

12/18/73

Week in Review

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

Saipan, Mariana Islands

Dec. 3-7, 1973

ENERGY SHORTAGE HITS MICRONESIA

The impact of the world wide shortage of petroleum products continues to be felt in Micronesia. Last week High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston announced the creation of a special territory-wide Fuel Conservation Committee responsible for developing policies for the conservation of fuel, possible allocations of fuel and their matters relating to fuel consumption in the TT. The primary concern of the government at this point is with maintaining its vital shipping services to all districts, along with power plant fuel needs and fuel necessary to operate construction equipment and other types of vehicles.

Examples of steps taken to conserve fuel in the districts include gas rationing in Ponape, reduction of 30% in the use of gasoline by government activities in Yap, a fuel allotment schedule implemented in the Marshalls, cutback in use of heavy equipment in Truk by one day per week, a comprehensive plan for fuel conservation put into effect in Palau, including a monthly quota of fuel and efforts to minimize power plant operation, and in the Marianas, the public has been requested to voluntarily conserve power by eliminating excessive use of air conditioners and clothes dryers.

Spokesmen at both TransPacific Lines and Saipan Shipping Company said that the current fuel crisis and reductions in allocation by Mobil might force them to curtail service unless alternative supplies are found. According to Air Micronesia General Manager Barrie Duggan, however, no cutbacks in flight schedules are presently anticipated, although a plan for reduced service is ready if it is needed.

Support activities of the U.S. Military have been cutback. And the TT government has notified foreign government in the Pacific Basin that bunkering of foreign ships will be discontinued and re-fueling of ships and aircraft in the TT will be curtailed, unless their owners can make private arrangements with Mobil.

MARIANAS STATUS TALKS BEGIN

The Third Round in the status negotiations between the Marianas Political Status Commission and the United States delegation opened last week on Saipan. The Marianas delegation is headed by Senator Edward Dlg. Pangelinan. The U.S. delegation is chaired by President Nixon's Personal Representative, Ambassador F. Haydn Williams.

Among those dignitaries who attended the opening session were TT High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston and members of his cabinet, Mariana Islands District Administrator Francisco C. Ada and members of his staff, and Mayor Vicente D. Sablan of Saipan.

In his opening statement Ambassador Williams emphasized that the U.S. delegation is here negotiating as a result "of the oft-repeated request of the people of the Northern Marianas for separate negotiations and a separate status". He said "we are here to pursue the attainment of a future status which you have asked for--and that is political union with the United States." Williams continued that these talks would deal specifically with "a review of some remaining political status questions of a legal and constitutional nature, a deeper and fuller exploration of economic needs and support requirements, and a further discussion of land questions including the disposition of public land, land alienation and the satisfaction of United States land requirements." He also indicated that the talks should include the subject of transition and U.S. financial assistance for both the planning and implementation stages of transition.

In his opening remarks, Senator Pangelinan stated that he was confident this round of negotiations would "show even greater progress toward our mutual goal--a secure and enduring place in the American political family for the people of the Marianas." He commended the U.S. for its Policy Statement on the Return of Public Lands and asked for assistance from the U.S. in implementing its policy. Pangelinan also indicated that the sessions would include talks on political status, financial support, land and military needs and transition. He concluded by stating the "members of the Commission remain firm on their conviction that we are engaged in an historic joint venture," and that the people of the Marianas are enthusiastic about their future relationship with the United States.

TASK FORCE COMPLETES STUDY

A Joint Department of Health, Education and Welfare-Department of the Interior Task Force has identified priority problems in health, education and social services in Micronesia and recommended steps to improve HEW programs in the Trust Territory.

The Task Force study undertook a review of HEW programs in Micronesia to determine whether resources meet the needs in areas of health, education and social services in the Trust Territory.

The Health Subcommittee Report stated that the greatest emphasis in the Trust Territory should be placed on the orderly development of the overall health program, providing health education to citizens of Micronesia, providing sanitary facilities and pure water supplies, and extending training for Micronesians so they can carry on various health programs.

The Report stated that it is imperative that personnel, facilities and programs be planned together so that the overall program will be properly phased within the TT. It recommended the formulation of an outside advisory group on a long-term basis to meet regularly to advise the TT on health matters

or an arrangement whereby the University of Hawaii train Micronesian medical personnel and also provide consultation on a regular basis.

Among those Micronesian-wide educational needs identified by the Task Force were the need to strengthen the TT Board of Education and the District Boards of Education, the need for the TT Board of Education to determine long-term goals and objectives and for the District Board of Education to establish short-term and intermediate educational goals and objectives. The Subcommittee also identified the need for man power and development, the continued development of a Micronesian curriculum, the need for additional educational facilities, and the development of Micronesian-wide institutions.

The Social Services Subcommittee Report concerned itself primarily with the social service needs of the handicapped, youth, and the elderly. The report stated that social services in Micronesia should deal mainly with adjustment services of a rehabilitative nature. It further stated that idleness is a problem of youth with alcoholism, minor disturbances and drug addiction manifestations of this idleness or restlessness. The Committee recommended community-based development of a social service to deal with problems of the elderly.

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

According to an announcement by the Economic Development Division of the Department of Resources and Development, in order to comply with current Trust Territory foreign business regulations, a business permit was granted to the Bank of America for the operation of a commercial banking business in Majuro, Marshall Islands. The renewal of the foreign business permit for Dillingham Corporation for Micronesia was approved by the High Commissioner and the foreign business permit for a commercial fishing business in Yap, headed by Gunther W. Mothes, was officially revoked.

The annual Trust Territory Immigration Officers Conference was held last week on Saipan. Quirin Mendiola, TT Chief Immigration Officer, presided over the conference.

The Congress of Micronesia's House Committee on Education and Social Matters is currently traveling to the Eastern Districts of Micronesia to hold a series of public hearings on a number of education-related matters.

The Third Ponape District Legislature's Special Session concluded last week on Ponape after passing several bills and sending them to the District Administrator for approval. One of the three resolutions passed requested the High Commissioner to give favorable consideration to the salary bill that was vetoed last month by District Administrator Leo Falcam.

Trust Territory Director of Health Services Dr. Masao Kumangai announced the appointments of two staff physicians, Drs. Mary Jane Brand and Stephen L. Zuckerman, for Truk Hospital.

The Leadership of the Congress of Micronesia met on Saipan last week to finalize plans for the forthcoming Second Regular Session of the Fifth Congress which will officially convene on Monday, January 14, 1974, on Saipan.

Members of the Community Action Agency Directors Organization met last week on Saipan to review current problems of the CAA's, the state of the Neighborhood Youth Corps and Elderly programs, the Palau Economic Development Corporation grant, the Ponape skipjack fishing program, the Marianas fishing cooperative, and proposed CAA legislation for the upcoming Congress of Micronesia session.

Officials of TransPacific Lines, Inc. announced last week that the M/S Mas Mauleg, the smallest vessel in the TransPac fleet, has been sold for scrap to a Taiwan company. General Manager William Penrose stated that the two newly acquired TransPac ships, the M/S Muskingum and M/S Herkimer, will take up the service to Kusaie and Ebeye. In other news at TransPac, an order granting a 90 day rate increase of 12% became official with an effective date of November 21, 1973.

In Yap last week, Rull Municipality became the first municipality in Yap District to receive a municipal charter granted by the High Commissioner on November 30, 1973. Also, a brief ceremony took place at the Yap Airport to mark the completion of the Yap Airfield rehabilitation project.