

1974

(THREE MORE BILLS TO HICOM)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 24 (MNS)---FOLLOWING A BUSY LEGISLATIVE WEEKEND, AN ADDITIONAL THREE BILLS ARE ON THEIR WAY FROM THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TO HIGH COMMISSIONER EDWARD E. JOHNSTON FOR HIS ACTION. FOR THE FIRST TIME DURING THE CURRENT SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE FIFTH CONGRESS ON SAIPAN, THE LAWMAKERS HALD WEEKEND SESSIONS FEBRUARY 23 AND 24. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MET BOTH DAYS, WHILE THE SENATE MET ONLY ON SATURDAY.

ONE OF THE BILLS ON ITS WAY TO THE HICOM CAME OUT OF THAT SENATE SESSION, WHEN THE SOLONS ACCEPTED A MINOR HOUSE AMENDMENT TO A BILL APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO DEFRAY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA GENERAL ELECTION COMING UP IN NOVEMBER OF THIS YEAR (SB 221). THE ORIGINAL BILL ASKED FOR \$62,000 BUT THE HOUSE REDUCED THAT BY \$10,000, CITING THE "RESTRICTIVE CONGRESS BUDGET" AS THE REASON.

THE OTHER TWO BILLS THAT WILL SOON BE BEFORE THE HICOM FOR CONSIDERATION CAME OUT OF THE HOUSE. ONE IS A BILL REQUIRING THAT ALL VOTING MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARDS BE CITIZENS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY (SB 239). THE OTHER IS A MEASURE WHICH WOULD BROADEN THE DEFINITION OF "DANGEROUS DEVICE" CONTAINED IN THE WEAPONS CONTROL ACT (HB 174). SEVEN BILLS HAVE BEEN PASSED DURING THE SESSION. ON THESE LATEST BILLS, AND ALL FURTHER MEASURES THAT HE WILL RECEIVE FROM THIS SESSION, THE HICOM WILL HAVE 30 DAYS AFTER OFFICIALLY RECEIVING THE BILLS TO ACT ON THEM.

THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT, WHICH STUDIED THE BILL ON DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARDS MEMBERSHIP, CONSIDERED THAT MEASURE AS "TIMELY AND APPROPRIATE" AT THIS STAGE. UNDER THE PRESENT LAW, ONLY FOUR OF THE FIVE MEMBERS NEED BE CITIZENS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE RELATING TO THE WEAPONS CONTROL ACT IS TWO-FOLD. IT WOULD INCLUDE ADDITIONAL COMMON WEAPONS SUCH AS SWITCHBLADE AND GRAVITY BLADE KNIVES; BLACKJACKS; DAGGERS, METAL, WOODEN, OR SHARK'S TOOTH KNUCKLES, IN THE DEFINITION OF DANGEROUS DEVICE, WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF PROHIBITING THEIR POSSESSION WHEN "UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES... POSSESSION SERVES NO LAWFUL PURPOSE." OTHER SECTIONS OF THE BILL WOULD PRESCRIBE RULES REGARDING POSSESSION OF WEAPONS ABOARD VEHICLES AND VESSELS.

SATURDAY NIGHT'S SESSION ALSO SAW THE HOUSE FILE AN APPROPRIATION BILL OF \$100,000 FOR THE MICRONESIAN STUDENT LOAN FUND, (HB 301). THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FELT THAT A BILL THAT WAS PASSED AND SENT TO THE SENATE SUNDAY EVENING (HB 254) ADEQUATELY CONSIDERS AND PROVIDES FOR THE AREA OF SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE, AND RECOMMENDED THAT THE OTHER BILL BE FILED. HOUSE BILL 254 WOULD APPROPRIATE \$409,000 FOR TRUST TERRITORY SCHOLARSHIPS, TO PURCHASE A BUS FOR TRUST TERRITORY STUDENTS ATTENDING SCHOOLS ON GUAM, AND FOR THE STUDENT LOAN FUND. IT PASSED THE HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY.

ALSO SENT TO THE SENATE SUNDAY WAS A BILL APPROPRIATING \$30,000 FOR CONTINUING AND EXPANDING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS FUNDED UNDER CERTAIN PREVIOUS PUBLIC LAWS, (HB 211). A MEASURE TO ESTABLISH A CAPITPL LOAN PROGRAM AND CAPITOL LOAN REVOLVING FUND; AND TO APPROPRIATE \$150,000 FOR THIS PURPOSE, WAS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND

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DEVELOPMENT FOR FURTHER STUDY. THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MADE SOME SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN THE ORIGINAL BILL, PROMPTING THE MEMBERS TO REFER THE MEASURE TO THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO GET ANOTHER COMMITTEE'S VIEW ON IT.

FIVE JOINT RESOLUTIONS, TWO OF THEM SENATE, WERE ADOPTED DURING THE WEEKEND SESSION IN THE HOUSE. THEY ARE: A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE LEVI DAVID OF PONAPE, (SJR 123); A MEASURE REQUESTING THE TRUK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR AND THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO COMMENCE OPERATION OF THE M/V PUGH TO SERVE THE OUTER ISLANDS OF TRUK DISTRICT, (HJR 90); A RESOLUTION DIRECTING AND AUTHORIZING THE SENATE PRESIDENT AND THE HOUSE SPEAKER OF THE CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE AND MAKE PLANS AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO COMMEMORATE THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONGRESS IN 1975 AND REPORT THEIR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AT THE NEXT SESSION OF CONGRESS, (HJR 125); A RESOLUTION DEMANDING THAT THE UNITED STATES FORTHWITH TERMINATE THE UNILATERALLY IMPOSED MORATORIUM ON HOMESTEADING ON TINIAN ISLAND, (HJR 88); AND A RESOLUTION TO CONVEY THE BEST WISHES AND CONGRATULATIONS OF THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF MICRONESIA TO THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF PAPUA, NEW GUINEA ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR ACHIEVING SELF-GOVERNMENT AND EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE, (SJR 78).

ONE BILL AND THREE HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED SATURDAY NIGHT. THE BILL IS A NATURALIZATION MEASURE, (HB 332). THE RESOLUTIONS WOULD: REQUEST THE HICOM TO ARRANGE FOR A CONSULTANT TO UNDERTAKE A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VEHICULAR BRIDGE CONNECTING THE ISLAND OF MOEN WITH DUBLON, DUBLON WITH FEFAN, FEFAN WITH UMAN, AND DUBLON WITH ETEW ISLAND IN THE TRUK LAGOON, TRUK DISTRICT, (HJR 126); ANOTHER SIMILAR RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE HICOM AND THE CHIEF OF THE PLANNING DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO CONDUCT SUCH A FEASIBILITY STUDY, (HJR 127); AND A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE REAPPOINTMENTS OF TWO NOMINEES FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE TT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD, (HJR 128). NO BILLS OR RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED SUNDAY.

THE HOUSE STANDS IN RECESS UNTIL 4:00 P.M. MONDAY AFTERNOON.

IN ADDITION TO THE SINGLE BILL IT SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, THE SENATE AT ITS SATURDAY SESSION PASSED WITHOUT OPPOSITION TWO OTHER BILLS ON FINAL READING, SENDING THEM TO THE HOUSE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. ONE IS A MEASURE TO INCREASE THE TRUST TERRITORY'S ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION FROM THE PRESENT \$1,000 A YEAR TO A MINIMUM OF \$2,500 A YEAR, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS FROM THE CONGRESS (SB 162). THE OTHER IS AN AMENDMENT TO THE INCOME AND GROSS BUSINESS RECEIPTS TAX LAW THAT WOULD EXCLUDE FROM "GROSS REVENUE" INCOME DERIVED FROM SALES FOR EXPORT (SB 204).

THREE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE ALSO ADOPTED BY THE SENATE. TWO ARE HOUSE MEASURES, AND HAVE THUS COMPLETED THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS. THEY ARE: A MEASURE URGING THE ESTABLISHMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF AN AGRICULTURAL SUBSTATION ON THE ISLAND OF FEFAN, IN THE TRUK LAGOON (HJR 55); AND A MEASURE URGING THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR TO AMEND SECRETARIAL ORDER 2902 TO REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA OF ANY FRANCHISE AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO FOR EITHER AIR OR SEA TRANSPORTATION IN THE TT (HJR 97).

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION ADOPTED AND SENT TO THE HOUSE FOR FURTHER ACTION EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR THE CONCEPT OF ELECTRICITY GENERATION BY THE VARIANCE IN SEA WATER TEMPERATURE, AND INVITES THE APPROPRIATE JAPANESE AND U.S. INSTITUTES TO CONDUCT EXPERIMENTS IN THIS TYPE OF ELECTRICAL GENERATION IN THE TRUST TERRITORY (SJR 105).

TWO NEW BILLS AND TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE OFFERED AT THE SATURDAY SENATE SESSION. THE BILLS ARE: A MINOR AMENDMENT TO THE LAW ESTABLISHING THE DISTRICT FISHING AUTHORITIES (SB 333); AND A NATURALIZATION MEASURE (SB 334). THE NEW JOINT RESOLUTIONS INCLUDE: A MEASURE CONFIRMING THE RE-APPOINTMENTS OF GILBERT C. ADA OF THE MARIANAS AND MOSES SAMUEL OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD (SJR 109); AND A HUMEROUS RESOLUTION FROM YAP SENATOR JOHN MANGEFEL, EXTENDING ASSISTANCE FROM MICRONESIA TO THE REST OF THE WORLD TO HELP EASE CERTAIN CRISES, AND URGING THE "ALMIGHTY" TO CONFINE SUCH CRISES IN THE FUTURE TO A SINGLE DAY OUT OF THE YEAR (SJR 108). SENATOR MANGEFEL, WHO CAN USUALLY BE COUNTED UPON FOR AT LEAST ONE SUCH RESOLUTION EVERY SESSION, POINTS OUT IN THIS MEASURE THAT SUCH CRISES DURING THE PAST YEAR AS THE ENERGY CRISIS, THE INFLATION CRISIS, THE WATERGATE CONTROVERSY IN THE U.S. AND ITS ATTENDANT "CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP" IN THAT COUNTRY, AND EVEN THE TOILET PAPER AND PING PONG BALL SHORTAGES, HAVE CAUSED GREAT HARDSHIP IN THE WORLD, INCLUDING IN MICRONESIA, AND THAT PERHAPS MICRONESIA CAN OFFER SOME ASSISTANCE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD IN EASING THESE CRISES.

THE SENATE WILL MEET AGAIN AT 3:00 MONDAY AFTERNOON.

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