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(CONGRESS-TWELFTH DAY)

SAIPAN, JAN. 25 (MNS)---THREE SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE HIGHLIGHTED FLOOR ACTIVITY ON THE TWELFTH DAY OF THE CURRENT REGULAR SESSION OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA ON SAIPAN FRIDAY (JAN.25). (SEE FOLLOWING STORY). AS THE LAWMAKERS MOVED THROUGH THE END OF THE SESSION'S SECOND WEEK, THE FOCUS OF ACTIVITY SHIFTED INCREASINGLY TO THE COMMITTEES, WITH NUMEROUS PUBLIC HEARING ON TAP WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, MANY OF THEM TO CONSIDER MAJOR PIECES OF LEGISLATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, MICRONESIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WILL BE THE PRIMARY CONSIDERATION NEXT WEEK WHEN THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT HOLDS A HEARING INTO BILLS THAT WOULD ESTABLISH A JOINT ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (SB 46), AND THAT WOULD CREATE A MICRONESIAN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (SB 111). THAT HEARING WILL TAKE PLACE MONDAY, JANUARY 28 AT ONE IN THE AFTERNOON.

IN THE HOUSE, THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HAS SCHEDULED A PUBLIC HEARING FOR SATURDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 2, AT 1:30 TO EXAMINE PROVISIONS OF A BILL THAT WOULD ESTABLISH A PRICE CONTROL SYSTEM IN MICRONESIA (HB 124). THE SAME COMMITTEE INTENDS TO LOOK INTO THE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF TRANSPACIFIC LINES AT A HEARING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6 IN THE HOUSE CHAMBER.

OTHER COMMITTEES IN BOTH HOUSES ARE HOLDING HEARINGS ON OTHER BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS, AND IT IS IN THESE MEETING THAT THE REAL "GIVE-AND-TAKE" OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS OCCURS. BY THE TIME BILLS REACH THE FLOOR FOR FINAL ACTION IN EITHER HOUSE, THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES OVER THE MEASURE HAVE GENERALLY BEEN WORKED OUT. THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS ALWAYS WELCOME TO ATTEND ANY PUBLIC HEARING, AND TO OFFER TESTIMONY IF DESIRED ON ANY MEASURE PENDING BEFORE THAT PARTICULAR COMMITTEE.

FINAL FLOOR ACTION CONTINUED TO BE LIGHT IN BOTH HOUSES FRIDAY, BUT ONE BILL DID PASS SECOND READING IN THE HOUSE, WHILE A MEASURE WAS FILED IN THE SENATE.

THE HOUSE APPROVED AND SENT TO THE SENATE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION A MEASURE THAT WOULD MAKE JABOR ISLAND, IN THE JALUIT ATOLL OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, AN OFFICIAL TRUST TERRITORY PORT OF ENTRY (HB 52). ACTION ON ANOTHER BILL UP

FOR SECOND READING, RELATING TO ABANDONED WATERCRAFT, WAS DEFERRED (HB 197).

SENATORS VOTED TO FILE A BILL EXTENDING THE TIME FOR FILING OF EMPLOYERS' QUARTERLY TAX AND INCOME REPORTS (SB 126), SENATOR ANDON AMARAICH (TRUK) COMMENTING THAT SUCH ACTION IS NOT NECESSARY AT THIS TIME. ACTION ON ANOTHER BILL UP FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING IN THE SENATE, RELATING TO ELIGIBILITY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT BENEFITS (SB 66) WAS ALSO DEFERRED.

THERE WERE NO MEASURE ON THE RESOLUTION CALENDER FOR ADOPTION IN THE SENATE, BUT IN THE HOUSE TWO RECEIVED UNANIMOUS APPROVAL AND WILL GO TO THE SENATE FOR CONSIDERATION. ONE REQUESTS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SPONSOR THE TRUST TERRITORY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (HJR 77). THE OTHER CONVEYS THE CONDOLENCES OF THE CONGRESS TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE JUDGE PABLO RINGANG OF PALAU, WHO DIED RECENTLY (HJR 76).

THREE BILLS, TWO RESOLUTIONS AND TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED AT FRIDAY'S HOUSE SESSION. THE BILLS INCLUDE: AN APPROPRIATION OF \$300,000 FOR ROAD AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION WORK IN CERTAIN PORTIONS OF TRUK DISTRICT (HB 238); ANOTHER APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$60,000 DOLLARS TO DEFRAY EXPENSES OF THE NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION (HB 236); AND A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUNICIPAL ALIEN WORKER REVIEW BOARDS IN ALL CHARTERED MUNICIPALITIES (HB 237). THESE BOARDS WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO RESTRICT ANY ALIEN WORKER FROM RESIDING IN AND WORKING IN AN MUNICIPALITY FOR LONGER THAN TWO YEARS.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS OFFERED INCLUDE ONE REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES TO EXTEND THE PROVISIONS FOR VETERAN'S LOANS TO RESIDENTS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY (HJR 86), AND ONE DECLARING THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE U.S. SHOULD BE ACCORDED EQUAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES AS THE PEOPLE OF KWAJALEIN ATOLL IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, OFFERED BY CONGRESSMAN ATAJI BALOS IN CONJUNCTION WITH REMARKS DELIVERED ON THE FLOOR (HJR 85, SEE FOLLOWING STORY).

THE NEW BILL WERE INTRODUCED DURING THE FRIDAY SESSION OF THE SENATE. THEY ARE: A BILL CONCERNING AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE TT, SETTING UP WHAT WOULD BE KNOWN AS THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974 AND PROVIDING FOR A LOAN FUND (SB 225); A MEASURE DESIGNED TO FOSTER UNITY IN MICRONESIA, PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES SUCH AS AN EXCHANGE OF STUDENT AMONG THE SIX DISTRICTS (SB 226); A BILL CONCERNING FORGIVENESS AS A DEFENSE TO A CRIMINAL ACT (SB 227); A MEASURE RELATING TO THE OWNERSHIP OF INTEREST IN REAL PROPERTY AND PROVIDING FOR DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN SECTION OF THE TT CODE RELATING TO MUNICIPAL CONTROL OVER LICENSING OF RETAIL AND SERVICE BUSINESSES (SB 229); AN APPROPRIATION OF \$30,000 DOLLARS FOR THE COMPLETION OF ROTA SCHOOL (SB 230); ANOTHER APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$350,000 DOLLARS TO SUPPLEMENT TT HOUSING LOAN FUNDS (SB 231); AN APPROPRIATION OF \$300,000 DOLLARS FOR PHASE ONE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PORT FACILITY IN THE MARSHALLS DISTRICT (SB 232); AND TWO NATURALIZATION BILLS (SB 233 AND 234).

THE TWO HOUSES OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA ARE IN RECESS UNTIL TEN MONDAY MORNING, JANUARY 28, WHICH WILL BE THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF THE CURRENT, 50-DAY SESSIONS.

(ALL USERS, PLEASE CREDIT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)

SAIPAN JAN 25, 1974---(CONGRESS RELEASE)---IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FRIDAY (JAN 25) THREE STATEMENTS WERE DELIVERED BY MEMBERS, TWO ON THE FLOOR AND ONE WAS INSERTED INTO THE JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE. THEY RANGED IN SUBJECT MATTER FROM DESIGNATING A FUTURE PERMANENT CAPITAL OF MICRONESIA TO THE LAND MORATORIUM ON TINIAN, TO HUMOROUS BUT SERIOUS REMARKS ABOUT THE USE OF KWAJALEIN MISSILE RANGE IN THE MARSHALLS DISTRICT.

IN THE STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY VICE-SPEAKER ENDY DOIS FOR INCLUSION IN THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE HOUSE HE CALLED ON THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA NOT TO WAIT UNTIL "THE ELEVENTH HOUR" BUT TO GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF DETERMINING THE FUTURE LOCATION OF THE PERMANENT CAPITAL OF MICRONESIA.

REMINING THE HOUSE OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN A REPORT PREPARED TWO YEARS AGO BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING, THE TRUK CONGRESSMAN SUGGESTED THAT ON THE BASIS OF EXPERIENCES SINCE THEN, A SITE SHOULD BE SELECTED AND A COMMITTEE OF THE CONGRESS ASSIGNED TO WORK OUT THE PROCEDURES, SO THAT AN EASY TRANSITION CAN BE POSSIBLE WHEN THE TIME COMES TO MOVE THE CAPITAL.

ALTHOUGH THE VICE SPEAKER SAID SAIPAN IS THE SEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, HE SAID, "I WOULD REMIND ALL OF US THAT SAIPAN HAS NEVER BEEN DESIGNATED A PERMANENT CAPITAL OF TRUST TERRITORY, AND STILL REMAINS A PROVISIONAL SEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT."

"IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY FOR US TO CONTINUE ON OUR PRESENT COURSE OF DISCUSSING FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT," DOIS SAID, "WHEN WE HAVE YET TO DETERMINE WHERE OUR HOME WILL BE NOT ONLY WILL IT BE MORE COSTLY THE LONGER WE WAIT, BUT THE LONGER IT IS DELAYED, THE GREATER THE CHANCE WILL BE, THAT EVENT AND CIRCUMSTANCES WILL OVERTAKE US, AND WE WILL FIND OURSELVES IN THE AWKWARD POSITION OF AGAIN ACTING AT THE "ELEVENTH HOUR."

MEANWHILE, CONGRESSMAN FELIPE Q. ATALIG OF THE MARIANAS COMMENTED ON SECRETARY ROGERS C.B. MORTON'S REMARKS CONCERNING THE RETURN OF PUBLIC LANDS TO LOCAL CONTROL, THAT FINAL DECISION ON MICRONESIA'S POLITICAL FUTURE MUST BE MADE BY MICRONESIANS, THAT INVESTORS FROM THE WORLD'S COMMUNITY WILL BE PERMITTED TO COME INTO MICRONESIA AND THAT THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS "WILL HAVE COMPLETED THE PROCESS OF SELF-DETERMINATION THAT IS THE RIGHT OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD."

ATALIG POINTED OUT THAT WHAT MORTON DID NOT MENTION IS THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON OR ABOUT MAY 8 OF LAST YEAR, WITHOUT INFORMING THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN, DIRECTED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO HALT THE ISSUANCE OF HOMESTEADING PERMITS ON TINIAN.

ATALIG SAID THAT MORTON ALSO DID NOT MENTION AT THE SAME TIME THE HICOM AND THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR WERE ORDERED TO CEASE APPROVING LEASE AGREEMENTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS TO NON-CITIZENS. THEY WERE ALSO INSTRUCTED TO CANCEL OR REVOKE ANY EXISTING BUSINESS PERMITS WHICH HAD NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED ON TINIAN AND THAT THEY ARE NOT CONSIDERING ANY NEW APPLICATION FOR PERMITS," HE NOTED.

~~IN TERMS OF THE MORATORIUM, THE MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN STATED~~ THE OFFICE OF MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS HAS PROMISED THAT IT IS ONLY TEMPORARY--TO LAST ONLY DURING THE LENGTH OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT AND THE UNITED STATES. BUT ....THIS TEMPORARY SITUATION MAY GO ON FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS MORE DURING WHICH TIME THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN WILL LOSE MANY ECONOMIC BENEFITS." HE SAID THE "PROMISE" REMINDS HIM AND THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN OF ANOTHER PROMISE MADE BY THE UNITED STATES--AFTER THE WAR, THE UNITED STATES EVACUATED PEOPLE FROM TINIAN FROM YAP AND RETURNED THEM HOME WITH THE PROMISE THEY WOULD BE GIVEN LAND. THEY ARE STILL WAITING FOR THE LAND.

THE CONGRESSMAN THEN ASKED HOW CAN THERE BE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHEN THE UNITED STATES UNILATERALLY IMPOSED A MORATORIUM ON TINIAN AND HOW CAN MICRONESIANS EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION WHEN DECISIONS ARE ISSUED FROM WASHINGTON AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE.

REPRESENTATIVE ATALIG CALLED UPON THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS TO GIVE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION TO A RESOLUTION HE PLANS TO INTRODUCE LATER RELATING TO THE CURRENT SITUATION. HE ALSO ASKED THAT MEMBERS FOLLOW THE SITUATION CAREFULLY FOR IN HIS WORDS: "REGARDLESS OF WHICH KIND OF FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS WE MAY FOLLOW, THE IMPLICATIONS ARE CLEAR THAT IN ANY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRESENT ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY, ITS DEEDS CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO REVEAL THE TRUTH OR FALSITY OF ITS WORDS."

FINALLY, REPRESENTATIVE AJAJI BALOS OF THE MARSHALLS INTRODUCED A "TONGUE-IN-CHEEK" HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION THAT POINTED OUT THE UNFAIR TREATMENT THAT THE DISPLACED PEOPLE OF KWAJALEIN ATOLL HAVE RECEIVED SINCE THE U.S. ARMED FORCES BEGAN USING THEIR ISLANDS NEARLY 30 YEARS AGO.

IN INTRODUCING THE RESOLUTION, WHICH DECLARED THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE ACCORDED EQUAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES THAT KWAJALEIN PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED, BALOS SURPRISED HIS COLLEAGUES SAYING:

"I HONESTLY FEEL THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS OUTDONE ITSELF IN ITS GENEROSITY TO OUR PEOPLE AND NOW WE MUST PAY AMERICA BACK."

BALOS RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGED THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD THE AUTHORITY TO USE KWAJALEIN "IN THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY," BUT SAID THE UNITED STATES HAD DONE SO FOR 20 YEARS, UNTIL 1964, WITHOUT NEGOTIATION LEASE ARRANGEMENT WITH THE LANDOWNERS ON KWAJALEIN ISLAND. HE POINTED OUT MILITARY HAVE STILL NOT BEEN PAID FOR THE RESOLUTION ALSO TAUNTED THAT THE DISPLACED KWAJALEIN PEOPLE, "NOT RECEIVING ON EBEYE AND ENESON, NO LONGER FREELY VISIT THEIR FORMER ISLANDS"...BECAUSE OF NUMEROUS BENEFITS SHOWERED DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS..." AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO LAGARDONS MISSILE DEBRIS THAT FALLS OVER THE LAGOON, WHEN TESTS ARE CONDUCTED.

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