

# Week in Review

## SUMMARY OF NEWS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Prepared by Micronesian News Service

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Saipan, Mariana Islands

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### DATE SET FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

An official date was finally announced last week for the start of the Micronesian Constitutional Convention. After a meeting in Truk, the pre-convention committee, which is chaired by Senate President Tosiwo Nakayama, said it has decided to begin the 90-day convention on July 12, 1975. The committee had already announced that the convention will take place at the Continental Hotel on Saipan. The announcement of the date put aside speculation that the convention might not be held until 1976. This speculation was based on the reaction which the committee found in several districts from people who felt that the timing was being rushed, and that more time should be taken to study the various alternatives and the wishes of the people. The committee decided, however, not to delay the convention too long. Senator Nakayama said the committee will begin immediately to recruit staff for the convention, and get them on board as soon as possible to begin the preliminary work.

During its meeting in Truk, the pre-convention committee also discussed and made decisions on other matters including a review of the draft rules of procedure to be submitted for the convention's approval, a review of the convention budget, consideration of legislation affecting the convention which should be considered by the Congress of Micronesia during its next session, and a review of personnel policies and staffing needs for the historic meeting.

The committee also met with Dr. Norman Meller of the University of Hawaii, who is an expert on constitutional procedures, and helped set up the first session of the Congress of Micronesia in 1965. Coincidentally, the Constitutional Convention will convene next year on Micronesia Day, which will mark the official tenth anniversary of the Congress of Micronesia. It was on July 12, 1965, that the first Congress of Micronesia session convened, also on Saipan.

### CHIEFS CONFERENCE ENDS

The second territory-wide conference of traditional leaders ended in Truk on a note of optimism and good spirits, according to reports received early last week. The meeting ended on November 15. Moen Mayor the chairman of the conference, told the chiefs that the spirit of the conference was evidence that the traditional leaders were not only interested in the

people of their respective districts but in the welfare of all the people of Micronesia as well.

"My sincere hope is that we continue working toward the goal of maintaining the respect of the traditional chiefs by all the people of Micronesia," Mayor Bossy said.

At the conclusion of the meeting, High Chief Ibedul and Acting High Chief Reklai of Palau invited the traditional leaders to Palau for the third conference, which was set for January, 1976.

The traditional leaders adopted eight resolutions on the final day. They are: A resolution disapproving the continuation of the future status negotiations and convening of the Micronesian Constitutional Convention until the complete return of title to all so-called public lands is made to the people of Micronesia.

A resolution requesting financial assistance from the Congress of Micronesia and the office of the High Commissioner for the purpose of funding the annual or semi-annual conferences of Micronesian traditional chiefs.

A resolution requesting financial assistance from the Congress of Micronesia Constitutional Convention to endorse and support legislation during the next regular session of the Congress of Micronesia to give voting rights to traditional leadership delegates at the CorCon.

A resolution requesting the Congress of Micronesia to take steps to have the U.S. and Japan increase the amount of war claims compensation to the people of Micronesia, and to expedite its payments.

A resolution asking that the claimants under the claims act be paid in full for the amount of their claims.

A resolution expressing the desire of the traditional leaders that public land be returned to the people and that future status negotiations be stopped until that time (similar to the first measure.)

A resolution requesting the TT Copra Stabilization Board and the Congress of Micronesia to appropriate funds to maintain the price of copra in Micronesia.

And finally, a resolution asking the Congress to provide legislation for financial assistance to traditional leaders conferences and asking the district administrators to provide staff and other assistance for such conferences, and to promote traditional, social and cultural values throughout Micronesia toward the goal of unity in Micronesia.

#### LEGISLATOR'S CONFERENCE MEETS ON SAIPAN

The Sixth Annual Pacific Legislator's Conference was held on Saipan last week. The meeting was attended by legislators from American Samoa, Guam and Hawaii, as well as from most of the six Micronesian district legislatures. The conference dealt with a number of problems facing lawmakers in the

Pacific area, with workshops covering such things as future political status for dependent areas, the energy crisis and its effect on the Pacific area, and foreign investment in the Pacific islands. The conference lasted through the week.

#### SHIPPING SURVEY RELEASED

The Joint Committee on Resources and Development of the Congress of Micronesia, after hearings that took place in each of the districts, released last week its findings on the shipping system in the Trust Territory. Chairman Sasauo Haruo said the committee's findings were that "neglect, a lack of funds and misplaced priorities" by both the Trust Territory and U.S. governments have resulted in "...an obsolete fleet, generally inadequate port facilities, and an overall lack of planning for a viable shipping system in the Trust Territory."

The committee had with it on its survey tour a shipping consultant from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Danko Koludrovic, who said he found it surprising that what he considers to be some of the "most fundamental elements" of attempting to establish an efficient shipping service, such as statistics on tonnage, are apparently nonexistent.

Chairman Haruo said his committee plans to recommend the creation of an independent agency to oversee the operations of the TT Transportation Division, which he said is "preoccupied with day-to-day operations of shipping. We need an independent agency to set policies and goals and to monitor our government transportation system. The lack of such a policy setting agency is reflected in the present poor state of affairs in shipping in Micronesia today," said Sasauo Haruo, Chairman of the Joint Resources and Development Committee.

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

The members of the Micronesian Sports Council held a meeting on Saipan, to finalize plans for Micronesia's participation in the South Pacific Games, which are to be held on Guam next August. Felix Rabauliman of Saipan is chairman of the council.

Results from the Upper and Lower Mortlock Islands of Truk District still leave incumbent Senator Andon Amaraich some 862 votes behind his challenger, Nick Bossy, in the only district which still has not counted all of its votes from the November 5 election. Ballot boxes from the final areas, the Western Islands and Namounito Atoll, were expected to arrive on Moen over the weekend for counting, with final results expected to be available early this week.

Family Health Plan, Guam's prepaid health maintenance program, has received a \$35,000 grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, to study the feasibility of establishing a similar health maintenance office on Saipan.

Saipan's Popular Party has decided not to contest the results of the Nov. 5 election, in which three of its candidates were defeated. In the fourth race, between incumbent Pedro P. Tenorio and Herman R. Guerrero, a petition for a recount filed by Tenorio was denied. Tenorio lost the election by only four votes.

A move has been made on Tinian to replace the two Tinian members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, Jose R. Cruz and Bernard Hofschneider. Some members of the island's municipal council want the men replaced with two who more closely reflect their views. At week's end, the situation was still unclear, with the Mayor of Tinian, Felipe Mendiola, saying the two men had been replaced, but one of the two, Cruz, insisting that it's not true. The Marianas Political Status Commission and the United States are due to sit down for another round of negotiations beginning Dec. 2 on Saipan.

Jerry Craddock, of the Community Development Division at Headquarters, returned last week from a sub-regional conference on out-of-school youth sponsored by the South Pacific Commission in Suva, Fiji.

The Trust Territory Government has received special funds under the U.S. Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) for use in providing transitional employment for the unemployed in the TT. Further information on the CETA program may be obtained through the Training Division, Department of Personnel, on Saipan.

And finally, Marianas District Administrator Francisco C. Ada has vetoed a controversial Saipan municipal ordinance which would have established price controls on essential commodities such as rice, flour and sugar. The ordinance would have set a maximum markup of ten percent over landed cost on such items. The Saipan business community was unanimously opposed to the bill.