

(SENATE PASSES TWO BILLS)

SAIPAN, FEB 6 (MNS)---TWO BILLS PASSED FINAL READING IN THE SENATE WEDNESDAY, (FEB. 6) AND WERE SENT TO THE HOUSE FOR CONSIDERATION DURING THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF THE CURRENT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SESSION ON SAIPAN. THE SENATORS ALSO ADOPTED A JOINT RESOLUTION, AND PASSED ON FIRST READING A TOTAL OF FIFTEEN BILLS.

A BILL TO RESTRICT MEMBERSHIP ON THE DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARDS TO ONLY TRUST TERRITORY CITIZENS WAS PASSED ON SECOND READING (SB 239). PRESENTLY NON-CITIZENS OF THE TT MAY BE APPOINTED TO SUCH BOARDS. THE BILL PASSED WITHOUT DISCUSSION OR OPPOSITION, AS DID A BILL TO REQUIRE, TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE INVESTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS WITHIN MICRONESIA (SB 244). SENATOR AYATA KABUA (MARSHALLS), CHAIRMAN OF THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, COMMENTED THAT THE BILL IS FLEXIBLE, AND LEAVES OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF INVESTING THE FUNDS OUTSIDE THE TT IF GOOD, SECURE INVESTMENTS CANNOT BE FOUND WITHIN MICRONESIA.

ADOPTED ON THE RESOLUTION CALENDAR WAS A MEASURE TO "ADJURE" THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARDS TO EXERCISE THE "UTMOST CIRCUMSPECTION" IN THE GRANTING OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT PERMITS UNDER THE NEW.

RELAXED POLICY ANNOUNCED LAST MONTH BY INTERIOR SECRETARY ROGER MORTON (SR 82). THE USE OF THE WORD "ADJURE" IN THIS MEASURE SPARKED SOME COMMENT, WHEN IT DEVELOPED THAT NO ONE WAS SURE OF ITS MEANING. DURING A BRIEF RECESS A DICTIONARY WAS CONSULTED, AND IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE WORD MEANS "TO ENTREAT, TO ENJOIN SOLEMNLY, OR, IN OTHER WORDS, TO URGE SOMEONE TO DO SOMETHING. THUS IT IS AN APPROPRIATE, IF SOMEWHAT OBSCURE, WORD TO USE IN SUCH A RESOLUTION.

SENATOR OLYMPIO T. BORJA (MARIANAS) DELIVERED BRIEF REMARKS FROM THE FLOOR IN SUPPORT OF A MEASURE NOW PENDING BEFORE THE HOUSE, AND ALREADY PASSED BY THE SENATE, THAT WOULD ESTABLISH DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS AND PROVIDE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FOR THE ELECTION OF DISTADS (SEE FOLLOWING STORY). THE SENATOR'S REMARKS WERE SECONDED BY HIS MARIANAS COLLEAGUE, SENATOR EDWARD PANGELINAN, WHO ALSO ASKED THAT THE SENATE URGE ITS FELLOW LAWMAKERS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CALL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THIS IMPORTANT BILL.

SEVEN NEW BILLS AND TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED DURING THE WEDNESDAY SESSION IN THE SENATE. THE BILLS ARE: AN APPROPRIATION OF \$150,000 TO DEFRAY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND CONTINGENT EXPENSES OF THE PALAU FISHING AUTHORITY, FOR LOANS FOR FISHING ENTERPRISES, AND THE THE PURCHASE OF ICE-MAKING MACHINERY (SB 273); ANOTHER APPROPRIATION OF \$380,000 FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT AND CONSTRUCTION OF SEAWALLS FOR FEFAN ISLAND, TRUK DISTRICT (SB 274); A MEASURE CONCERNING THE TRAVEL OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY, AND OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING THE OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY, PROVIDING THAT COPIES OF SUCH CORRESPONDENCE, CONVERSATION SUMMARIES, AND COPIES OF SUCH TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS BE PROVIDED TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA (SB 275); A BILL UPDATING AND RENEWING THE PRESENT SALARY PLAN, INCLUDING SOME CHANGES TO REDUCE THE MAXIMUM COMPENSATION THAT MAY BE PAID TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES, CHANGES IN OVERTIME REGULATIONS, THE ADDITION OF SEVERAL POSITIONS TO THOSE FOR WHICH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE CONGRESS IS REQUIRED, PROVISIONS THAT WOULD PROVIDE FOR A SYSTEMATIC REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES EMPLOYED BY THE TT GOVERNMENT, AND ELIMINATION OF ALL U.S. CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES BY FORCING THEM TO VOLUNTARILY RELINQUISH SUCH STATUS AND SIGN CONTRACTS WITH THE TT GOVERNMENT, OR RESIGN,

AND A PROVISION PROVIDING FOR THE PERIODIC ROTATION OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS (SB 276); A MEASURE REVISING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN INVESTORS BUSINESS PERMIT ACT (SB 277); A BILL TO PROVIDE THAT THE TERMS OF OFFICIALS APPOINTED BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE CONGRESS SHALL AUTOMATICALLY EXPIRE UPON THE INAUGURATION OF A HIGH COMMISSIONER OTHER THAN THE ONE WHO MADE THE APPOINTMENTS, OR UPON THE INAUGURATION OF A PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. OTHER THAN THE PRESIDENT DURING WHOSE TERM SUCH OFFICIALS WERE APPOINTED (SB 278); AND AN APPROPRIATION OF \$200,000 TO THE TERRITORIAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY OFFICE FOR GRANTS TO DISTRICT COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES (SB 279);

THE TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED WEDNESDAY WOULD: DIRECT THE MICRONESIAN BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TRANSMIT ITS VIEWS TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA CONCERNING CERTAIN ISSUES (SJR 89); AND REQUEST THAT FUNDING OF THE BIKINI REHABILITATION PROJECT BE SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM GENERAL BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE MARSHALL ISLANDS DISTRICT (SJR 90).

FLOOR ACTION IN THE HOUSE WEDNESDAY MORNING CONTINUED TO BE THE FILING OF MORE BILLS, AND THE ADOPTION OF TWO HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND TWO SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS. TWO SPEECHES WERE DELIVERED, ONE BY REPRESENTATIVE POLYCARP

BASILEUS CONCERNING REMARKS ABOUT MICRONESIA BY A U.S. OFFICIAL IN NEW ZEALAND, AND TANKONG PEDRO REGARDING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN MICRONESIA, JUST BEFORE SUBMITTING A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE MICRONESIA BOARD OF EDUCATION TO EXPLORE WAYS AND MEANS OF MAKING THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN MICRONESIA MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE PEOPLE (SJR. 105).

THE FOUR BILLS THAT WERE FILED WERE: A MEASURE TO CREATE A SPECIAL SUB-ACCOUNT IN THE GENERAL FUND OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA; TO EMPLOY AND ADMINISTER PART OF SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD TO ALLOCATE AND SET ASIDE CERTAIN FUNDS FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT FUND AND PLACE THE SUM IN THE SAME SPECIAL SUB-ACCOUNT, TO CREATE AN OBLIGATION ON THE GENERAL FUND OF THE CONGRESS TO REIMBURSE THE RETIREMENT FUND AND TO MAKE PROVISIONS FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FROM THE SPECIAL SUB-ACCOUNT, (HB 196), FILED BECAUSE THE ADMINISTRATION'S WITNESSES TESTIFYING FOR THE BILL OPPOSED USING THE MONEY FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT FUND FOR SUCH A PURPOSE, AND SINCE THE RETIREMENT FUND IS HELD IN TRUST FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL CONTRIBUTORS, THE COMMITTEE FEELS THAT MONEY FROM THE FUND SHOULD BE PLACED IN FINANCIALLY SOUND, LOW-RISK INVESTMENTS; A MEASURE PROPOSING TO PROHIBIT DUAL EMPLOYMENT AND OWNERSHIP, PARTICIPATION IN OWNERSHIP, OR ENGAGING IN ANY BUSINESS OF ANY NATURE OF KEY OFFICIALS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, (HB 9), FILED BECAUSE IT IS THE FEELING OF THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS THAT PUBLIC TRUST COULD BE FOSTERED BY THE REQUIREMENT OF FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES BY MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS, THE JUDICIARY, AND KEY OFFICIALS IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, RATHER THAN BY ATTEMPTING TO PROHIBIT BUSINESS ACTIVITY ALTOGETHER, A BILL WHICH WOULD EXTEND COVERAGE OF SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT, (HB 145); FILED SINCE THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS BILL WAS ENACTED INTO LAW (PL 5-15) LAST SESSION; AND A MEASURE TO PROVIDE DISABILITY BENEFIT UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, AND TO EXTEND SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE TO TEMPORARY WORKERS AND PERSONS WITH RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS, (HB 108) FILED BECAUSE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BILL WAS ENACTED INTO PUBLIC LAW 5-7 LAST SESSION.

THE HOUSE ALSO ADOPTED AND SENT BACK TO THE SENATE A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO AMEND THEIR IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR TT CITIZENS SO THAT TT CITIZENS CAN

OBTAIN MULTIPLE ENTRY VISAS TO ENTER JAPAN, (SJR 39); AND A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO TRY TO DETERMINE HOW "MIDDLEMEN" CAN BE ELIMINATED FROM THE PROCESS OF IMPORTING GOODS INTO THE TT, THUS RESULTING IN A REDUCTION OF THE COST OF IMPORTED GOODS TO THE CONSUMER (S.J.R. 62); EACH WAS RETURNED TO THE SENATE WITH A HOUSE DRAFT, MOSTLY TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS. ALSO ADOPTED WAS A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE U.S. CONGRESS TO ENACT LEGISLATION APPROPRIATING ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO COVER CERTAIN DEFICIENCIES AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS DURING FISCAL YEAR 1974 (H.J.R. 87); AND A RESOLUTION DECLARING ENEN-KIO ATOLL (ALSO KNOWN AS WAKE ISLAND) PART OF MICRONESIA, (HJR 3).

THREE BILLS AND THREE HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED. THEY ARE: A MEASURE APPROPRIATING \$1,905,975 TO DEFRAY THE OPERATING AND CONTINGENT EXPENSES OF THE CONGRESS TO COVER THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1, 1974 TO MARCH 31, 1975, (HB 282); A BILL TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE TT CODE TO AUTHORIZE THE DISTADS AND MUNICIPAL CHIEF EXECUTIVES TO INDICATE BY WRITTEN ORDER HIGHER OR LOWER SPEED LIMITS, (HB 281); AND A MEASURE TO IMPOSE WHARFAGE AND DOCKING FEES ON VESSELS USING TT PORTS, (HB 283);

THE HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS IN ADDITION TO CONGRESSMAN TARKONG PEDRO'S RESOLUTION WOULD: REQUEST MOBIL OIL MICRONESIA, INC., TO CONSTRUCT A BULK PLANT FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS ON KUSAIE ISLAND, (HJR 106); AND URGE THE RICON TO MAKE SURE THAT GRANT FUNDS ALLOCATED AND EARMARKED FOR ULITHI ISLAND AND OTHER ISLANDS IN YAP DISTRICT ARE ACTUALLY CONTROLLED AND SPENT BY THE DISTAD REP ON ULITHI ISLAND, ESPECIALLY THE BUDGETED FUNDS FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND EDUCATION, (HJR 104).

BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS ARE IN RECESS UNTIL 10 THURSDAY MORNING.

(CALL USERS: PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(SENATOR BORJA ON CHARTERED DISTRICT GOVERNMENT)

SAIPAN, FEB. 6 (CONGRESS RELEASE---IN A SPEECH TO THE SENATE WEDNESDAY, SENATOR OLYMPIO BORJA OF THE MARIANAS URGED PASSAGE OF A BILL NOW PENDING BEFORE THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA WHICH HE SAID WAS "ABSOLUTELY VITAL AND NECESSARY FOR MICRONESIA'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT."

THE BILL, WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH CHARTERED DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS INCLUDING THE ELECTION OF TOP LEVEL DISTRICT OFFICIALS, PASSED THE SENATE DURING LAST YEAR'S REGULAR SESSION, BUT IS STILL PENDING BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

"THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THIS BILL IS IN COMPLETE ACCORDANCE WITH UNITED STATES AND UNITED NATIONS POLICY IN MICRONESIA AS WELL AS THE POLICY OF THIS CONGRESS," SAID BORJA. "IT IS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE AN INCREASING MEASURE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE."

IF THE MEASURE BECOMES LAW, BORJA POINTED OUT, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR DEPUTIES WOULD BE ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE, AND CABINET MEMBERS IN THE DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE APPOINTED WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE RESPECTIVE DISTRICT LEGISLATURES.

"EVEN IF LEGISLATION IS APPROVED BY THIS CONGRESS FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION," HE SAID, "PASSAGE OF THIS BILL WOULD ENHANCE SELF-GOVERNMENT BETWEEN NOW AND THE TIME THE CONSTITUTION WOULD TAKE EFFECT AND STRENGTHEN THE AUTONOMY OF OUR DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS. AND JUST AS IMPORTANT, AS WE NOW ANTICIPATE ADDED FOREIGN INVESTMENT FROM OTHER NATIONS AND THE RETURN OF OUR PUBLIC LANDS BACK TO THE DISTRICTS, NOW, MORE THAN EVER, WE NEED DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS AND WISHES OF THE PEOPLE."

BORJA CONTINUED: "KEY PEOPLE IN OUR EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN THE DISTRICTS NOW APPOINTED BY OUR ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY, CANNOT IN MY OPINION, BE RESPONSIVE ENOUGH TO OUR PEOPLE. WE MUST HAVE ELECTED LEADERS RUNNING OUR DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS."

IN BRIEF REMARKS FOLLOWING THE SPEECH, SENATOR EDWARD PANGELINAN URGED THE HOUSE TO THOROUGHLY CONSIDER THE MEASURE. "I FEEL THIS IS A MAJOR PIECE OF LEGISLATION BUT "UNFORTUNATELY IT MORE OR LESS HAS BEEN FILED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE." PANGELINAN SAID THE HOUSE SHOULD BE URGED TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE MATTER BECAUSE OF THE BILL'S IMPORTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA.

(ALL USERS: PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(CONGRESS OBSERVERS)

SAIPAN, FEB. 6 (CONGRESS RELEASE)---AS PART OF ITS ON-GOING PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE TRUST TERRITORY, THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA HAS INVITED KEY LEADERS, MANY FROM OUTER ISLANDS AND MUNICIPALITIES, FROM EACH DISTRICT TO OBSERVE THE SESSIONS NOW UNDERWAY ON SAIPAN.

MANY OF THE OBSERVERS, SELECTED BY EACH DISTRICT'S DELEGATION AND THE PRESIDING OFFICERS BECAUSE OF THEIR LEADERSHIP AT THE GROSS ROOTS LEVEL, BEGAN ARRIVING ON SAIPAN EARLY IN THE SESSION. IN ADDITION TO MEETING INFORMALLY WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CONGRESS, THE VISITORS HAVE ALSO TOURED THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS ON CAPITOL HILL, AS WELL AS THE MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES.

OTHER EFFORTS AIMED AT POLITICAL EDUCATION ARE ALSO UNDERWAY AT THE CONGRESS. AS A RESULT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE JOINT STATUS SUB-COMMITTEES THAT TOURED MICRONESIA LAST SUMMER, A MEASURE IS NOW BEFORE THE CONGRESS TO REVIVE THE POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMISSION TO GUARANTEE FAIR AND IMPARTIAL DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS BY SETTING POLICY FOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TASK FORCE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

IN ADDITION TO BRINGING LOCAL LEADERS TO THE CONGRESS ON SAIPAN, ONE OF THE BEST MEANS OF PROMOTING POLITICAL EDUCATION HAS BEEN HELD IN TRUK, PALAU AND PONAPE, WHICH SERVES TO FAMILIARIZE THE GENERAL PUBLIC WITH THE WORKINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT.

OBSERVERS INVITED TO SAIPAN SO FAR INCLUDE: FROM PONAPE DISTRICT, NANHWARKIS IOANIS ARTURI OF SOKENS, BENITO PETER OF KITI, AND PAUL SIGRAH, TRADITIONAL CHURCH LEADER FROM KUSAIE; FROM THE MARIANAS, FIDEL MENDIOLA, A POLITICAL LEADER FROM ROTA, AND SPEAKER OF THE TINIAN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, HARRY CRUZ; FROM PALAU, CHIEF REKLAI LOMISANG, AND CHIEF IBEDUL YUTAKA GIBBONS; FROM YAP, CHIEF ANDREW ROBOMAN OF TAMIL, AND CHIEF FERNANDO FALOURATH OF RUUL; AND FROM TRUK, CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF ULUL LEON ETPISOM, AND DISTRICT COURT JUDGE RING PUAS OF LUKUNOR. MARSHALLS OBSERVERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED.