

(ALL USERS PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(BILL WOULD REDUCE FOOD TAXES)

SAIPAN, JANUARY 16 (CONGRESS RELEASE)---CITING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS AN "ECONOMIC CRISIS" TODAY IN MICRONESIA, MARSHALLS REPRESENTATIVE EKPAP SILK INTRODUCED A MEASURE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE WEDNESDAY (JAN. 16) THAT PROPOSES TO REPEAL THE IMPORT TAX ON ALL ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS IMPORTED INTO THE TRUST TERRITORY.

IN A STATEMENT WHICH HE PLACED INTO THE HOUSE JOURNAL BEFORE INTRODUCING THE MEASURE, SILK TOLD THE HOUSE MEMBERSHIP OF DRASTIC INCREASES IN SHIPPING AND FUEL COST, WHICH HE SAID WERE IMPOSING AN UNFAIR BURDEN ON MICRONESIA'S CONSUMERS.

"TODAY THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA FACE AN ECONOMIC CRISIS THAT, IN MY OPINION, THEY HAVE NEVER FACED BEFORE. I AM REFERRING PARTICULARLY TO THE INCREDIBLY RAPID RISE IN GOOD COSTS THAT--IN MY DISTRICT FOR EXAMPLE--RISE ALMOST WEEKLY, OR AFTER EVERY VISIT OF TRANSPACIFIC LINES SHIP." HE TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES THAT REVISIONS SHOULD BE MADE IN THE TAXING SYSTEM FOR IMPORTS TO MAKE IT MORE EQUITABLE, AND EASE THE BURDEN FOR THE AVERAGE CONSUMER IN MICRONESIA.

SILK SAID IN RECENT WEEKS THE PRICE OF RICE HAS RISEN FROM \$5.75 TO \$8.00 PER 25 LB. BAG, THAT PRICES WILL MOST LIKELY CONTINUE TO RISE, AND ALL THE WHILE CONSUMERS IN THE OTHER ISLANDS WILL CONTINUE TO PAY THE HIGHEST PRICES FOR IMPORTED GOODS.

SILK PUT PART OF THE BLAME FOR THE SITUATION ON THE UNITED STATES AS ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY OF MICRONESIA.

"IF THE UNITED STATES HAD TAKEN SERIOUSLY ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MICRONESIA AS A DEVELOPING NATION, THEN IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO INSURE THE STEADY GROWTH OF OUR ECONOMY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE U.S. HAS FAILED TO DO THIS; IT TREATS MICRONESIA AS ONE OF ITS STATES OR POSSESSIONS ON ONE HAND, BUT DIFFERENTLY ON THE OTHER HAND. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN IT COMES TO THE MATTER OF UNITED STATES SECURITY INTERESTS, I AM SURE THAT KWAJALEIN WILL SUFFER LESS OF A SHORTAGE OF FUEL THAN THE REST OF MICRONESIA."

THE HOUSE FLOOR LEADER SAID IT WOULD BE "IRRESPONSIBLE" FOR HIM TO LAY THE ENTIRE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUCH PRICE INCREASES ON SHIPPING COSTS OR THE ENERGY CRISIS WHICH HAS RESULTED IN REDUCED FUEL ALLOCATIONS IN THE DISTRICTS. HE SAID THE CONGRESS SHOULD ALSO BE BLAMED, ALONG WITH THE UNITED STATES, THE OIL AND SHIPPING COMPANIES, FOR NOT HAVING THE FORESIGHT TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE CONSUMER.

CONGRESSMAN SILK DESCRIBED HIS BILL AS "SOMETHING CONCRETE" THE CONGRESS CAN DO AS A FIRST STEP TO HELP EASE THE BURDEN ON MICRONESIA'S CONSUMERS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE

CONGRESS ALSO TAKE ACTION CONCERNING SHIPPING AND ENERGY PROBLEMS DURING THE CURRENT SESSION.

"FOR THE PAST YEAR OR SO WE HAVE WATCHED THE STEADY RISE IN THE COST OF ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS RICE, FLOUR, SUGAR, MILK, OR ECETERA, AND WE HAVE DONE VERY LITTLE TO STOP THIS TREND," HE SAID. "NOW IT APPEARS THAT, AS USUAL, WE WILL ACT AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR."

(CONGRESS--THIRD DAY)

SAIPAN, JAN. 16 (MNS)---FLOOR ACTION CONTINUED LIGHT WEDNESDAY (JAN. 16) AS THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA MOVED THROUGH THE THIRD DAY OF ITS CURRENT SESSION ON SAIPAN. SEVERAL NEW PIECES OF LEGISLATION WERE ADDED TO THOSE ALREADY PENDING FROM THE PREVIOUS SESSION, AS THE NUMBER OF "ACTIVE" BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS IN THE FIFTH CONGRESS APPROACHES THE 400 MARK.

AMONG THE NEWLY-INTRODUCED BILLS IS ONE WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE THE IMPORT TAXES ON FOODSTUFFS, WHILE INCREASING TAXES ON SUCH ITEMS AS BEER, WINE AND OTHER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES (HB 209). THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL, BY REPRESENTATIVE EKPAP SILK (MARSHALLS), WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A SPEECH WHICH THE HOUSE FLOOR LEADER INSERTED IN THE OFFICIAL RECORD (SEE PREVIOUS STORY).

ALSO INTRODUCED DURING THE WEDNESDAY HOUSE SESSION WAS A BILL THAT WOULD CREATE A MICRONESIAN CLAIMS GROUP WHICH WOULD "VIGOROUSLY SEEK" ADDITIONAL WAR AND POST-WAR AND PRE-WAR CLAIMS COMPENSATION FROM BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN, ABOVE WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVIDED UNDER THE 1969 AGREEMENT ON WAR CLAIMS BETWEEN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES (HB208).

NEW BILLS INTRODUCED TUESDAY IN THE HOUSE INCLUDED A SIMILAR MEASURE THAT WOULD CREATE A JOINT COMMITTEE ON CLAIMS AGAINST JAPAN (HB 207). AND A BILL APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPLEMENT THE OPERATION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL IN TRUK DISTRICT (HB 208).

NO FINAL ACTION WAS TAKEN ON ANY BILLS OR RESOLUTIONS IN EITHER THE HOUSE OR THE SENATE WEDNESDAY. NEW BILLS OFFERED FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE INCLUDE: A MEASURE THAT WOULD CREAT A TRUST TERRITORY PORT AUTHORITY (SB 188); A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DUTY FREE RETAIL CONCESSIONS IN OFFICIAL PORTS OF ENTRY TO THE TT (SB 189); A BILL RELATING TO ADVICE AND CONSENT (SB 186); AND A BILL THAT WOULD APPROPRIATE \$77,000 DOLLARS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF NAVIGATIONAL LIGHTS IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS FOR USE BY AIR TRAFFIC (SB 187). THE LATTER TWO MEASURES HAD BEEN INTRODUCED TUESDAY, AND WERE ASSIGNED TO COMMITTEES ON WEDNESDAY.

ALSO RECEIVING COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AT THE WEDNESDAY SESSION WERE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS: A MEASURE URGING THE APPOINTMENT OF A MICRONESIAN CITIZEN TO FILL THE NEXT VACANCY ON THE TRUST TERRITORY HIGH COURT (SJR 76); A JOINT RESOLUTION ASKING AIR MICRONESIA TO REDUCE ITS FREIGHT RATE ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (SJR 77); AND A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (TESL) PROGRAM IN THE TRUST TERRITORY (SR 7).

THERE WERE A NUMBER OF PLANNING SESSIONS AND MEETINGS OF THE VARIOUS HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEES AS THE SESSION PROGRESSED THIS WEEK, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS ON LEGISLATION ARE ALREADY IN VARIOUS STAGES OF PREPARATION, PROMISING MORE FLOOR ACTION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THE TWO HOUSES ARE IN RECESS UNTIL TEN THURSDAY MORNING, WHICH WILL BE THE FOURTH DAY OF THE 50-DAY SESSION.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: IN THE MNS DISPATCHES OF MONDAY AND TUESDAY, JAN. 08 AND 15, THE STORIES RELATING TO THE AIRPLANE ACCIDENT ON GOAT ISLAND INCORRECTLY IDENTIFIED RICARDO BORDALLO OF GUAM AS A "GUAM SENATOR." IF ANY FURTHER USE IS TO BE MADE OF THESE STORIES, BORDALLO SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AS A GUAM BUSINESSMAN." IT IS HIS BROTHER, PAUL, WHO IS A SENATOR IN THE GUAM LEGISLATURE. MNS REGRETS THIS ERROR.)

(MOSES AND NIMWES TO E-W CENTER PROJECT)

SAIPAN, JAN. 16 (MNS)---TRUK DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION CHUTOMO NIMWES AND AUGUSTINE H. MOSES, HEADQUARTERS CO-ORDINATOR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION, HAVE BEEN SELECTED FROM THE TRUST TERRITORY TO PARTICIPATE IN AN "OCEANIA TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT" AT THE EAST-WEST CENTER IN HONOLULU, HAWAII.

THE THREE-MONTH PROJECT STARTS IN FEBRUARY AND RUNS THROUGH MAY. THIS SPECIAL PROJECT IS FINANCED BY THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, ADMINISTERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, AND IMPLEMENTED BY THE CULTURE LEARNING INSTITUTE OF THE EAST-WEST CENTER.

MISS MARY VANCE TRENT, STATE DEPARTMENT LIAISON OFFICER FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS, WHO ALSO HELPED IN COORDINATING THE PROGRAM, SAID: "THE PROJECT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A 'PACIFIC COMMUNITY' FEELING. "I THINK THAT MICRONESIANS, ESPECIALLY THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND OLDER PUPILS, WOULD VERY MUCH WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING AND HOSTING TEACHERS FROM THE NON-U.S. PACIFIC ISLANDS," MISS TRENT SAID.

ACCORDING TO MISS TRENT, THE CONCEPT BEHIND THE PROGRAM IS TO GIVE TEACHERS IN THE PACIFIC AREAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT SCHOOLS IN AREAS WHICH HAVE DEVELOPED AN AMERICAN-ORIENTED SYSTEM OF EDUCATION, NAMELY, AMERICAN SAMOA, MICRONESIA AND GUAM.

WITH RESPECT TO THE TECHNICALITIES OF TRUST TERRITORY PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT, MISS TRENT SAID "THE SITUATION APPEARS TO BE A LITTLE COMPLICATED." SHE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ON THE BASIS OF HER FAIRLY BRIEF EXPERIENCE IN THE AREA, "THE POLICY OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN TO TRAIN AND EMPLOY INCREASING NUMBERS OF MICRONESIAN TEACHERS SO THAT THE SCHOOL, WHILE BASED ON U.S. SYSTEM, ARE INCREASINGLY MICRONESIANIZED."

THE TWO GRANTEES FROM THE TRUST TERRITORY WERE SELECTED FROM AMONG SEVERAL OTHER NOMINEES TO ATTEND THE SPECIAL PROJECT ALONG WITH PARTICIPANTS FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA, TONGA AND FIJI.

(WILLIAMS RECEIVES INCENTIVE AWARD)

PALAU, JAN. 16 (MNS)---DAVID D. WILLIAMS OF THE DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICE IN PALAU, WHO WAS TEMPORARILY ASSIGNED AS CENSUS SUPERVISOR FOR PALAU, HAS RECEIVED A TRUST TERRITORY HEADQUARTERS INCENTIVE AWARD FOR HIS PERFORMANCE IN ADMINISTERING AND SUPERVISING THE 1973 CENSUS PROGRAM IN PALAU DISTRICT, ACCORDING TO PALAU PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER DAVID N3IRMIDOL.

PALAU DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR THOMAS O. REMENGESAU, IN PRESENTING THE \$250 CASH AWARD TO WILLIAMS, SAID THAT BECAUSE OF WILLIAMS' OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE PALAU DISTRICT WAS THE FIRST DISTRICT TO SUBMIT ALL CENSUS DATA TO THE HEADQUARTERS AND AS A RESULT PALAU EARNED RECOGNITION AS THE FIRST DISTRICT TO REACH THE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT GOAL OF COMPLETING ITS PROGRAM.

DISTAD REMENGESAU ALSO SAID THAT THE CENSUS PROGRAM IS AN INDISPENSIBLE PROGRAM IN THAT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TOGETHER WITH THE ADMINISTRATION WILL UTILIZE THE DATA COLLECTED AND COLLATED FOR MULTIPLE USES FOR DIRECT BENEFIT OF ALL MICRONESIANS.

"CENSUS SUPERVISOR WILLIAMS' EFFORT IN CARRYING OUT THE PALAU DISTRICT CENSUS PROGRAM RATHER SUPERBLY REFLECTS HIS DEVOTION TO THE WELFARE OF PALAU AND MICRONESIA," REMENGESAU STATED.

THE DISTAD ADDED THAT BECAUSE OF WILLIAMS' EFFORT, A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY WAS SAVED BY RELEASING MORE THAN HALF OF THE NUMBER OF THE CENSUS EMPLOYEES WHO WERE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES TO THEIR RESPECTIVE JOBS LEAVING HALF THE MANPOWER TO MAN THE DIFFICULT TASK OF CHECKING THE VARIOUS ENUMERATED AREAS IN THE PALAU DISTRICT.

REMENGESAU CONCLUDED HIS REMARKS BY SAYING THAT THE \$250 CASH AWARD WILLIAMS RECEIVED IS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CASH AWARDS THAT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS APPROVED.

ASKED HOW HE FEELS IN RECEIVING THE AWARD, WILLIAMS, STATED, "WHILE THE INCENTIVE AWARDS COMMITTEE HAS RECOGNIZED THE PERFORMANCE THAT I DISPLAYED IT MUST BE BORNE IN EVERYONE'S MIND THAT WITHOUT THE UNTIRING AND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF THOSE ASSISTANT SUPERVISORS AND ENUMERATORS WHO EQUALLY EXERTED HERCULEAN EFFORTS IN TRYING TO MEET THE DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF THE COLLECTED DATA, THE COMPLETION OF THE PALAU DISTRICT CENSUS PROGRAM WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE."

IN ADDITION TO DISTAD REMENGESAU, WHO PRESENTED THE AWARD TO WILLIAMS, SEVERAL OTHER PALAU DIGNITARIES WITNESSED THE SPECIAL CEREMONY INCLUDING DEPUTY DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR HARUO I. REMILIK, CHAIRMAN OF THE PALAU DISTRICT INCENTIVE AWARDS COMMITTEE; MITSUO SOLANG, PALAU DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS; AND YOICHI K. RENGIL, DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICER.