOUSE LATER TUESDAY MORNING, APPARENTLY BECAUSE FUNDS FOR THE COMMITTEES WORK ON THE CONSTITUTION HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE CONGRESS' OPERATING BUDGET.

THE HOUSE GOT INTO ITS STATUS DEBATE OVER THE "SENSE OF THE CONGRESS" RESOLUTION. THE MEASURE WAS OPPOSED BY THE MEMBERS FROM THE MARIANAS, AS COULD BE EXPECTED. BUT MARSHALESE CONGRESSMAN CHARLES DOMNICK ALSO SPOKE STRONGLY AGAINST IT. HE ARGUED THAT THE CONGRESS CANNOT TIE DOWN THE OTHER DISTRICTS IF THEY WANT A SEPARATE STATUS. THE MEASURE EVENTUALLY WAS ADOPTED, BUT ONLY BY A MARGIN OF 13 TO 9.

(AIRLINE RESOLUTION ADJUTED)

SAIPAN FEBRUARY 27 (HONOLULU) AFTER MORE THAN A YEAR, COUNTLESS HOURS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS, DEBATE, DRAFTING OF RESOLUTIONS AND ASSORTED OTHER ACTIVITIES, THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA HAS FINALLY AND OFFICI-

When received 03-413404
Pages were not in
right order