

(EDUCATION BILL DISAPPROVED)

SAIPAN, MAY 3 (MNS)---A BILL THAT WOULD HAVE PROVIDED FOR THE EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (SB 242) HAS BEEN DISAPPROVED BY HIGH COMMISSIONER EDWARD E. JOHNSTON, IN THE LATEST ACTION TAKEN ON BILLS PASSED DURING THE 1974 REGULAR SESSION OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA. OF THE 46 BILLS WHICH WERE PASSED DURING THAT SESSION, EIGHT HAVE NOW BEEN VETOED, 35 APPROVED, AND THREE ARE STILL AWAITING ACTION.

IN A LETTER TO THE CONGRESS LEADERSHIP, THE HICOM SAID HE "GREATLY REGRETS" THE NECESSITY OF DISAPPROVING THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN LEGISLATION, SINCE THE ADMINISTRATION "STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE OBJECTIVES OF PROVIDING FOR THE EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN."

"MY DECISION TO DISAPPROVE THIS LEGISLATION," HE CONTINUED, "WAS MADE ONLY AFTER MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND REVIEW, AND MY DECISION WAS BASED ON LARGE PART ON THE OBJECTIONS RELAYED TO ME BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES--BOTH MICRONESIAN CITIZENS.

"THERE IS LITTLE DISAGREEMENT WITH THE POLICY TO PROVIDE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN IN THE TRUST TERRITORY. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISAGREEMENT AS TO THE BEST PROCEDURE. SINCE ANY PROGRAM WILL REQUIRE POSITIVE ACTION BY THE MICRONESIAN BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION ASSISTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES, THE VIEWS OF THESE AGENCIES MUST BE GIVEN GREAT WEIGHT. IT APPEARS THAT EACH HAS SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS PARTICULAR BILL AND THEY HAVE RECOMMENDED AGAINST IT BECOMING LAW."

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER POINTED OUT THAT SENATE BILL 242 WOULD "USURP" THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF BOTH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATION DIRECTOR. "THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION," HE STATED IN HIS LETTER, "SUBMITTED TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND THE CONGRESS A MORE REALISTIC PROPOSAL TO MEET THE NEED OF THESE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN. UNFORTUNATELY THAT PROPOSAL WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY THE CONGRESS, AND WE CANNOT ACCEPT SENATE BILL 242, AS PASSED, AS THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION."

HE SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL PROPOSE AGAIN A PLAN TO MEET THE NEED IN THE AREA OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN FOR THE NEXT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS, AND ASSURED THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL COOPERATE FULLY IN GETTING ACCEPTABLE LEGISLATION PREPARED AND READY FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CONGRESS.

HIGH COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON IS EXPECTED TO ACT ON THE FINAL THREE BILLS BEFORE THE END OF THE NEXT WEEK.

(DISTAD CONFERENCE SET)

SAIPAN, MAY 3 (MNS)---THE NEXT SIMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF TRUST TERRITORY DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS WILL BE HELD IN TRUK DISTRICT, FROM MAY 13 TO 17, ACCORDING TO SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR DISTRICT AFFAIRS J. BOYD MACKENZIE.

THE SIX DISTADS MEET TWICE A YEAR TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL CONCERN AND LEARN ABOUT NEW GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT THEIR AREAS. ONE OF THE MEETINGS IS HELD ON SAIPAN, AND THE OTHER IN ONE OF THE OTHER FIVE DISTRICTS. THE DISTADS LAST MET IN NOVEMBER ON SAIPAN.

MACKENZIE SAID MAJOR TOPICS LIKELY TO BE ON THE AGENDA FOR THE TRUK MEETING INCLUDE BUDGET PROBLEMS AND THE OVERALL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN THE TT: THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES IN JUNE AND CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA MEMBERS IN NOVEMBER; BOATING SAFETY, WHICH IS BECOMING AN INCREASING CONCERN WITH THE RISING NUMBER OF MISSING SMALL BOATS REPORTED; AND THE CONTINUING PROBLEM OF SEA TRANSPORTATION IN THE TT.

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EXPECTED TO ATTEND THE MEETING FROM TT HEADQUARTERS ARE HIGH COMMISSIONER EDWARD E. JOHNSTON, MACKENZIE, PROGRAM AND BUDGET OFFICER WILLIAM D. OYLER, AND SPECIAL CONSULTANT DWIGHT HEINE. OTHER OFFICIALS MAY ALSO BE SCHEDULED TO ATTEND AS THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING IS FINALIZED.

THE SIX DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS ARE: FRANCISCO C. ADA, MARIANAS; THOMAS O. REMENGESAU, PALAU; LEONARD AGUIGUI, YAP; LEO A. FALCAM, PONAPE; OSCAR DEBRUM, MARSHALLS; AND JUAN SABLAN OF TRUK, HOST DISTAD FOR THE MEETING.

(TRUK PHOTO SEMINAR)

TRUK, MAY 3, (MNS)---AN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY SEMINAR IS TO BE HELD IN TRUK DISTRICT THIS SUMMER IN CONJUNCTION WITH A TOUR OF TRUK AND PONAPE DISTRICTS FOR DIVERS.

PLANS FOR THE SEMINAR WERE ANNOUNCED BY TOM JACOBUS, PRESIDENT OF INNERSPACE ADVENTURES, A TOUR COMPANY IN HAWAII, AND ERNIE BROOKS, PRESIDENT OF THE BROOKS INSTITUTE OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA. THE TOUR AND SEMINAR WILL TAKE PALCE FROM JULY 23 TOAUGUST 3.

ACCORDING TO THE PROMOTERS, THE TOUR IS OPEN TO PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH ALL LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE. "OVER-THRE-SHOULDER" INSTRUCTION AND HINTS WILL BE GIVEN DURING THE DAY AT THE DIVE SITES, AND IN THE EVENINGS BROOKS WILL CONDUCT A SERIES OF LECTURES ON AVAILABLE LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY, FLASH TECHNIQUES, AND FUNDAMENTALS USEFUL TO THE UNDERWATER OR LAND PHOTOGRAPHER. HE WILL ALSO CRITIQUE THE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINAR, WHICH THEY WILL PROCESS THEMSELVES.

THE TRIP WILL START IN PONAPE AND CONCLUDE IN TRUK, WHERE THE UNDERWATER WRECKS OF WORLD WAR TWO HAVE BECOME A MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR DIVERS IN RECENT YEARS.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: BECAUSE OF TROPICAL STORM CARLA, WHICH WAS HEADED TOWARD SAIPAN FRIDAY, GOVERNMENT WORKERS WERE DISMISSED FROM WORK EARLY. THUS THIS MICRONESIAN NEWS SERVICE DISPATCH IS A BRIEF ONE. THE STORM DID NOT, AS OF NOON FRIDAY, APPEAR TO BE VERY SEVERE, BUT FULL PRECAUTIONS WERE NEVERTHELESS BEING TAKEN.)