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SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 3 (MNS) --- CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SENATE PRESIDENT TOSIMO NAKAYAMA SAID LAST WEEK THAT THE CONSTITUTION WHICH WILL BE DRAFTED BY DELEGATES REPRESENTING THE SIX DISTRICTS OF MICRONESIA SHOULD BE MADE APPLICABLE TO ALL DISTRICTS. HE ADDED THAT ALL DISTRICTS SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REJECT BOTH THE CONSTITUTION AND THE FREE ASSOCIATION PACKAGE.

SPEAKING ON THE EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE PROGRAM "DIALOGUE FOR MICRONESIA," THE SENATE PRESIDENT STATED THAT THE MOST DIFFICULT ISSUE FACING THE PEOPLE MEETING IN THE CONVENTION WILL PROBABLY BE THE ALLOCATION OF POWER BETWEEN THE FEDERAL AND THE DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS.

CONCERNING THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MARIANAS IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, THE PRE-CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN INDICATED THAT HE FEELS THE MARIANAS SHOULD PARTICIPATE BOTH IN THE PRE-CONVENTION MEETING AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ITSELF. "IT WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL," HE SAID. "THE ONLY ADVERSE EFFECT WOULD BE IF THE MARIANAS WITHDREW FROM THE CONVENTION."

REGARDING NEWSPAPER REPORTS ABOUT A DRAFT CONSTITUTION DRAWN AT THE REQUEST OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS BY A WASHINGTON LEGAL FIRM, THE PRE-CONVENTION CHAIRMAN INDICATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME DISCUSSION ABOUT IT IN THE MEETING BUT THAT THERE WAS NO PROBLEM BECAUSE THE DRAFT WAS JUST ONE OF SEVERAL WHICH ARE CIRCULATING AROUND, AND THESE ARE "JUST WORKING PAPERS," NOT OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

THE PRE-CONVENTION COMMITTEE, HE SAID, IS TRAVELLING THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICTS THIS MONTH TO FIND OUT WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT. NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET FOR THE ACTUAL CONVENTION TO TAKE PLACE. NAKAYAMA SAID HE HAS RECEIVED REQUESTS FROM TWO DISTRICTS INDICATING A PREFERENCE FOR A DATE AFTER THE SUMMER OF 1975.

THE TRUKESSE SENATOR, IN REPOSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE ABSENCE OF A MARSHALLS REPRESENTATIVE IN THE PRE-CONVENTION COMMITTEE MEETING, SAID THAT HE EXPRESSED HOPE THEY WOULD GET THEMSELVES ORGANIZED IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND ATTEND FUTURE MEETINGS. AS TO THE EFFECT OF THEIR ABSENCE, HE SAID THAT THE DECISIONS BEING MADE AT PRESENT ARE NON-CONTROVERSIAL AND ARE BEING MADE FOR THE GOOD OF ALL DISTRICTS.

SENATOR NAKAYAMA WAS INTERVIEWED BY A PANEL CONSISTING OF MS. CHRISTINA SMITH, MICRONESIAN INDEPENDENT REPORTER BASED ON SAIPAN; RAY ULUCHONG, ESS TASK FORCE MEMBER; AND FRANK ROSARIO OF THE MICRONESIAN NEWS SERVICE.

(REVENUE SHARING NOW LAW)

SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 3 (MNS) --- THE CONCEPT OF REVENUE SHARING, WHICH PROMPTED CONSIDERABLE DEBATE DURING SEVERAL RECENT SESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, HAS NOW BECOME LAW.

DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER PETER T. COLEMAN HAS SIGNED SENATE BILL 370, A MEASURE WHICH PROVIDES THAT TWENTY PER CENT OF ALL TAXES COLLECTED UNDER THE TERRITORY'S INCOME TAX LAW WILL BE PAID INTO THE TREASURY OF THE DISTRICT GOVERNMENT WHEREIN THE TAXES WERE COLLECTED, FOR APPROPRIATION BY THAT DISTRICT'S LEGISLATURE, BEGINNING JULY 1, 1975. THE BILL HAS NOW BECOME PUBLIC LAW 5-91.

THE STRUGGLE OVER REVENUE SHARING GOES BACK TO 1972, WHEN MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN HERMAN GUERRERO FIRST INTRODUCED A BILL PROVIDING FOR A SHARING OF TAX REVENUE IN THE CONGRESS. ALL REVENUE COLLECTED UNDER THE TAX LAW NOW GOES TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA FOR ALLOCATION. VARIOUS VERSIONS OF THE BILL WERE

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SUBSEQUENTLY DISCUSSED, BUT THE MEASURES ALWAYS FAILED TO PASS, GENERALLY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHERE THE DIVISIONS OVER THE CONCEPT RAN DEEP.

FINALLY, DURING THE RECENT SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONGRESS ON SAIPAN, A BILL INTRODUCED BY SENATOR AMBILOS IEHSI (PONAPE) PASSED THE SENATE, AND IN THE HOUSE AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION IT WAS ALSO PASSED. WHEN A CONFERENCE COMMITTEE OF THE TWO HOUSES WORKED OUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO OVER THE BILL, THE MEASURE WAS ULTIMATELY ADOPTED AND SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. IT DID NOT SATISFY SOME MEMBERS OF THE MARSHALLS DELEGATION, WHO HELD OUT FOR A FIFTY PER CENT SHARE FOR THE DISTRICTS, BUT OTHER CONGRESSMEN EXPRESSED THE FEELING THAT TWENTY PER CENT WAS "BETER THAN NOTHING," AND A MAJORITY OF BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE WENT ALONG.

THE NEW LAW WILL MEAN THAT, BEGINNING WITH FISCAL YEAR 1976, THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA WILL HAVE LESS MONEY TO APPROPRIATE, WHILE THE DISTRICT LEGALATURE WILL HAVE MORE, IN PROPORTION ACCORDING TO THE AMOUNT OF TAX REVENUE COLLECTED IN EACH DISTRICT. THE MARSHALL ISLANDS DISTRICT, WHICH CONTRIBUTES THE MOST TAX REVENUE, STANDS TO GAIN THE MOST FROM ANY REVENUE SHARING LEGISLATION. AND ITS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, THE NITIJELA, HAD STRONGLY FAVORED THE CONCEPT.

DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER COLEMAN HAS ALSO SIGNED INTO LAW A BILL APPROPRIATING \$72,000 TO ENABLE THE DELEGATES TO THE MICRONESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FROM EACH DISTRICT TO TRAVEL TO MEET WITH THEIR CONSTITUENTS IN PREPARATION FOR THE CONVENTION (SB 371). THE BILL HAS NOW BECOME PUBLIC LAW 5-92.

THREE OF THE 23 BILLS PASSED DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION HAVE NOW BEEN SIGNED INTO LAW.

(HICOM'S OFFICE RECEIVES FINAL BILLS)

SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 3 (MNS)---THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER RECEIVED TUESDAY (SEPT. 3) THE FINAL TWO BILLS TO BE OFFICIALLY TRANSMITTED FROM THE SEPCIAL SESSION OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, HELD THIS SUMMER ON SAIPAN. ALL 23 BILLS PASSED DURING THAT SESSION ARE NOW EITHER UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE HICOM, OR HAVE BEEN SIGNED INTO LAW (SEE PREVIOUS STORY).

RECEIVED THIS WEEK WERE THE NEW TRUST TERRITORY DRUG LAW, PROVIDING CONTROLS ON CERTAIN HARMFUL SUBSTANCES (HB 359), AND A MEASURE APPROPRIATING \$102,000 FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC PURCHASES AND PROJECTS ON KUSAIE ISLAND, PONAPE DISTRICT (HB 325).

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS THIRTY DAYS, OR UNTIL THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, TO TAKE ACTION ON THESE TWO BILLS.

(SOCIAL SECURITY ANNIVERSARY)

SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 3 (MNS)---THE TRUST TERRITORY SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM RECENTLY CELEBRATED ITS SIXTH ANNIVERSARY. THE PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1968, AND IN 1969, THE FIRST BENEFIT CHECK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25.64 WAS ISSUED, ACCORDING TO SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATOR YOSIWO P. GEORGE.

SINCE THAT TIME, THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES AND THE AMOUNT OF MONTHLY BENEFITS HAVE GROWN AT AN ACCELERATED RATE, GEORGE REPORTS. PRESENTLY 322 FAMILIES THROUGHOUT THE SIX DISTRICTS ARE RECEIVING PENSIONS TOTALLING MORE THAN \$10,000 A MONTH, INCLUDING 178 RECEIVING SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS, 137 RETIREES, AND SEVEN WITH DISABILITIES.

SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS PLUS INTEREST EARNED ON INVESTMENT HAVE SURPASSED THE \$2.5 MILLION MARK, GEORGE SAID THIS WEEK.

HE ADDED THAT BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 1979 CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES WILL BE INCREASED FROM ONE PERCENT TO TWO PERCENT.