

(CAMPAIGN '74--PONAPE)

PONAPE, NOVEMBER 2 (MNS) ⁷⁴ NEARLY TEN PERCENT OF PONAPE'S VOTERS HAVE ALREADY CAST THEIR BALLOTS FOR TUESDAY'S CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA GENERAL ELECTION. THEY ARE VOTING ABSENTEE, AND A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DISTRICT'S PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE SAID FRIDAY (NOV 01) THAT ABOUT 1,000 OF THE APPROXIMATELY 10,000 ELIGIBLE VOTERS HAD COME INTO THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE IN KOLONIA TO VOTE.

THESE BALLOTS WILL NOT BE COUNTED UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION, BUT EACH EVENING PERSONNEL FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS SORT THEM AND PLACE THEM IN THE APPROPRIATE BALLOT BOXES. AND EVERY DAY, DOZENS MORE PEOPLE QUEUE BESIDE THE VOTING DESK TO ADD THEIR VOTE TO THE TOTALS. ONE OFFICIAL SAID IT SEEMS TO HIM THERE IS A MUCH GREATER INTEREST IN THE ELECTION THIS YEAR WITH MANY PEOPLE VOTING WHO HAVE NEVER BOTHERED TO VOTE BEFORE.

THE CLOSENESS OF SOME OF THE RACES IN PONAPE MAY BE THE REASON. MOST OBSERVERS AGREE THAT, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL RACE ON KUSAIE, THE OUTCOME IN THE VARIOUS VOTING DISTRICTS OF PONAPE IS GOING TO BE VERY CLOSE INCEED.

ONLY ONE OF PONAPE'S INCUMBENT MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA IS UNOPPOSED--BETHWEL HENRY, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. INCUMBENT SENATOR AMBILOS IEHSI IS ENGAGED IN A TOUGH FIGHT FOR RE-ELECTION AGAINST EDWEL SANTOS, DIRECTOR OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY. REPRESENTATIVES RESIO MOSES AND SUNGIWO HADLEY ARE ENGAGED IN THREE-WAY RACES, AND KUSAIE'S REPRESENTATIVE JOAB SIGRAH IS FACING A SINGLE CHALLENGER.

PERHAPS THE MOST FRUSTRATED CANDIDATE IN PONAPE THIS WEEK IS SIGRAH. A MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS' JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTS, HE JOURNEYED TO SAIPAN FOR THE RECENT HEARINGS, AND FOUND ON HIS RETURN TO PONAPE THAT HE HAD MISSED THE BOAT TO KUSAIE. HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO HIS HOME UNTIL WELL AFTER THE ELECTION. MEANWHILE HIS OPPONENT, YOSIWO GEORGE, IS ON KUSAIE AND, ACCORDING TO REPORTS RECEIVED IN KOLONIA, IS CAMPAIGNING HARD. ONE OBSERVER SAID GEORGE IS TRYING SOME "SAIPAN STYLE" CAMPAIGN TACTICS ON THE VOTERS OF KUSAIE. SAIPAN CAMPAIGNING INVOLVES MANY SPEECHES, RALLIES, POSTERS AND ADVERTISING, A STYLE NOT FOUND TO THE SAME DEGREE IN ANY OTHER DISTRICT.

CONGRESSMAN SIGRAH HAS A STRONG RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE CONGRESS ON BEHALF OF KUSAIE, HOWEVER. THE ISLAND ACHIEVED ITS LONG-SOUGHT SEPARATE DISTRICT STATUS DURING THE RECENT CONGRESS, AND SIGRAH TOLD MNS THIS WEEK HE FEELS HIS RECORD WILL SERVE HIM WELL EVEN THOUGH HE IS NOT IN KUSAIE TO CAMPAIGN IN PERSON.

SENATOR IEHSI IS FACING PERHAPS HIS STRONGEST CHALLENGER EVER. SANTOS IS FROM PONAPE ISLANDS, WHILE IEHSI IS FROM PINGELAP, AND WHILE PONAPE DISTAD LEO A. FALCAM FEELS THIS WILL NOT BE AN ISSUE IN THE ELECTION, OTHER POLITICAL OBSERVERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF PONAPE'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, THINK THE DIFFERENT HOME BASES OF THE TWO MEN WILL BE A FACTOR, WITH SANTOS RUNNING STRONG ON PONAPE, AND IEHSI CARRYING MOST OF THE OUTER ISLANDS INCLUDING KUSAIE. THE VOTING IN KOLONIA, WHICH HAS A POPULATION MADE UP OF PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE DISTRICT, COULD WELL DECIDE THE RACE, AND THOSE CASTING THEIR ABSENTEE BALLOTS THIS WEEK MAY BE CASTING THE DECISIVE VOTES.

CONGRESSMAN MOSES, RUNNING FOR A SECOND TERM AFTER DEFEATING VETERAN CONGRESSMAN HEINRICH IRIARTE TWO YEARS AGO, IS AGAIN FACING IRIARTE, WHO SAID THIS WEEK HE FEELS HE IS "STRONG" THAN HE WAS LAST ELECTION. THE THIRD

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CANDIDATE IN THIS RACE IS PETE CHRISTIAN, A KOLONIA BUSINESSMAN MAKING HIS FIRST TRY FOR ELECTED OFFICE. CHRISTIAN AND IRIARTE SHARE SOME OF THE SAME POLITICAL BASE, IN NETT MUNICIPALITY, AND MANY PEOPLE FEEL THAT IN A THREE WAY RACE THE INCUMBENT IS STRENGTHENED, SINCE THE CHALLENGERS TEND TO DIVIDE THE OPPOSITION VOTE. SUCH A SIMPLE FORMULA MAY WELL NOT APPLY TO MICRONESIAN POLITICS, HOWEVER, WHERE MANY OTHER FACTORS---FAMILY TIES AND TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP HERITAGE, FOR EXAMPLE---PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE.

CONGRESSMAN HADLEY IS ANOTHER FRESHMAN SEEKING HIS SECOND TERM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. ORIGIN OF THE CANDIDATES MAY WELL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE IN THIS RACE, SINCE OBSERVERS TEND TO RATE THE THREE CANDIDATES AS ABOUT EQUALLY WELL QUALIFIED. HADLEY AND ONE OF HIS CHALLENGERS, LUCAS ADA, ARE FROM METALANIM MUNICIPALITY IN THE SOUTHEASTERN PONAPE ISLAND. THE OTHER CANDIDATE, EDGAR EDWARD, IS FROM KITTI MUNICIPALITY, AND SINCE KITTI AND METALANIM ARE ABOUT EQUAL IN POPULATION, SOME OBSERVERS GIVE EDWARD THE EDGE. CONGRESSMAN HADLEY TOLD MNS HE IS CONCENTRATING HIS CAMPAIGN EFFORTS IN KITTI IN AN AFFORT TO OFFSET HIS OPPONENTS APPARENT ADVANTAGE THERE.

AS THE CAMPAIGN IN PONAPE DRAWS TO A CLOSE, MANY OF THE CANDIDATES BEGAN FRIDAY TO MAKE THE DRIVE UP THE HILL TO THE DISTRICT'S BROADCAST STATION, WSZD. THEY HAVEN'T BEEN ANY CAMPAIGN SPEECHES ON THE RADIO UP TO THIS POINT, BUT HALVORSEN JOHNNY, STATION MANAGER, SAID THE THE BROADCAST WILL BEGIN THIS WEEKEND AS THE CANDIDATES TAKE TO THE AIR IN A LAST-MINUTE ATTEMPT TO REACH AS MANY VOTERS AS POSSIBLE WITH THEIR PLATFORMS AND PROMISES..

(SATAWAN LEGAL HOLIDAY PROCLAMATION)

TRUK, NOVEMBER 2 (MNS)---TRUK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR JUAN A. SABLAN SIGNED A PROCLAMATION THURSDAY (OCT. 31) DECLARING THE FIRST DAY OF NOVEMBER EVERY YEAR A "LEGAL HOLIDAY" FOR SATAWAN MUNICIPALITY, THE PRESENT SITE OF THE SUB-DISTRICT CENTER IN THE MORTLOCK AREA, ACCORDING TO PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER NOHA RUBEN.

ACCORDING TO THE PROCLAMATION, "THE FIRST DAY OF NOVEMBER MARKS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE RETURN OF THE PEOPLE OF SATAWAN MUNICIPALITY TO THEIR ISLAND AFTER THE CESSATION OF THE HOSTILITY OF WORLD WAR II."

BEFORE AND DURING SECOND WORLD WAR, SATAWAN WAS OCCUPIED BY MORE THAN 500 JAPANESE SOLDIERS WHO ESTABLISHED A MILITARY BASE THERE. THE PEOPLE OF SATAWAN WERE SENT TO LIVE ON NEARBY ISLANDS PREVIOUSLY UNOCCUPIED, ACCORDING TO RUBEN.

THE FIRST DAY OF NOVEMBER, ACCORDING TO THE PROCLAMATION, ALSO COMMEMORATES THE RESTORATION OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT BY THE U.S. ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY ON THE ISLAND OF SATAWAN.

IN VIEW OF THESE SIGNIFICANT OCCASION TO THE PEOPLE OF SATAWAN, DISTAD SABLAN TOLD SATAWAN MAGISTRATE SOICHY BULICHE WHO WAS ON HAND TO WITNESS THE SIGNING OF THE PROCLAMATION, OF HIS GREAT HONOR IN CREATING THE NEW HOLIDAY. HE SAID THAT THE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLE OF SATAWAN TO OBSERVE THE EVENT SIGNIFIES SOME UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE THAT IS PART OF MICRONESIA'S HISTORY.

ALSO ON HAND TO WITNESS THE SIGNING WERE SATAWAN TRADITIONAL CHIEF ELIAS MUANGI, COUNCIL MEMBER KRISPIN CARLOS, SENATOR ANDON AMARAICH, DEPUTY DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR MITARO DANIS, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR REPRESENTATIVE EARHART ATEN, DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER EZEKIEL MALON, AND TRUK'S LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICER ISKIA SONY.