

Rec. 6-20-73

Week in Review

SUMMARY OF NEWS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
Prepared by Micronesian News Service

Saipan, Mariana Islands

June 4-8, 1973

MARIANAS TALKS END

The Mariana Islands Status Negotiations ended last week with the issuance of a joint communique by the United States delegation, headed by Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, and the Mariana Islands Political Status Commission, headed by Senator Edward Pangelinan. The statement indicated that substantial progress was made during the three-week round of talks toward bringing the Mariana Islands into the U.S. political family as a commonwealth.

Both delegation heads expressed the belief that an agreement is near, although there still remain some problems to be negotiated. Senator Pangelinan noted that the talks were marked by free discussion, and that they were very successful. "We have a long and difficult job ahead before our mutual objective is attained," he said, but he added, "the members of this Commission are optimistic about the future and look forward eagerly to our next session of negotiations."

Ambassador Williams noted the spirit of mutual trust and common objectives which marked the talks. He said between now and the next round smaller groups of specialists in such areas as land and finance will continue to meet from time to time, to, in his words, "ensure that the next meeting of our full delegations will bring further substantial progress toward final decisions on the formal status agreement which now seems clearly in prospect." The Ambassador said he would return to Washington to brief key U.S. leaders on the talks, and stated that he was sure the word of progress toward bringing the Marianas into the U.S. political family would be welcomed in the United States.

Immediately after the talks ended last week, Ambassador Williams and Senator Pangelinan left for Rota and a meeting with the people there. The Ambassador then went on to Guam, where he held a press conference to explain the results of the talks to the people of Guam, who have a vital interest in the future of their northern neighbors even though they are not directly involved in the negotiations. Following the talks, the Marianas Commission also announced that it was sending two delegates to New York City to appear before the current meeting of the United Nations Trusteeship Council and answer questions about the political aspirations of the Mariana Islands. A Visiting Mission of the Council has been critical of the United States for conducting the separate status talks with the Marianas.

UN HEARINGS BEGIN

On Friday of last week the United Nations Trusteeship Council began its hearings into conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

This followed several days of examination of the other remaining Trust Territory, the Territory of Papua/New Guinea, which is administered by Australia. At the conclusion of those meetings, U.S. Ambassador to the Trusteeship Council W. Tapley Bennett, Jr., said the U.S. would look with interest at the programs being implemented in New Guinea by Australia, which are designed to bring full self-government to the Territory by the end of this year.

Reports on the Micronesian portion of the United Nations meetings were not available on Saipan when this Week in Review script was being prepared. However next week we will summarize on this program the entire Micronesian Trusteeship Council proceeding.

UNIQUE POLITICAL EDUCATION SEMINAR HELD

A unique seminar to examine some of the moral implications of the future political status question for Micronesia was held last week in Kolonia, Ponape. Sponsored by the Micronesian Seminar, an organization supported by the Catholic Mission in Micronesia, the week-long meeting drew together some of the key Micronesian leaders from the Congress of Micronesia, the TT administration, and the private sector for the purpose of discussing, in depth, the status question as it may affect the lives, attitudes and self respect of all Micronesians. A number of Jesuit priests took part in the seminar in addition to the Micronesian participants.

A spokesman said the hope was that the seminar would be just the beginning of a whole series of meetings, throughout the Trust Territory, that would begin to look at some aspects of the status question which the sponsors feel have been neglected up to now.

GOVERNMENT TAKES POSITION ON SHIPPING

The Trust Territory Government has taken a position on the current shipping problems in Micronesia, indicating that at least for the present government approval cannot be given to any other company entering the Trust Territory shipping service in competition with TransPacific Line, the franchised carrier.

The position was taken in response to a public announcement that Seatrain Lines, of Oakland, California, intends to begin serving Yap and Palau Districts next month. The government responded with a telegram saying that "the Trust Territory government has obligations which preclude its approval of such actions at this time."

A spokesman for TransPac, General Manager William Penrose, said "we are pleased with the recent action of the High Commissioner in reaffirming the obligation of the U.S. government to protect the interest of the many Micronesian investors in TransPac."

The Government also informed TransPac, however, that other carriers may be permitted to enter the TT in the future if TransPac should fail to provide adequate service in accordance with its contract obligations.

Seatrain, meanwhile, has indicated that it will go ahead with its planned Yap and Palau service anyway, on a strictly private basis in response to requests from the Palau District Legislature and businessmen in Palau and Yap. What this move, if it is carried through, will mean in terms of TransPac's franchise will probably have to be decided through a court of law, according to government and TransPac officials.

MEDICAL EXAM LAW TO TAKE EFFECT SOON

A law requiring all persons entering the Trust Territory for purposes of private employment, and members of their families, to have a medical examination and carry with them a card certifying that they are free from communicable disease, will go into effect July 5. The law was passed during the 1973 session of the Congress of Micronesia and signed into law by High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston.

All employees in the TT were advised last week by the Chief of Labor that it will be up to them to see that their employees comply with the provisions of this new law. The Chief of Labor, the Immigration Officer and the Director of Health Services are responsible for administering the new statute. Anyone failing to comply with the law, or any alien worker found to have some communicable disease, will have his entry permit revoked.

NOW BRIEFLY, HERE ARE SOME OTHER ITEMS THAT MADE NEWS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY LAST WEEK:

Ponape District Administrator Leo A. Falcam has signed into law two bills designed to make the Ponape District Legislature the Territory's first full-time district lawmaking body. The bills must still be approved by the High Commissioner.

A Stanford University graduate student, Daniel Smith, is conducting Micronesia's first in-depth television study on Saipan.

The search has been resumed for a missing boat with ten people on board out of Majuro. The boat, the M/S Miula, disappeared May 21, but was sighted again last week in Ponape District so the search, which had been called off, was begun again. The boat is drifting with engine trouble.

Plans for a microfilm and computerized information system for the Trust Territory are being developed by the Planning Division.

A seminar in preventive maintenance for engines and equipment was held on Saipan last week for district Public Works Directors and their Deputies.

Fiberglass water storage tanks have been installed in several areas of Truk District in a program developed and funded by the Trust Territory Community Development Division.

The new General Manager of Air Micronesia, Barrie Duggan, toured the Trust Territory last week to get acquainted with business and government leaders. Duggan takes over the airline July first from Don Beck, who has been named

Vice President, Sales and Service, for Continental Airlines in Los Angeles.

And finally, a group of olympic swimmers from the Santa Clara, California Swim Club in the U.S. visited Saipan last week. The young swimming champions were on Guam to give swimming demonstrations, but found time for a day-long visit to the Northern Marianas.