

House Overrides TT Veto

SAIPAN (MNS) — The house of representatives voted Monday to override the veto last Friday

Navy Team Surveys Target Isle

SAIPAN (MNS) — A five-member U.S. Navy survey team was transported by Navy helicopter to Farallon de Medinilla Island in the northern Marianas Friday to survey the island.

Sen. Olympio T. Borja, representing the Marianas Status Commission, accompanied the group.

Among other things, the group, headed by Lt. Cdr. W.R. Niemeir, studied flora and fauna and other matters relating to the environment of the uninhabited island. The island is about 80 miles north of Saipan and is under study because the U.S. delegation to the Marianas status talks has indicated the U.S. wishes to lease the island for continued use as target range.

The team will compile a report on "environmental impact" on the island and copies will be sent to the Marianas Status Commission and the Micronesian status negotiation office headed by U.S. ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams.

by High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston on a bill designed to curb the practice of non-citizens using a Micronesian spouse or adopted child as a "front" to avoid compliance with foreign business permit regulations.

In his veto message the HiCom said the measure is "discriminatory against Micronesians who have married or been adopted by non-TT citizens" and that this bill if enacted "could well be set aside by the courts as being illegal" from the standpoint of "equal protection of the law."

The house Committee on Resources and Development which studied the bill and the

veto messages objected to the HiCom's reasons. It cited "laws enacted by the U.S. Congress which have been frequently challenged in the U.S. Supreme Court on the basis that they violate a similar provision of the U.S. Constitution."

"The Supreme Court repeatedly has upheld the validity of those laws if there is a reasonable basis for the classification between one class of citizens and another and the classification is not arbitrary. Your committee feels that there is a reasonable basis for the classification between citizens who are married to or adopted by non-citizens and those who are married to or adopted by

citizens and that the classification is not arbitrary," the committee report said.

The HiCom also said the bill discriminates against citizens married to or adopted by non-citizens and that it would operate "adversely" against businesses in which a citizen who is married to or adopted by a non-citizen owns any interest." The committee pointed out "the bill does not preclude such citizens from doing business in Micronesia, it merely requires them to comply with the Foreign Investment Act."

Marshalls Rep. Charles Domnick commented that the

administration is aware of the problems but did not offer remedial steps for the congress to consider. Domnick's comments drew support from Reps. Luke Tman of Yap and Ekpap Silk of the Marshalls. The motion to override passed the house unanimously.

It is the second time this session that one chamber has voted to override a High Commissioner's veto. The senate overrode the veto of a measure to make Micronesia a country of registry of ships. Both measures must be cleared by both houses before they can be returned to the High Commissioner for reconsideration.

