

(LOST PONAPE FISHERMEN FOUND)

SAIPAN, APRIL 12 (MNS)---FOUR YOUNG MEN FROM PONAPE, MISSING SINCE MARCH 15 WHEN THEY LEFT ON A FISHING TRIP, WERE FOUND THURSDAY AFTERNOON (APRIL 12) BY A DANISH FREIGHTER NEARLY 1,000 MILES FROM THEIR HOME ISLAND. 11 74

ACCORDING TO LT. CMDR. ALAN PENDLETON, NAVY LIAISON OFFICER ON SAIPAN, THE FREIGHTER M/V NORDTRAMP SPOTTED THE FOUR MEN AND THEIR 24-FOOT DORY FISHING BOAT, THE MARLI-, ABOUT 60 MILES EAST OF GAERUT, AN UNINHABITED ATOLL IN YAP DISTRICT. THE MEN WERE SAID TO BE IN GOOD CONDITION DESPITE THEIR ORDEAL. THEY HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS KALOSTIN JACK, ENDY EDMON, SLAUDER JOEL AND PEDRO POLL, ALL OF PONAPE.

IN KOLONIA, PONAPE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR LEO A. FALCAM SAID FRIDAY MORNING THAT WORD OF THE MEN'S RESCUE WAS GREETED WITH GREAT JOY BY THEIR FAMILIES. HE SAID HE PERSONALLY HAD CONTACTED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILIES TO TELL THEM THE NEWS.

THE NORDTRAMP WAS TO RENDEZVOUS WITH A U.S. NAVY RESCUE BOAT OFF GUAM SOMETIME FRIDAY AFTERNOON, TO TRANSFER THE MEN FROM THE SHIP TO SHORE, WHERE THEY WILL BE TAKEN TO THE NAVAL HOSPITAL FOR EXAMINATION. THE TRUST TERRITORY LIAISON OFFICE ON GUAM WILL THEN ARRANGE FOR THEIR TRANSPORTATION BACK TO PONAPE.

PENDLETON SAID IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE DANISH SHIP TO RECOVER THE FISHING BOAT, AND IT WAS LEFT TO DRIFT. THE BOAT WAS APPARENTLY DAMAGED SOMEWHAT DURING THE RESCUE OF THE MEN, HE SAID, ADDING THAT GENERALLY SMALL FREIGHTERS SUCH AS THE NORDTRAMP DO NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF TAKING A DRIFTING BOAT ON BOARD.

THE FOUR FISHERMEN ARE ALL CREWMEN OF THE MARLIN, A BOAT THAT WAS WORKING WITH THE PONAPE FISHING AUTHORITY IN DEVELOPING METHODS OF COMMERCIAL FISHING WITH DORY-TYPE CRAFT.

(SALII RETURNS FROM CALIFORNIA MEETING)

SAIPAN, APRIL 12 (MNS)---THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS, SENATOR LAZARUS SALII OF PALAU, RETURNED TO SAIPAN THIS WEEK FROM CALIFORNIA, WHERE HE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MET WITH AMBASSADOR F. HAYDN WILLIAMS AND OTHER AMERICAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING ISSUES IN THE TALKS.

THE SENATOR SAID THE TALKS WERE "VERY PRODUCTIVE, AND MOVED VERY FAST." THE MEETINGS TOOK PLACE AT CARMEL, A RESORT AREA SOUTH OF SAN FRANCISCO, FROM APRIL 1 TO APRIL 5. JOINT COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMAN EKPAP SILK OF THE MARSHALLS, AND COMMITTEE MEMBER SENATOR BAILEY OLTOR OF PONAPE ALSO TOOK PART, WHILE ON THE AMERICAN SIDE DEPUTY U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS JAMES WILSON JOINED AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS, ALONG WITH OTHER AMERICAN OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH CERTAIN TECHNICAL AREAS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

"WE TOUCHED UPON TITLE FOUR (OF THE DRAFT COMPACT), WHICH IS THE TITLE ON FINANCE, AS WELL AS RANGING OVER THE ENTIRE LIST OF OTHER ISSUES WHICH STILL REMAIN TO BE SETTLED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS," THE SENATOR STATED. HE DECLINED TO BE MORE SPECIFIC ON THE TALKS UNTIL HE CAN BRIEF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE LATER THIS MONTH.

THE TWELVE MEMBER JOINT COMMITTEE WILL TRAVEL TO GUAM APRIL 19 AND 20 TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF THE GUAM POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION. SENATOR SALII SAID HE WILL BRIEF MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION ON HIS TALKS WITH AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS EITHER JUST PRIOR TO OR FOLLOWING THAT MEETING. THE GUAM COMMISSION'S CHAIRMAN, SENATOR FRANK LUJAN, HAS INVITED THE MICRONESIAN GROUP TO GUAM FOR THE INFORMAL TALKS. SENATOR SALIID ADDED.

(KUSAIE DISTRICT BILL BECOMES LAW)

SAIPAN, APRIL 12 (MNS)---THE BILL TO MAKE THE ISLAND OF KUSAIE A SEPARATE DISTRICT OFFICIALLY BECAME LAW FRIDAY (APRIL 12), WHEN DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER PETER T. COLEMAN PUT HIS SIGNATURE TO SENATE BILL 298 IN A BRIEF CEREMONY IN HIS OFFICE ON SAIPAN. THE BILL IS NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-77, A NUMBER WHICH IS SIGNIFICANT SINCE 1977 IS THE YEAR WHEN, UNDER THE NEW LAW, KUSAIE WILL OFFICIALLY ATTAIN SEPARATE DISTRICT STATUS.

THE BILL WAS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT MEASURES APPROVED BY THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA DURING ITS 1974 REGULAR SESSION ON SAIPAN, MARKING THE CULMINATION OF SEVERAL YEARS OF EFFORT BY KUSAIE'S LEADERS TO ACHIEVE SEPARATE DISTRICT STATUS. THE NEW PUBLIC LAW ALLOWS FOR JUST OVER TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF "LEAD TIME," TO ENABLE TRUST TERRITORY HEADQUARTERS AND PONAPE DISTRICT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO GRADUALLY MAKE THE TRANSITION, AS WELL AS TO ALLOW FOR CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC FACILITIES IN KUSAIE TO BRING THE ISLAND UP TO SOMETHING APPROACHING THE STANDARDS OF OTHER DISTRICTS. THESE NEW FACILITIES INCLUDE AN AIRPORT AND GREATLY IMPROVED DOCK FACILITIES, BOTH OF WHICH ARE IN THE PLANNING STAGES, AS IS A NEW KUSAIE HOSPITAL.

ONE HAND TO WITNESS THE HISTORIC SIGNING IN COLEMAN'S OFFICE WERE STRIK YOMA, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, N. NEIMAN CRALEY JR., SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, AND ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL MAMORU NAKAMURA.

THE BILL WAS ONE OF NINE WHICH WERE SIGNED BY THE DEPUTY HICOM FRIDAY AFTERNOON. ADDED TO THE BILLS WHICH HE SIGNED LATE THURSDAY (SEE FOLLOWING STORY), THEY BRING TO 31 THE MEASURES WHICH HAVE BEEN SIGNED INTO LAW THUS FAR, OF THE 46 WHICH WERE PASSED DURING THE RECENT CONGRESSIONAL SESSION.

THE OTHER NEW PUBLIC LAWS INCLUDE: AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPIRATION OF NONRESIDENT WORKER'S HIRING PERMITS FOR BUSINESSES WHEN NO NONRESIDENT WORKER HAS BEEN HIRED AND IS PRESENT IN THE TT WITHIN SIXTY DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE AGREEMENT (SB 108), NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-76; A BILL ESTABLISHING THE TRUST TERRITORY PLANNING OFFICE WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (SB 240); NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-78; A BILL TO ELIMINATE THE PRESENT TRUST TERRITORY INCOME TAX DEDUCTION FOR ANYONE EARNING MORE THAN \$5,000 A YEAR (SB 291), NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-79; AN ACT MAKING CERTAIN AMENDMENTS TO PUBLIC LAW 5-52 WHICH PROVIDES BENEFITS FOR THE RADIATION FALLOUT VICTIMS OF RONGELAP AND UTIRIK IN THE MARSHALLS (SB 340), NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-80; AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOREIGN SERVICE PREMIUM FOR MICRONESIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHOSE WORK REQUIRED THEM TO LIVE OUTSIDE THE TRUST TERRITORY (SB 289), NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-81; AND FINALLY, A BILL TO ESTABLISH A MICRONESIAN SPORTS COUNCIL, APPROPRIATING \$80,000 TO FUND THE ORGANIZATION (SB 299), WHICH BECOMES PUBLIC LAW 5-82.

THIS LATTER MEASURE IS EXPECTED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR SOME SORT OF MICRONESIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORTHCOMING SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES, WHICH ARE TO BE HELD NEXT YEAR ON GUAM.

COLEMAN ALSO SIGNED ONE PRIVATE BILL INTO LAW. IT IS A MEASURE MAKING ESTAFANIA RIOS ARCE ELIGIBLE FOR NATURALIZATION AS A CITIZEN OF THE TRUST TERRITORY (SB 58). THIS MEASURE BECOMES PRIVATE LAW 5-1, SINCE LEGISLATION WHICH APPLIES TO ONLY A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DOES NOT BECOME PART OF THE BODY OF PUBLIC LAWS IN THE TT.

(COCONUT PROCESSING BILL SIGNED)

SAIPAN, APRIL 12 (MNS)---FOUR ADDITIONAL BILLS WERE SIGNED INTO LAW LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON (APRIL 11) BY TRUST TERRITORY DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER PETER T. COLEMAN. THE DEPUTY HICOM ALSO DISAPPROVED ONE BILL THURSDAY, RETURNING IT TO THE CONGRESS, THE FIFTH BILL TO BE VOTED.

ONE OF THE BILLS SIGNED IS AMONG THE MAJOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEASURES TO BE PASSED BY THE CONGRESS THIS YEAR.

IT IS AN ACT WHICH ESTABLISHES A GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY TO ENGAGE IN THE BUSINESS OF PROCESSING, MANUFACTURING AND SELLING PRODUCTS DERIVED FROM THE COCONUT TREE, AND APPROPRIATING \$300,000 FOR THIS PURPOSE (HB 49). THE BILL IS NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-72. ALSO SIGNED WAS AN APPROPRIATION OF \$80,000 FOR THE DISTRICT FISHING AUTHORITIES (HB 226), BECOMING PUBLIC LAW 5-73; A BILL TO REDESIGNATE AND RENUMBER CERTAIN SECTIONS OF PUBLIC LAW 4C-68 TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENTS IN THIS MARSHALL ISLANDS FUNDING LAW THAT THE NITIJELA PROVIDE MATCHING FUNDS (HB 293), NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-74; AND A BILL PERMITTING THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT TO GRANT THE USE OF PUBLIC LAND ON PAGAN ISLAND AND IN THE KAGMAN AND MARPI AREAS OF SAIPAN IN THE MARIANAS FOR SUCH PUBLIC PURPOSES AS THE ERECTION OF SCHOOLS, STORES, CHURCHES AND HOTELS (HB 334), WHICH IS NOW PUBLIC LAW 5-75.

THE DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOUND IT NECESSARY TO DISAPPROVE A BILL THAT WOULD HAVE EXEMPTED NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM THE PAYMENT OF GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUEL EXCISE TAXES (HB 277). IN HIS VETO MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS LEADERSHIP, COLEMAN SAID A PORTION OF THE BILL WAS "TOO BROAD," AND COULD BE CONSTRUED TO APPLY TO PRIVATE, PROFITMAKING ORGANIZATIONS WHICH COULD PROVIDE SOME VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THEIR BUSINESS. HE ALSO SAID THERE ARE, AT PRESENT, NO EXEMPTIONS TO THESE GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUEL TAXES AND, "SINCE MOST OF THE NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE TRUST TERRITORY ARE OPERATED BY RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY THE GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUEL BEING USED FOR SCHOOL OPERATIONS AS OPPOSED TO OTHER ACTIVITIES."

(SUIT FILED AGAINST SANTOS)

SAIPAN, APRIL 11 (MNS)---A CIVIL ACTION WAS FILED THURSDAY (APRIL 11) IN TRUST TERRITORY HIGH COURT ON SAIPAN AGAINST MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE PRESIDENT VICENTE N. SANTOS. THE SUIT, BROUGHT BY THE TT GOVERNMENT, SEEKS TO RECOVER SOME \$35,346 IN FUNDS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT ALLEGES WERE MISAPPROPRIATED BY SANTOS AND EITHER CONVERTED TO HIS OWN USE OR PAID TO OTHERS WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION. THE SUIT IS NOT A CRIMINAL ACTION, AND NO CRIMINAL CHARGES HAVE BEEN FILED AGAINST SANTOS.

THE CIVIC ACTION GROWS OUT OF AN AUDIT OF THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE WHICH WAS CONDUCTED IN JULY AND AUGUST, 1972, WHEREIN IT WAS FIRST LEARNED BY THE GOVERNMENT THAT, IN THE WORDS OF THE COMPLAINT, "... DEFENDANT WAS ENGAGED IN A CONTINUING SCHEME, DESIGN AND PLAN OF ACTION WHICH RESULTED IN THE IMPROPER AND UNAUTHORIZED PAYMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS TO DEFENDANT AND OTHERS IN EXCESS OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS, WHICH PLAINTIFF SEEKS TO RECOVER HEREIN." THE COMPLAINT EXPLAINS THAT THE EXACT AMOUNT OF THE CLAIM IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WITH ACCURACY PENDING FURTHER INVESTIGATION, BUT SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS IN THE SUIT TOTAL MORE THAN \$35,000 WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS SEEKING TO RECOVER FROM
SANTOS

SPECIFICALLY, THE COMPLAINT CHARGES THAT ALTHOUGH HE KNEW THAT OVERTIME PAYMENTS WERE NOT AUTHORIZED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, SANTOS "... REPRESENTED THAT HE HAD WORKED OVERTIME AND ORDERED THAT HE BE PAID FOR THE SAME. UPON DEFENDANT'S OWN ORDERS TO THE DISTRICT TREASURER, DEFENDANT WAS PAID THE SUM OF NINE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND SIXTY-EIGHT CENTS FOR ALLEGED OVERTIME WORKED FROM APRIL 1, 1970 THROUGH APRIL 1, 1972." THE COMPLAINT FURTHER STATES THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SANTOS "... DID NOT WORK THE HOURS OF OVERTIME FOR WHICH HE DEMANDED PAYMENT AND THAT SUCH DEMANDS ARE FALSE, FRAUDULENT AND WERE MADE WITH THE INTENTION TO APPROPRIATE AND CONVERT PUBLIC FUNDS TO DEFENDANTS OWN USE."

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THE COMPLAINT ALSO CHARGES THAT ALTHOUGH SANTOS WAS ALLOWED AND AUTHORIZED TO EXPEND A MAXIMUM OF 500 DOLLARS A YEAR FOR "OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION EXPENSES," HE "...DEMANDED THE SUM OF EIGHTEEN THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED THIRTY ONE DOLLARS AND SIXTY FIVE CENTS AS OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION AND EXPENSES AND WAS PAID THAT AMOUNT BY THE DISTRICT TREASURER," THE GOVERNMENT ALLEGES THAT THIS DEMAND FOR PAYMENT WAS "FRAUDULENT AND WITH THE INTENT TO CONVERT PUBLIC FUNDS TO DEFENDANT'S OWN USE., THE COMPLAINT FURHTER ALLEGES THAT THE FUNDS WERE NOT EXPENDED FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES, AND SEEKS TO HAVE AN ACCOUNTING OF ALL SUCH EXPENDITURES.

OTHER, SMALLER CLAIMS ARE MADE IN SEPARATE COUNTS OF THE COMPLAINT, INCLUDING A CHARGE THAT SANTOS AUTHORIZED THE PAYMENT OF \$2,500 TO WILLIAM NABORS, COUNSEL TO THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, AND THAT "... SUCH PAYMENTS WERE NOT AUTHORIZED OR EARNED BY THE SAID WILLIAM NABORS AND THAT DEFENDANT (SANTOS) WAS FULLY AWARE OF HIS LACK OF AUTHORITY TO PAY OR CAUSE SUCH PAYMENTS TO BE MADE.

SEVERAL OF THE ADDITIONAL CHARGES DEAL WITH OVERPAYMENT OF PER DIEM OR TRAVEL EXPENSES.

A SUMMONS WAS OFFICIALLY SERVED ON SANTOS ON SAIPAN THURSDAY, IN WHICH HE WAS GIVEN 20 DAYS TO ANSWER THE COMPLAINT. THE COMPLAINT WAS FILED BY PONAPE DISTRICT ATTORNEY MINOR POUNDS, ACTING AS COUNSEL FOR THE TT GOVERNMENT.

MNS WAS NOT ABLE TO CONTACT PRESIDENT SANTOS, EITHER THURSDAY AFTERNOON OR FRIDAY TO OBTAIN HIS COMMENTS ON THE LEGAL ACTION TAKEN AGAINST HIM. HWEVER ATTORNEY WILLIAM NABORS, CONTACTED BY ANOTHER REPORTER THURSDAY, INDICATED THAT HE HAD NO COMMENT TO MAKE ON THE SUIT AT THE TIME. NABORS WAS ON GUAM FRIDAY AND COULD NOT BE REACHED.

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