

NOV/29/74

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL WEEKEND MICRONESIAN NEWS SERVICE DISPATCH CONTAINS A RESPONSE BY SENATOR LAZARUS SALII TO THE SATURDAY, NOV. 30, STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HAYDN WILLIAMS. IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE SATURDAY DISPATCH, CHECK WITH YOUR COMSTATION.)

SAIPAN, DECEMBER 1 (MNS)---THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS (JCFS), SENATOR LAZARUS SALII OF PALAU, REACTED SHARPLY SATURDAY (NOV. 30) TO A STATEMENT RELEASED BY U.S. AMBASSADOR HAYDN WILLIAMS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED ACTION BY THE UNITED STATES TO RETURN MICRONESIAN PUBLIC LANDS THROUGH AN EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

THE EXCHANGE CONTINUED A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SENATOR AND THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS'S OFFICE, ON THE OTHER, OVER THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THE RETURN OF THE LANDS.

THE SENATOR SAID THAT, CONTRARY TO AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS'S STATEMENT, HE DID NOT MAKE ANY SUGGESTION OF PARTICIPATION BY MICRONESIAN LEADERS IN ANY EXECUTIVE ACTION, IN AND OF ITSELF, DURING THIS MEETING WITH WILLIAMS IN HAWAII IN OCTOBER.

"WE MADE IT VERY CLEAR," HE SAID, "THAT OUR FIRST CHOICE WAS ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE RETURN OF PUBLIC LAND THROUGH LEGISLATION. THE AMBASSADOR IN TURN MADE IT EQUALLY CLEAR, HOWEVER, AND A SUBSEQUENT LETTER FROM INTERIOR SECRETARY ROGERS MORTON REINFORCED THIS. THAT THESE LANDS ARE GOING TO BE RETURNED BY EXECUTIVE ACTION."

"WE EXPRESSED OUR VERY STRONG OPPOSITION TO THIS, UNLESS INTERIOR AGREED NOT ONLY TO OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE DRAFTING OF THE ORDER, BUT ALSO TO OUR REQUIREMENT FOR OUR CONSENT PRIOR TO ITS ISSUANCE. IN ANY EVENT, THE EXECUTIVE ORDER IS STILL A SECONDARY ALTERNATIVE TO LEGISLATIVE ACTION."

THE SENATOR WENT ON TO SAY THAT IT IS A "GROSS DISTORTION" OF THE FACTS TO SAY THAT THE U.S. POLICY ON THE RETURN OF PUBLIC LANDS, ISSUED IN NOVEMBER, 1973, WAS "ENDORSED" BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS.

"THE JCFS NEVER ENDORSED THE DETAILS OF THE U.S. POLICY," HE SAID. "IT MERELY TOOK NOTE OF ITS ISSUANCE. THE POLICY WAS SHOWN TO THE JCFS ONLY AFTER IT WAS ISSUED. THE COMMITTEE HAD ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE TO SEE THE STATEMENT IN ADVANCE. THIS IS THE SAME PROCEDURE THAT THE U.S. IS TRYING TO USE NOW IN THE CASE OF THE PROPOSED EXECUTIVE ORDER--TO TRY TO OBTAIN CONSENT AFTER THE FACT. THIS IS THE REASON THE INVITATION TO MEET IN HAWAII HAS GONE TO SO MANY LEADERS IN MICRONESIA. AN ATTEMPT IS BEING MADE TO DIVIDE MICRONESIA--TO GET THE CONGRESS AND THE DISTRICTS TO FIGHT."

THE UNITED STATES HAS PROPOSED A DECEMBER 2 MEETING IN HONOLULU BETWEEN AN AMERICAN DELEGATION HEADED BY STANLEY S. CARPENTER, DIRECTOR OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS, AND THE MICRONESIANS. THAT DATE HAS NOW BEEN MOVED BACK TO DECEMBER 9 AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONGRESS LEADERSHIP, ACCORDING TO SENATOR SALII, BUT HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE LEADERSHIP HAS NOT YET ACCEPTED EVEN THE LATER DATE. CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA LEADERS HAVE ASKED OTHER MICRONESIANS INVITED TO THE HAWAII MEETING TO GATHER ON SAIPAN NEXT WEEK TO HAMMER OUT A UNIFIED MICRONESIAN POSITION ON THE LAND ISSUE.

SENATOR SALII SAID THAT IF THE UNITED STATES BYPASSES THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA ON THIS VITAL ISSUE, IT COULD HAVE "SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES" FOR THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP OF MICRONESIA WITH THE U.S.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: THE FOLLOWING STORY IS BEING RELEASED IN THIS SPECIAL, SATURDAY MICRONESIAN NEWS SERVICE DISPATCH AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S. OFFICE OF MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS.)

(WILLIAMS COMMENTS ON LAND STORY)

SAIPAN, NOVEMBER 30 (MNS)---AMBASSADOR HAYDN WILLIAMS, THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS, COMMENTED SATURDAY (NOV. 30) THROUGH THE STATUS LIAISON OFFICER ON SAIPAN ON A RECENT MNS RELEASE REGARDING THE PUBLIC LAND TRANSFER QUESTION DISCUSSED DURING A MEETING IN HONOLULU LAST MONTH WITH SENATOR LAZARUS SALII, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS (JCFS).

THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD RECENTLY SENT A MESSAGE TO THE SENATOR WHICH POINTS OUT THAT MUCH OF THE HONOLULU DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT CONCERNED THE MEANS BY WHICH EXECUTIVE ACTION COULD BE TAKEN, AND THE SENATOR'S SUGGESTION THAT MICRONESIAN LEADERS PARTICIPATE IN THE PREPARATION OF THE NECESSARY EXECUTIVE ACTION.

THE AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE NOTES THAT EXECUTIVE ACTION IS BEING TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER REQUESTS FROM THE JCFS AND THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, AND SOME DISTRICTS. IT WOULD FOLLOW THE POLICY STATEMENT ISSUED A YEAR AGO WHICH HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY ENDORSED BY THE JCFS AND THE LEADERSHIP IN TWO OF THE DISTRICTS.

THE AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE CONCLUDES BY SAYING, "WE NOW KNOW OF NOTHING THAT SHOULD STAND IN THE WAY OF THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA FOR THE RETURN OF PUBLIC LANDS TO THE DISTRICTS TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THEM ON EXACTLY THE SAME BASIS THAT WAS ENDORSED BY THE JCFS LAST YEAR. I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THE MEETING WHICH THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HAS CALLED WILL BRING ABOUT A SPIRIT OF FULL UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION IN MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR THOSE DISTRICTS WHICH WANT TITLE TO THESE PUBLIC LANDS TO RECEIVE SUCH TITLE WITHOUT ANY FURTHER UNNECESSARY DELAY."