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# Week in Review

SUMMARY OF NEWS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS  
Prepared by Micronesian News Service

Saipan, Mariana Islands

Dec. 31, 1973 - January 4, 1974

## MEDICAL REFERRAL RATES REDUCED

The daily military hospital rate charged for medical referrals from the Trust Territory and American Samoa was lowered last week by the United States Department of Defense from \$126 a day to \$66 a day. Hospitals to which referral are made include Tripler Army Hospital in Hawaii and the Guam Naval Hospital.

The daily rate for referrals was increased from \$42 to \$126 a day on July 1, 1973. According to Trust Territory health officials this 200 percent increase would have forced a cut of two-thirds in medical referrals of patients with medical problems that cannot be handled by territorial health facilities or personnel.

The action to lower the rates of referrals was taken after Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton appealed to Defense Secretary James Schlesinger for a special rate for medical patients from both Micronesia and American Samoa. In a letter to Secretary Morton, Secretary Schlesinger instructed the two military hospitals concerned to initiate the special inter-agency rate of \$66 per day effective until the end of fiscal year 1975.

The inter-agency rates charged by the military hospitals are billed to the TT Government and payment is made from the Health Services budget.

TT Health Services Director Dr. Masao Kumangai expressed his appreciation for the rate reduction. He stated that even though the possibility of still higher rates will face the TT in 1975, the budget can be planned to take this into account whereas the drastic increase announced last year came after budgets had already been submitted and funds appropriated.

Over 600 patients were referred to hospitals outside the TT during the past year. Even though the number is not great, most of these patients require special and therefore expensive treatment.

## FUEL SUPPLY TO BE SHIPPED TO TT

Mobil Oil Micronesia officials stated last week that the tanker "Halekulani" was expected to sail for the Trust Territory to supply fuel to the bulk plants on Saipan, Yap and Palau thereby increasing the TT reserves of gasoline, diesel fuel and other fuels. Mobil Manager Ron Chevako stated that the allocation of fuel during January continues to be based on 88 percent of January to September purchases and that conservation must be practiced by everyone.

Chevako stressed that everyone must realize that fuel is limited and that the limitation requires economizing rather than hoarding of the gasoline. "The key to the success of any allocation program lies in the hands of the public. We all must conserve fuel," stated Chevako.

In discussing the fuel problem with various district administrators, High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston found that the other districts have successfully reduced their fuel consumption while avoiding any panic buying on the part of the public that was so evident on Saipan over the Christmas and New Years holidays.

In other news concerning the fuel situation, the Trust Territory Fuel Conservation Committee has prepared a standby plan for the rationing of gasoline on Saipan. According to Director of Public Works James Wheeler, Chairman of the Committee, the plan involves printed ration cards which would identify the station from which each cardholder could obtain a weekly allotment of gasoline. As yet, no decision has been made on whether government-imposed rationing of gas is necessary.

The plan developed by the Fuel Conservation Committee would have each registered vehicle owner declare the station where he prefers to buy his gas. He would then receive a card with the station's name on it, and would be entitled to purchase gas only at that station. The amount of gas allowed has not been determined pending the results of statistics obtained from the Department of Public Safety on the number of motor vehicles registered on Saipan and from figures obtained from Mobil on the amount of gasoline available for a given month.

Marianas District Administrator Francisco C. Ada said that the situation is being watched very closely and some kind of rationing would be instituted if it becomes necessary.

The High Commissioner said that Government officials of Guam and the TT have been in close contact concerning the possibility of rationing gasoline on both islands.

#### TRANSPAC INCREASES RATES

The fuel crisis was cited last week as justification for imposing an immediate, temporary twenty dollar per ton increase in freight shipping rates by Trans Pacific Lines, the Trust Territory franchised shipping line. Bernard Helgenberger, President of the company, made the announcement, saying the unexpected cost increases in fuel over the past several months had placed TransPac in a position where it is unable to handle these increases in time with normal freight rate adjustments. He stated that fuel prices have increased from twenty-one dollars per ton last spring to one hundred-thirty dollars per ton at the beginning of December.

"We in Micronesia are more desperately affected by fuel costs than other areas, due to our long distances and short tonnages as compared to Guam and other larger island countries," Helgenberger said. When asked if there would be a time limit to these charges, he answered, "this will only be determined by future cost increases, and the rate review in February." Helgenberger said further that

other than an immediate direct subsidy from the government, this action was "the only means to keep Micronesia's supply line going through this oil embargo crisis."

Trust Territory Government officials were studying the action late last week, and had no comment to make on it.

#### SURVEYING CONTRACT SIGNED

✓ A contract for an accelerated program of surveying agricultural homesteads on Saipan in the Marianas District was signed by High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston during a special ceremony last week. The \$111,000 contract was awarded to the firm of Juan Tenorio and Associates of Saipan, Incorporated which will begin work within the month and expects to complete the assignment within a year.

Pursuant to a recent court order, the High Commissioner issued quitclaim deeds to 191 agricultural homesteads on Saipan, but promised at the time that he would see that a proper survey was effected for homestead parcel recipients, despite the class action suit brought to compel issuance of the quitclaim deeds.

A spokesman from Lands and Surveys Division stated that the survey work to be completed under the contract will determine the exact area and boundaries of the homesteader's property and remove any title cloud upon the premises which may have resulted from the required quitclaim conveyance.

In addition to the High Commissioner, Chief of Lands and Survey Division Kozo Yamada, Land Law Examiner for the TT Emmett Rice, and Juan Tenorio and Joe Tenorio of the survey company were present at the signing of the contract.

#### BRIEFLY, HERE ARE SOME OTHER ITEMS THAT MADE NEWS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY LAST WEEK:

The High Commissioner announced the appointment of Victorino T. Borja of Saipan as Assistant to Communication Management Officer John Welch. Borja previously served as Assistant Chief of the Communication's Engineering Branch.

Four Trust Territory students have been selected by the Division of Agriculture, Department of Resources and Development to pursue a three-year intensive college-level course of study in tropical agriculture and forestry in New Guinea. The students are Mathias Kugumagar from Yap, Glastine Cornelius and Adelino Lorens from Ponape, and Ismael Mike from Truk.

According to a report from "Marianas Variety", Saipan's population is likely to reach at least 18,000 six years from now, and possibly could go as high as 85,000. The report indicated that attempts to limit or restrict employment of alien labor would create serious social tensions between the aliens and the indigenous population.

Emergency medical supplies were air-dropped last week on the island of Satawal in Yap District. Following a request from Health Services, Emergency Coordination Center of the Commander, Naval Forces, Marianas on Guam sent in HU-16 on the mercy mission. The medical supplies were needed following an outbreak of upper respiratory influenza that has affected nearly 100 per cent of the 150 children on the island and about half of the adults.

Trust Territory Director of Education David Ramarui announced that a multilingual workshop will be held in Palau January 7 through 18 and a Micronesian Seminar on Education will be held in Ponape beginning Monday, January 7.

A delegation of United States Congress members from the House Interior Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs is visiting the Trust Territory this week. The delegation is headed by Representative Phillip Burton of California. Other members of the delegation include Congressmen Thomas S. Foley of Washington, William M. Ketchum of California; and Delegates to Congress Antonio B. Won Pat of Guam and Ron deLugo of the Virgin Islands.

Distribution of the 1974 Micronesia calendar has been completed by the Trust Territory Public Information Division. The calendar is the most colorful of the three published by the division, including scenes in full color from all district centers and from many outer island areas as well. Sixteen thousand of the calendars are being distributed throughout the territory, primarily to schools and government offices.

One mistake which sharp-eyed observers quickly noticed in the new calendar... three of the holidays are shown on the wrong dates. Two are in October-- Columbus Day is shown as the 7th when it should be on the 14th, and Veteran's Day, which the calendar shows as the 21st, should be the 28th. The third holiday listed wrong is Thanksgiving, which appears on the calendar as November 21st but should really be on the 28th.