

(HOUSE SESSION ACTIVE)

SAIPAN, FEB. 8 (MNS)---THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WAS MORE ACTIVE DURING ITS FRIDAY SESSION THAN THE SENATE, AS THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA COMPLETED FOUR FULL WEEKS OF ITS CURRENT SESSION ON SAIPAN. THREE BILLS AND A JOINT RESOLUTION WERE PASSED IN THE HOUSE, AND SENT ON TO THE SENATE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. THE SENATE, ON THE OTHER HAND, DID NOT TAKE FINAL ACTION ON ANY LEGISLATION FRIDAY.

PASSED BY THE HOUSE WERE: AN APPROPRIATION BILL OF \$250,800 TO DEFRAY OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE REVENUE DIVISION FOR FY 1975 (HB 240); A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$22,000 FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FOR THE SAME DIVISION, WHICH ACTS FOR THE CONGRESS IN COLLECTING TAX REVENUE (HB 244); AND AN APPROPRIATION OF \$42,000 FOR THE OPERATING AND CONTINGENT EXPENSES OF THE TRUST TERRITORY PERSONNEL BOARD (HB 215). ALL THREE OF THESE APPROPRIATION MEASURES WERE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

THE JOINT RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE 21 CONGRESSMEN ASKS THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO SUBMIT TO THE NEXT REGULAR SESSION HIS RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO WAYS OF EXPANDING MICRONESIA'S ECONOMIC BASE (HJR 96).

BRIEF REMARKS WERE DELIVERED ON THE FLOOR FRIDAY BY TWO MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE, CONGRESSMEN FELIPE Q. ATALIG OF THE MARIANAS, AND PALAU CONGRESSMAN TIMOTHY OLKERIIL. ATALIG SPOKE ABOUT THE SO-CALLED ECONOMIC MORATORIUM ON TINIAN, URGING HIS COLLEAGUES TO PASS A RESOLUTION HE INTRODUCED THIS WEEK AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE TO UTILIZE ATTORNEYS ON THE STAFF OF THE CONGRESS, OR ENGAGE PRIVATE COUNSEL, TO SUE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR IMPOSING THIS MORATORIUM.

CONGRESSMAN OLKERIIL ASKED THE CONGRESS TO ACT SWIFTLY ON SEVERAL BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS OF OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY THOSE DEALING WITH THE SHIPPING CRISIS, FOREIGN INVESTMENT, RETURN OF PUBLIC LANDS, AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. (SEE FOLLOWING STORY FOR FURTHER COVERAGE OF BOTH SPEECHES.)

FOUR BILLS AND TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED DURING FRIDAY'S SESSION. THE BILLS ARE: A MEASURE TO AMEND CERTAIN PORTIONS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY CODE TO ELIMINATE A TAX DEDUCTION FOR ANYONE EARNING MORE THAN \$5,000 A YEAR (HB 292); A BILL TO AMEND A PORTION OF AN APPROPRIATION MEASURE FOR THE MASHALL ISLANDS PASSED IN 1972 TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE NITIJELA PROVIDE MATCHING FUNDS (HB 293); AN APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000 TO RENOVATE AND IMPROVE THE EXISTING DISPENSARY ON LUKWONWOR ISLAND, MILI ATOLL, IN THE MARSHALLS (HB 294); AND AN ADMINISTRATION-PROPOSED BILL TO RECTIFY CERTAIN PROBLEMS THAT HAVE DEVELOPED IN COMPENSATION LEVEL FOR SO-CALLED "LOCAL HIRE" EXPATRIATE EMPLOYEES, AND FOR MICRONESIANS RECRUITED TO WORK OUTSIDE THE TRUST TERRITORY, SUCH AS IN GUAM OR HAWAII (HB 295).

THE TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED WOULD; URGE THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO STUDY THE CONCEPT OF A THREE-DAY WORK WEEK AS A MEANS OF EASING THE FUEL CRISIS IN MICRONESIA (HJR 111); AND, IN A HUMOROUS VEIN, DECLARE THAT HENCEFORTH CHRISTMAS DAY SHALL BE OBSERVED IN MICRONESIA ON APRIL FIRST, SINCE IT SEEMS TO TAKE THAT LONG FOR CHRISTMAS GOODS COMING BY SEA TO ARRIVE (HJR 110) (SEE FOLLOWING STORY).

THERE WAS NO FINAL FLOOR ACTION IN THE SENATE FRIDAY. FIVE BILLS AND TWO RESOLUTIONS, ONE OF THEM A JOINT MEASURE AND THE OTHER A SINGLE HOUSE MEASURE, WERE INTRODUCED. THE BILLS INCLUDE: AN ADMINISTRATION BILL IDENTICAL TO THE HOUSE BILL MENTIONED A MOMENT AGO, AMENDING THE SALARY PLAN LAW (SB 289); AN APPROPRIATION OF \$45,000 FOR THE TERRITORIAL HOUSING COMMISSION, A BILL THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN PASSED BY THE HOUSE (SB 290); THE TAX DEDUCTION BILL OFFERED IN THE HOUSE (SB 291); A BILL THAT

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WOULD PROVIDE A REQUIREMENT THAT UNDATED "LETTERS OF RESIGNATION" FROM THE TOP OFFICIALS OF THE TT GOVERNMENT BE KEPT ON FILE, TO BE PICKED UP IF WARRANTED AT ANY TIME (SB 287); AND A BILL PROVIDING FOR MUNICIPAL CONTROL OVER MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES, AND AMENDING THE LAW RELATING TO DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED (SB 288).

THE JOINT RESOLUTION WOULD URGE THE IMMEDIATE REINSTATEMENT OF ROGER ST. PIERRE AS CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER (SJR 92). IT WAS SIGNED BY ALL EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE SENATE WHO WERE PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER FRIDAY. THE SINGLE SENATE RESOLUTION WOULD AUTHORIZE THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE CURRENT FUEL CRISIS IN MICRONESIA AND PREPARE A REPORT NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 1974 (SR 10).

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FRIDAY SESSION, SENATOR EDWARD PANGELINAN (MARIANAS) BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF HIS COLLEAGUES THE FACT THAT AN IMPORTANT POSITION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, THAT OF CHIEF OF THE LABOR DIVISION, HAS BEEN UNFILLED FOR SOME TIME NOW. "THIS POSITION MUST BE FILLED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE," THE SENATOR SAID, ADDING "HOPEFULLY BY A QUALIFIED MICRONESIAN." PANGELINAN SAID HE UNDERSTANDS A NUMBER OF QUALIFIED MICRONESIANS HAVE APPLIED FOR THE JOB, BUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS LOOKING FOR AN EXPATRIATE.

THE MARIANAS SENATOR ALSO COMMENTED ON THE STRANGE SITUATION OF THERE BEING TWO DEPUTY DIRECTORS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, ONE OF WHOM IS PERMANENTLY STATIONED IN SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA. "WHY DO WE NEED A DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA," PANGELINAN ASKED.

SENATOR PETRUS TUN (YAP), CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTERS.

BOTH HOUSES ARE IN RECESS UNTIL TEN MONDAY MORNING, WITH MANY MEMBERS PLANNING TO TRAVEL SATURDAY TO ROTA FOR A DAY-LONG VISIT AT THE INVITATION OF ROTA MUNICIPAL LEADERS.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: IN THE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7 CONGRESS DISPATCH FROM MICRONESIAN NEWS SERVICE, THIRD PARAGRAPH OF THE LEAD STORY, THERE IS AN INCORRECT STATEMENT. PLEASE INSERT THE INFORMATION THAT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS TEN DAYS TO REVIEW ALL BILLS HE RECEIVES ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 22. ANY BILLS TRANSMITTED TO HIM AFTER THAT DATE WILL HAVE THIRTY DAYS BEFORE ACTION MUST BE TAKEN ON THEM. PLEASE MAKE THIS CORRECTION IF ANY FURTHER USE IS TO BE MADE OF THAT STORY. MNS REGRETS THE ERROR.)

(ALL USERS, PLEASE CREDIT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(ATALIG URGES COM TO SUE OVER TINIAN)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 8 (CONGRESS RELEASE--URGING THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA NOT TO SET A PRECEDENT FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE MORATORIUMS, MARIANAS REPRESENTATIVE FELIPE Q. ATALIG ASKED THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FRIDAY TO PASS A RESOLUTION TO SUE THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO END ITS MORATORIUM ON THE ISLAND OF TINIAN.

IF ADOPTED BY THE CONGRESS, THE RESOLUTION WOULD AUTHORIZE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO RETAIN LEGAL COUNSEL ON BEHALF OF TINIAN TO GO TO COURT TO END THE UNITED STATES IMPOSED CANCELLATION OF A HOMESTEAD PROGRAM ALONG WITH ALL BUSINESS APPLICATIONS AND PERMITS ON TINIAN.

EXPLAINING THE DILEMMA, ATALIG SAID: "THE UNITED STATES IS OBLIGATED TO PROMOTE THE ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF MICRONESIA AND TO PROTECT THE LANDS AND RESOURCES OF ITS PEOPLE BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT HAS THE RIGHT TO USE THESE LANDS FOR STRATEGIC PURPOSES. CONSEQUENTLY, WE HAVE BEEN FACED WITH THE PERPLEXING SITUATION WHERE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR SPEAKS ABOUT SELF-GOVERNMENT AND MICRONESIANS MAKING THE DECISIONS, AND A NEW FOREIGN INVESTMENT POLICY, AFTER THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED A UNILATERAL MORATORIUM ON TINIAN."

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HE SAID BECAUSE OF THE STATUS QUESTION, MANY MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS MIGHT CONSIDER THE MORATORIUM A DISTRICT MATTER, HOWEVER, ATALIG REMINDED THE HOUSE: "...WE ARE STILL A TRUSTEESHIP AND WE ARE STILL ALL WORKING HERE TOGETHER FOR THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA."

ASKING THE HOUSE TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF SUCH MORATORIUMS ARE DECLARED IN THE FUTURE FOR PALAU, FOR THE MARSHALLS, TRUK, YAP OR PONAPE, ATALIG SAID: "SHALL TINIAN THEN BECOME THE PRECEDENT FOR WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?"

ATALIG SAID THE CONGRESS MUST SET A PRECEDENT AND AN EXAMPLE AND NOT ALLOW SUCH A SITUATION TO EXIST FOR FEAR OF WHAT THE FUTURE MIGHT BRING. "WE CANNOT SIT IDLY AND CALMLY AND WATCH THE RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE BE ABUSED BECAUSE...AMERICAN BLOOD WAS SPILLED ON OUR ISLANDS."

"THESE PEOPLE OF TINIAN DESERVE THEIR DAY IN COURT," HE SAID. "I HOPE THIS CONGRESS WILL USE ITS RESOURCES AND AUTHORITY TO RIGHT THE WRONG THAT HAS BEEN IMPOSED ON THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN."

MEANWHILE, CONGRESSMAN TIMOTHY OLKERIIL OF PALAU DELIVERED A CRITICAL SPEECH CONCERNING THE GENERAL WORK OF THE CONGRESS TO DATE IN TERMS OF MAJOR ISSUES CONFRONTING MICRONESIA, FROM POLITICAL STATUS, CURRENT SHIPPING CRISIS, THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, RETURN OF PUBLIC LANDS AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

IN HIS STATEMENT, THE PALAU CONGRESSMAN CALLED UPON MEMBERS OF CONGRESS "TO GET DOWN TO BUSINESS AND LEGISLATE ON VITAL ISSUES" AND STOP WASTING TIME DEBATING AND ARGUING OVER "TRIVIAL MATTERS" OR PASSING MINOR LEGISLATION WHICH WILL BE REPLACED WHEN THE NEW MICRONESIAN GOVERNMENT IS FORMED.

OLKERIIL URGED CONGRESS TO FIRST TACKLE THE ISSUES WHICH, ALTHOUGH TEMPORARY IN NATURE, DESERVE "OUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION..."

SPEAKING ABOUT MICRONESIA'S MOVEMENT TOWARDS FULL SELF-GOVERNMENT, OLKERIIL SAID: "BEFORE THE FULL REIGN OVER INTERNAL AFFAIRS IS TURNED OVER TO US, WE GO THROUGH THE WHOLE PROCESS OF CHANGING THE WHEELS OF POWER IN MICRONESIA. WE CANNOT SIT BACK AND EXPECT THE U.S. TO VOLUNTARILY AND FREELY HAND OVER CONTROL OVER OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS." HE ADDED THAT CONGRESS MUST INDICATE TO THE UNITED STATES HOW, WHEN, AND WHY MICRONESIA WANTS SELF-GOVERNMENT.

OLKERIIL AGAIN ECHOED THE POSITION OF THE PALAU DELEGATION IN TERMS OF POLITICAL STATUS PRESENTED IN BOTH HOUSES LAST WEEK, ADVOCATING A LOOSE FEDERATION OF STATES AS THE MOST SUITABLE POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE FOR ALL OF MICRONESIA. HE EMPHASIZED: "WE DO NOT WANT THE CONGRESS TO CONTINUE TO ENACT LAWS WHICH ONLY PERPETUATE" THE STATUS QUO. HE POINTED OUT THAT HIS PEOPLE WANT CHANGE "AND WANT IT FAST AND IF THE CONGRESS WHICH HAS THE POWER TO EFFECT CHANGE, REFUSES TO BRING ABOUT CHANGES, HIS DISTRICT "MAY BE FORCED" TO TAKE THE MATTER INTO ITS OWN HANDS."

THESE ISSUES DEMAND SOLUTION FROM THIS SESSION." HE SAID THE CURRENT SESSION IS "WITHOUT DIRECTION" TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT CONGRESS HAS COME HALFWAY THROUGH ITS FIFTY-DAY SESSION AND HAS DONE VERY LITTLE IN TERMS OF LEGISLATION TO MEET MICRONESIA'S PROBLEMS.

(SUMMARY OF FIRST HALF OF SESSION)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 8 (MNS)---ALTHOUGH THE OUTPUT OF LEGISLATION IS ONLY ONE MEASURE OF THE ACTIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF A SESSION OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, IT IS THE ONE MOST COMMONLY USED AND UNDERSTOOD BY THE LAYMAN. BY THIS STANDARD, THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE FIFTH CONGRESS HAS NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE SO FAR, ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF PIECES OF LEGISLATION TECHNICALLY UNDER CONSIDERATION EXCEEDS 500.

AS OF THE COMPLETION OF THE 25TH DAY OF THE 50-DAY SESSION, ONLY TWO BILLS HAD PASSED FINAL READING OF BOTH HOUSES AND BEEN SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. IN ADDITION, FINAL LEGISLATIVE ACTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED ON SIX JOINT RESOLUTIONS. IN THE TWO HOUSES, THE ACTION LOOKS LIKE THIS: THE SENATE HAS PASSED ELEVEN BILLS ON FINAL READING, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS PASSED SEVEN BILLS ON FINAL READING, AND ADOPTED ELEVEN JOINT RESOLUTIONS.

IN ADDITION, A TOTAL OF 28 BILLS HAVE BEEN FILED, ALL BUT ONE OF THEM IN THE HOUSE, AND FIVE JOINT RESOLUTIONS HAVE BEEN FILED, ALSO ALL BUT ONE IN THE HOUSE.

WHEN IT COMES TO INTRODUCING NEW LEGISLATION, THE CURRENT SESSION HAS BEEN EXTREMELY ACTIVE. DURING THE FIRST HALF, NEARLY 250 NEW MEASURES WERE INTRODUCED. IN THE HOUSE, THERE WERE 84 BILLS OFFERED, ALONG WITH 36 JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND 4 RESOLUTIONS. SENATORS HAVE INTRODUCED 102 BILLS, 15 JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND THREE RESOLUTIONS.

VIRTUALLY ALL OF THESE NEW MEASURES REMAIN UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES, AS DO MANY OF THE MEASURES LEFT FROM LAST SESSION. THE STATISTICS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE REMAINING DAYS OF THIS CONGRESSIONAL SESSION WILL BE BUSY ONES.

(CHRISTMAS ON APRIL FOOLS DAY)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 8 (MNS)---CHRISTMAS SHOULD BE CELEBRATED IN MICRONESIA NEXT YEAR ON APRIL FOOLS DAY. THAT, AT LEAST, IS THE CONTENTION OF TRUK CONGRESSMAN RAYMOND SETIK, WHO INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION TO THAT EFFECT DURING FRIDAY'S SESSION OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA.

SAYING HIS JOINT RESOLUTION IS "VERY, VERY IMPORTANT," SETIK OFFERED HIS MEASURE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF HIS COLLEAGUES, AND IT WAS DULY ASSIGNED TO ALL STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE.

THE MEASURE READS: "WHEREAS, THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA ARE LARGELY DEPENDENT UPON OCEAN TRANSPORTATION FOR THE DELIVERY OF MUCH OF THE MATERIAL TRAPPINGS OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, MANY TYPES OF FOOD, GIFTS, AND SPIRITS. IF NOT SPIRIT, AND;

"WHEREAS, UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA, OCEAN SHIPPING IN THE TRUST TERRITORY IS PROVIDED BY TRANSPACIFIC LINES, INC., AND;

"WHEREAS, AS THE RESULT OF THE ALLEGED SERVICE PROVIDED BY TRANSPACIFIC LINES, INC., GOODS INTENDED FOR DELIVERY IN MICRONESIA FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO REMAIN ON DOCKS AND IN WAREHOUSES IN DIVERSE PLACES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD UNTIL WELL AFTER THAT SEASON IS BUT A MEMORY WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASANT IN THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE, AND;

"WHEREAS, GIVEN THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY TRANSPACIFIC LINES, INC., IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE THAT CHRISTMAS IN MICRONESIA BE OBSERVED SOMEWHAT LATER DURING THE NEXT SUCCEEDING YEAR NOW, THEREFORE,

"BE IT RESOLVED, ... THAT CHRISTMAS DAY IN MICRONESIA SHALL BE OBSERVED ON APRIL 1 OF THE NEXT SUCCEEDING YEAR, SO THAT THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA MIGHT BE ABLE TO OBSERVE THAT JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF GOODS SHIPPED TO MICRONESIA VIA OCEAN TRANSPORTATION INTENDED FOR DELIVERY AT SUCH CHRISTMAS SEASON, AND;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT APRIL 1 IS CHOSEN AS THE DATE OF SUCH OBSERVANCE BECAUSE THE ABILITY OF TRANSPACIFIC LINES, INC., TO DELIVER GOODS TO MICRONESIA IN TIME FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IS A PROPOSITION BELIEVED ONLY BY THOSE WHOM THAT DATE COMMEMORATES..."

5
COPIES OF THE RESOLUTION, IF IT IS ADOPTED, ARE TO BE
SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, THE PRESIDENT OF TRANSPACIFIC
LINES, AND TO SANTA CLAUS.