

(FOUR BILLS TO HICOM)

SAIPAN, MARCH 2 (MNS) --- FOUR MORE BILLS ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AS A RESULT OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON THE 48TH DAY OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SESSION SATURDAY (MARCH 2). THE HOUSE PASSED TWO AND THE SENATE TWO.

PASSED AND SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER BY THE HOUSE WERE: A MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPIRATION OF NONRESIDENT WORKER'S AGREEMENT BETWEEN AN EMPLOYER AND THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT WHEN NO NONRESIDENT WORKER HAS BEEN HIRED AND IS PRESENT IN THE TRUST TERRITORY WITHIN SIXTY DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE AGREEMENT, (SB 103); AND A MEASURE TO CREATE PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THE HOLDER OF A HOMESTEAD CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE, (SB 263). BOTH MEASURES PASSED THE HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY.

ON THE MEASURE REGARDING EXPIRATION OF PERMITS TO HIRE NON-RESIDENT WORKERS, BEFORE AN EMPLOYER DESIRES TO HIRE A NONRESIDENT WORKER, HE MUST GO THROUGH A PROCEDURE SPECIFIED UNDER THE LAW. AFTER AN EMPLOYER FILES AN APPLICATION WITH THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE, THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE ATTEMPTS TO FILL THE JOB VACANCY WITH A QUALIFIED RESIDENT WORKER; HOWEVER, IN THE EVENT NO QUALIFIED RESIDENT WORKERS CAN BE FOUND, THE CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF LABOR MAY DETERMINE THAT A NONRESIDENT WORKER CAN BE HIRED. THE CHIEF REQUIRES THAT A NONRESIDENT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BE ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE EMPLOYER AND THE TT GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYER TO HIRE NON-RESIDENT WORKERS. THE LAW, HOWEVER, DOES NOT MAKE PROVISION FOR THE EXPIRATION OF THESE AGREEMENTS, WHICH REMAINS THEORETICALLY VALID FOREVER. THE BILL PROVIDES THAT THE EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WOULD EXPIRE IN 60 DAYS. THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS FELT THAT "AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WITH NO DEFINITE EXPIRATION DATE AUTHORIZING AN EMPLOYER TO HIRE A NONRESIDENT WORKER IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CITIZENS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY. EXPIRATION OF THE AGREEMENT AFTER 60 DAYS WOULD PERMIT A QUALIFIED MICRONESIAN CITIZEN TO COME FORWARD AND APPLY FOR THE POSITION..."

REGARDING A MEASURE TO DEFINE PROPERTY RIGHTS IN CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE, THE MEASURE WILL ELIMINATE THE PROCESS WHEREBY A HOLDER OF A PERMIT TO HOMESTEAD LAND THAT HAS OCCUPIED HIS LAND FOR THREE YEARS IS ISSUED A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE BY THE DISTAD, AND FOLLOWING THAT, THE HICOM IS REQUIRED TO ISSUE THE HOMESTEADER A DEED OF CONVEYANCE, WHICH THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT FOUND USUALLY TAKES A NUMBER OF YEARS. "THIS BILL," THE COMMITTEE REPORTED, "WOULD CREATE PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THE HOMESTEADER UPON BEING ISSUED THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE, WHICH HE COULD SELL, ASSIGN OR PASS BY INHERITANCE."

THE OTHER TWO BILLS ON THEIR WAY TO THE HICOM AS THE RESULT OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITY SATURDAY CAME OUT OF THE SENATE, WHICH ACCEPTED HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO A NATURALIZATION MEASURE (SB 58) AND TO A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE EDUCATION OF "SPECIAL CHILDREN, EITHER THOSE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR HANDICAPS, OR CONVERSELY, THOSE WITH EXCEPTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OR TALENT (SB 242).

A TOTAL OF 16 BILLS HAS NOW COME OUT OF THE CURRENT SESSION. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER WILL HAVE THIRTY DAYS FROM THE DATE OF OFFICIAL RECEIPT TO ACT ON THESE LATEST MEASURES.

(SENATE ACTIVITY SATURDAY)

SAIPAN MARCH 2 (MNS) --- A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA, RALPH KAREPA, WAS A GUEST IN THE GALLERY DURING SATURDAY MORNING'S (MAR. 2) SESSION OF THE SENATE. THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR THE TWELVE LAWMAKERS WAS TO ADOPT A JOINT RESOLUTION WELCOMING KAREPA TO MICRONESIA AND EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT HIS VISIT WILL BE A PRODUCTIVE AND ENJOYABLE ONE. KAREPA, WHO ARRIVED ON SAIPAN FRIDAY AFTER VISITS TO PONAPE

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AND GUAM, IS ON HIS WAY BACK TO HIS COUNTRY FROM WASHINGTON, D.C. WHERE HE HAS WORKED ON PAPUA NEW GUINEA AFFAIRS FOR MOST OF THE PAST YEAR WITH THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY.

AFTER KAREPA HAD BEEN INTRODUCED, THE SENATORS TURNED TO THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR, AND IN RAPID ORDER PASSED THREE BILLS ON FINAL READING FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE HOUSE, AND ACCEPTED HOUSE AMENDMENTS ON A PRIVATE NATURALIZATION BILL THAT NOW GOES TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. THEY ALSO ADOPTED THREE ADDITIONAL RESOLUTIONS BEFORE RECESSING UNTIL LATER IN THE DAY.

BY FAR THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AND FAR-REACHING PIECE OF LEGISLATION ACTED ON BY THE SENATE SATURDAY WAS THE BILL TO FACILITATE THE RETURN OF SO-CALLED PUBLIC LANDS TO THE DISTRICTS (SB 296). THE MEASURE PROVIDES FOR PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE U.S. POLICY STATEMENT ON RETURN OF PUBLIC LAND ANNOUNCED LAST FALL. IF PASSED BY THE HOUSE IN THE NEXT THREE DAYS, THE BILL WILL HAVE TO BE RANKED AS ONE OF THE MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SESSION IN TERMS OF IMPACT.

(NOTE: SENATE BILL 295 IS BOTH LONG AND COMPLICATED. IF AND WHEN THE BILL IS PASSED BY THE HOUSE, WE WILL MAKE IT THE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE, DETAILED STORY.)

ANOTHER MAJOR ACTION TAKEN SATURDAY BY THE SENATE WAS TO PASS A BILL WHICH SETS UP THE ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT OF KUSAIE AS THE TRUST TERRITORY'S SEVENTH DISTRICT (SB298). PRIOR TO THEIR UNANIMOUS VOTE TO APPROVE THIS MEASURE, NEARLY EVERY MEMBER OF THE SENATE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUT INTO THE RECORD SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF KUSAIE, AND SOME STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THEIR LONG-SOUGHT OBJECTIVES OF SEPARATE DISTRICT STATUS. DR. HIROSI ISMAEL KUSAIE LEADER AND FORMER CONGRESS MEMBER, WAS A WITNESS IN THE GALLERY TO THE VOTE, AND AFTERWARD WAS CONGRATULATED BY SEVERAL MEMBERS AND SPECTATORS.

UNDER THE BILL AS PASSED BY THE SENATE, KUSAIE WOULD BECOME A DISTRICT ON JANUARY 1, 1977, THEREBY ALLOWING FOR TWO YEARS OF "LEAD TIME" FOR ALL THREE BRANCHES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE NECESSARY CHANGES AND ADJUSTMENTS THAT WILL BE REQUIRED. THE SENATE ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP FROM A DISTRICT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BE CHANGED FROM TWO TO ONE IN VIEW OF KUSAIE'S POPULATION OF JUST OVER FOUR THOUSAND. WHEN IT BECOMES A DISTRICT, KUSAIE WILL BE THE SMALLEST OF THE SEVEN.

"THE DESIRE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT IS NOT ONE WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN LIGHTLY, AS THIS CONGRESS HAS SAID SO MANY TIMES IN THE PAST," NOTES THE REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS ON THE BILL. "WE BELIEVE THAT KUSAIE'S ECONOMIC POTENTIAL, HER POPULATION, HER UNIQUE CULTURE, AND HER INABILITY TO OBTAIN WHAT SHE BELIEVES IS AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FROM THE DISTRICT CENTER ALL MILITATE IN FAVOR OF APPROVING HER DESIRES. WE NOW RECOMMEND THAT THOSE DESIRES SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED."

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHICH HAS ALREADY UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ADVOCATING THE CREATION OF KUSAIE DISTRICT, WILL NOW TAKE UP CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL THAT WOULD ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL.

THE THIRD BILL PASSED AND SENT FROM THE SENATE TO THE HOUSE SATURDAY MORNING WAS A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUES FROM IMPORT DUTIES (SB 265). PRESENT LAW PROVIDES THAT FIFTY PER CENT OF SUCH TAXES GOES TO THE DISTRICTS WHERE THE TAXES WERE COLLECTED FOR APPROPRIATION BY THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURES. THE BILL WOULD AMEND THIS TO PROVIDE THAT ONE HUNDRED PER CENT OF SUCH REVENUES WOULD GO TO THE DISTRICTS. THE BILL ALSO APPLIES TO SCRAP METAL EXPORT TAXES, WHICH HAVE BEEN A STEADILY DECREASING SOURCE OF REVENUE IN RECENT YEARS.

THE PRIVATE BILL ON ITS WAY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER IS ONE MAKING ESTAFANIA RIOS OF SAIPAN ELIGIBLE FOR NATURALIZATION AS A

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TRUST TERRITORY CITIZEN (SB 58).

ON THE RESOLUTION CALENDAR, THE SENATORS ADOPTED A MEASURE ASKING THAT U.S. INCOME TAXES COLLECTED FROM UNITED STATES CITIZENS WORKING IN MICRONESIA BE PAID INTO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA GENERAL FUND (SJR 4); A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CONGRESS TO CHOOSE A SITE FOR A SPECIAL SESSION THIS SUMMER, SHOULD ONE BE CALLED (THIS MEASURE ORIGINALLY WOULD HAVE INDICATED A PREFERENCE FOR MAJURO AS THE SITE, BUT WAS AMENDED TO A MORE GENERAL FORM--HJR 78); AND A MEASURE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PREMIER OF THE COOK ISLANDS, SIR ALBERT HENRY, ON HIS BEING AWARDED A KNIGHTHOOD OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE ((SJR 96).

RECONVENING LATER SATURDAY AFTERNOON, THE SENATE RESUMED DELIBERATIONS AND PASSED SEVERAL ADDITIONAL MEASURES, INCLUDING TWO WHICH ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (SEE PREVIOUS STORY).

PASSED ON SECOND READING AND SENT TO THE HOUSE FOR CONSIDERATION WERE: A BILL RELATING TO BENEFITS FOR THE RADIATION FALLOUT VICTIMS OF RONGELAP AND UTIPIK ATOLLS IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS (SB 340--SEE CONGRESS RELEASE WHICH FOLLOWS); A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE REAPPORTIONMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE REPRESENTATION FROM PALAU AND THE MARIANAS BY ONE MEMBER EACH AND ADD AN ADDITIONAL CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT TO TRUK AND THE MARSHALL ISLANDS DISTRICTS (SB 311); A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR A BOARD OF UTILITY RATES (SB 202); AND TWO BILLS ON WHICH SENATE AMENDMENTS WERE ADDED, ONE TO APPROPRIATE \$659,000 FOR TT SCHOLARSHIPS, STUDENT LOANS, AND A BUS FOR MICRONESIAN STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM (HB 254); AND ONE TO EXEMPT NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM PAYMENT OF THE GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUEL EXCISE TAX (HB 277).

THE ONLY ONE OF THESE MEASURES WHICH PRODUCED ANY NEGATIVE VOTES WAS THE REAPPORTIONMENT BILL. BOTH SENATORS FROM THE MARIANAS, WHICH WOULD LOSE A CONGRESSMAN UNDER THE FORMULA FOR REAPPORTIONMENT IN THE BILL, VOTED NO, ALONG WITH SENATOR BAILEY OLTER (PONAPE). SEVERAL OTHER MEMBERS ABSTAINED TWICE. THE BILL IS EXPECTED TO FACE MUCH TOUGHER OPPOSITION IN THE HOUSE, WHICH IS THE BODY BEING REAPPORTIONED UNDER THE BILL. FIGURES FROM THE 1973 TERRITORIAL CENSUS WERE USED IN THE FORMULA, AND THE PRINCIPLE IS THAT EACH MEMBER OF THE HOUSE SHOULD REPRESENT ROUGHLY THE SAME NUMBER OF PEOPLE, IN SO FAR AS THIS IS FEASIBLE.

THE SENATE WILL MEET AGAIN ON SUNDAY, IN AN AFTERNOON SESSION TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH A SESSION OF THE HOUSE, SO THAT LEGISLATION CAN BE HAND CARRIED FROM ONE CHAMBER TO THE OTHER TO FACILITATE THE WORK OF THE CONGRESS IN THE FINAL TWO DAYS OF THE SESSION.

(HOUSE ACTIVITY--48TH DAY)

SAIPAN, MARCH 2 (MNS)---THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSED TWO BILLS AND SENT THEM TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (SEE PREVIOUS STORY), DEFERRED ACTION ON ANOTHER, AND SENT TO THE SENATE FOUR MORE BILLS, ONE OF THEM A SENATE BILL, DURING TWO LENGTHY SESSIONS SATURDAY (MARCH 2).

PASSED AND SENT TO THE SENATE WERE: A MEASURE TO PERMIT THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT TO GRANT THE USE OF PUBLIC LAND ON PAGAN AND IN THE KAGMAN AND MARPI AREAS OF SAIPAN FOR PUBLIC USES, (HB 334); A BILL TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE EDUCATION FOR THE SPECIAL CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND TWENTY-ONE WHOSE PRESENCE IN THE REGULAR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OR MAY BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE EDUCATION OF OTHERS, OR WHO ARE UNABLE TO FUNCTION IN A NORMAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT SPECIAL ASSISTANCE, (SB 242); AND TWO NATURALIZATION MEASURES, (HB 286, AND 287).

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THE HOUSE DEFERRED ACTION ON A MEASURE WHICH WOULD PRESCRIBE MINIMUM COMPENSATION STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYEES, (HB 71) DISSEFER THE SECOND TIME IN AS MANY DAYS, MARSHALLS CONGRESSMAN CHARLES DOMNICK MADE A MOTION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS A CONTROVERSIAL REVENUE SHARING BILL, (HB 229). REPRESENTATIVE RESIO MOSES (PONAPE) MOVED TO HAVE THE HOUSE MEMBERS AGAIN VOTE IN SECRET BALLOT. THE RESULT WAS 11 FOR AND EIGHT AGAINST, AND THUS THE MOTION TO WITHDRAW PASSED THE HOUSE.

AFTER THE MEASURE WAS PLACED ON THE BILL CALENDAR FOR SECOND READING, TRUK CONGRESSMAN REYMOND SETIK SAID IN A PREPARED STATEMENT THAT WHILE HE FAVORS THE INTENT OF THE BILL WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE FUNDS FOR APPROPRIATION BY THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, HE URGED HIS COLLEAGUES NOT TO PASS THE MEASURE "AT THIS TIME." HE GAVE SEVERAL REASONS FOR HIS OBJECTION TO THE MEASURE.

REPRESENTATIVE POLYCARP BASILIUS (PALAU) URGED THE HOUSE TO PASS THE BILL, SAYING THE MARSHALLS DISTRICT HAS BEEN ASKING FOR THE REVENUE SHARING BILL TO PASS THE CONGRESS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE CONGRESS SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK THE PEOPLE'S INTEREST. THE PALAU CONGRESSMAN NOTED THAT WHILE THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ACTING ON CERTAIN LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MICRONESIA, HE URGED THE HOUSE TO PASS THE MEASURE TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MARSHALLS.

THE HOUSE THEN RECESSED TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. WHEN THEY RECONVENED, TRUK CONGRESSMAN SASAU HARUO MADE A MOTION THAT THE HOUSE RECESS UNTIL SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT TWO P.M. THE MOTION CARRIED. THERE WAS NO FURTHER ACTION ON THE REVENUE SHARING BILL, WHICH REMAINS ON THE CALENDAR FOR SECOND READING.

(ALL USERS PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(BORJA URGES END OF MORATORIUM)

SAIPAN, MARCH 2 (CONGRESS RELEASE)---SENATOR OLYMPIO T. BORJA OF THE MARIANAS INSERTED INTO THE SENATE JOURNAL FRIDAY (MARCH 2) A STATEMENT CONCERNING HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 88 WHICH DEMANDS THAT THE UNITED STATES IMMEDIATELY END THE UNILATERALLY IMPOSED MORATORIUM ON HOMESTEADING AND LEASING OF PUBLIC LANDS ON TINIAN ISLAND.

IN THE STATEMENT BORJA POINTED OUT THAT IN THE AGREEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 6 OF THE TRUSTEESHIP, THE UNITED STATES OBLIGATED ITSELF TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECT THE LANDS AND RESOURCES OF THE MICRONESIAN PEOPLE. HOWEVER, THE SAME DOCUMENT GAVE THE U.S. THE RIGHT TO "USE THESE SAME LANDS, IF NEED BE, FOR STRATEGIC PURPOSES," HE NOTED.

BORJA SAID, "DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF THE TRUSTEESHIP, THE UNITED STATES USED THIS POWER TO EVACUATE THE RESIDENTS OF BIKINI AND ENIWETOK ATOLLS IN THE MARSHALLS TO MAKE WAY FOR NUCLEAR TESTING. AND IN THE EARLY 1960'S USED PART OF THE ISLAND OF SAIPAN AS A TRAINING CENTER FOR NATIONALIST CHINESE."

DENATOR BORJA FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT EVEN AS THE END OF THE TRUSTEESHIP DRAWS NEAR, MICRONESIANS CAN SEE THAT THE UNITED STATES' STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE TRUST TERRITORY HAS NOT "DIMINISHED," BUT "INCREASED."

DURING EARLY MAY OF LAST YEAR, BORJA CITED, IN THE MIDST OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND THE U.S., WITHOUT INFORMING THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN OR THE MARIANAS LEADERS, THE U.S. DIRECTED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO HALT THE ISSUANCE OF HOMESTEADING PERMITS ON TINIAN EVEN THOUGH THE COMMISSION HAD ACTUALLY REQUESTED THAT ONLY LONG-TERM LEASES FOR PUBLIC LAND BY NON-CITIZENS SHOULD HAVE BEEN HALTED WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS TO MICRONESIANS.

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BORJA DECLARED: "THIS MOVE BY THE U.S. DEPRIVES THE PEOPLE OF TINIAN OF HOMESTEADS PROMISED TO THEM SINCE THEIR RELOCATION FROM YAP DISTRICT SHORTLY AFTER WORLD WAR II." HE CRITICIZED THE OFFICE OF MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS FOR HAVING "PROMISED THAT THE SITUATION WAS ONLY 'TEMPORARY' AND WOULD ONLY LAST DURING THE LENGTH OF THE NEGOTIATIONS"--U.S./ MARIANAS. HE SAID THAT THE WORD "TEMPORARY" IN IT TERMS OFTEN MEANS "PERMANENT," AND TO UNILATERALLY DEPRIVE ANY OF HIS PEOPLE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR LANDS PROMISED THEM FOR DECADES FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME IS "UNFAIR AND UNJUST."

BORJA INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS HAVE STATED IN THE PAST THAT THEY WOULD WELCOME THE MILITARY INTO THE MARIANAS, THEY ARE "WITHOUT DOUBT OPPOSED TO THE U.S. EXERCISE OF "CARTE BLANCHE" PRIVILEGES. HE SAID THESE PRIVILEGES ARE "INCLUDED IN THE STRATEGIC TRUST AGREEMENT TO EMPLOY MUCH HEAVY-HANDED TACTICS WITH ITS OWN INTERESTS AND NOT MICRONESIA'S INTERESTS IN MIND."

THE SENATOR POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH ONE-THIRD OF TINIAN HAS BEEN CLASSIFIED AS "MILITARY RETENTION" LANDS SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II, THE U.S. MUST BE REMINDED THAT "TINIAN DOES NOT BELONG TO THE UNITED STATES." HE SAID. "TINIAN BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS. AND THIS FACT MUST BE THE 'CORNERSTONE' OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE, OR ELSE THAT RELATIONSHIP IS DOOMED."

BORJA CONCLUDED THAT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TO SEE THAT MICRONESIANS' GOD-GIVEN RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED AND IT MUST THEREFORE DEMAND THE TERMINATION OF THE TINIAN MORATORIUM.

(ALL USERS PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(RONGELAP-UTIRIK COMMITTEE REPORT)

SAIPAN, MARCH 2 (KCONGRESS RELEASE)---THE SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE CONCERNING RONGELAP AND UTIRIK ATOLLS RECOMMENDED TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SATURDAY THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SHOULD COMPENSATE OVER 200 MARSHALL ISLANDERS, FOR LONG TERM EFFECTS AND INJURIES RECEIVED BY HARMFUL RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT FROM A HYDROGEN BOMB TEST ON BIKINI ATOLL NEARLY 20 YEARS AGO TO THE DAY.

THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED COMPENSATION IN FOUR CATEGORIES: \$50,000 FOR EACH PARENT OF LEKOJ ANJAIN, WHO DIED OF LEUKEMIA IN 1972; THE SUM OF \$25,000 FOR EVERY RONGELAPESE WHO HAS UNDERGONE OPERATIONS DUE TO RADIATION-INDUCED DISEASES \$1,000 FOR EVERY RESIDENT OF UTIRIK WHO HAS EXPOSED AND TEMPORARILY RELOCATED; AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT FUND OF \$25,000 FOR RONGELAP AND UTIRIK ATOLLS TO BE USED FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND COMPENSATION FOR OTHER DAMAGES TO THE ISLANDS.

IN SUBMITTING THE REPORT TO THE SENATE, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLYMPIO T. BORJA OF THE MARIANAS STATED: "IT IS A SAD BUT TRUE FACT THAT COMPENSATION FOR THESE PEOPLE CAN NEVER MAKE THEM 'WHOLE' AGAIN. WHAT WRONG HAS BEEN COMMITTED CAN NEVER BE ERASED BY BETTER MEDICAL TREATMENT, OR EVER THE PAYMENT OF MONEY. HOWEVER, COMPENSATION CAN ATTEMPT TO DO THIS AND THE GESTURE, IF NOTHING ELSE, MAY HAVE SOME HELPFUL EFFECT UPON THESE PEOPLE."

BORJA SAID HIS COMMITTEE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS BE GIVEN TO THE FALLOUT VICTIMS, INJURED IN THE FIRST HYDROGEN BOMB EXPLOSION ON MARCH 1, 1954, AND EMPHASIZED THE REPORT SUGGESTS FIGURES WHICH HE TERMED "MINIMUM DEMANDS."

"WE ARE NOT RECOMMENDING INFLATED FIGURES TO BE NEGOTIATED UPON," HE DECLARED. "WE FAIL TO SEE ANY MERIT IN NEGOTIATION IN THIS CASE. THE FACTS ARE CLEAR. THE PEOPLE WERE INJURED. THE UNITED STATES IS RESPONSIBLE. THE UNITED STATES THUS MUST

DO JUSTICE TO THESE PEOPLE."

THE MARIANAS SENATOR TOLD THE SENATE IN THE EVENT THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT WISH TO DO JUSTICE TO THESE PEOPLE, HIS COMMITTEE HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE PEOPLE OF RONGELAP AND UTIRIK ENGAGE LEGAL COUNSEL AND FILE A CLASS ACTION SUIT AGAINST THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

LAST YEAR, FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE RONGELAP AND UTIRIK PROBLEM, A REPORT WAS SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS TO EXTENSIVELY STUDY THE INJURIES THE PEOPLE RECEIVED AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING MEDICAL TREATMENT. BORJA SAID IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA HAD TO USE TAXPAYER'S MONEY TO STUDY A PROBLEM CREATED BY THE UNITED STATES, BUT INDICATED HE FELT THE MONEY WAS WELL-SPENT. BECAUSE OF LAST YEAR'S REPORT, HE SAID THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT AND THE U.S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION ARE PRESENTLY NEGOTIATING FOR SUPPORT FOR THE FALLOUT VICTIMS, AND TO PROVIDE "INCONVENIENCE" PAYMENTS TO THE UTIRIKES FOR THEIR TEMPORARY RELOCATION.

IN 1964, FUNDS WERE APPROPRIATED FOR THE PEOPLE OF RONGELAP BY THE U.S. CONGRESS AMOUNTING TO \$10,400 PER PERSON, HOWEVER, THIS WAS BEFORE THE LONG-RANGE EFFECTS OF THE HARMFUL RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT BECAME APPARENT, AND BEFORE OPERATIONS ON MANY REONGELAPESE BECAME NECESSARY.

BORJA SAID SINCE THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE BEGAN STUDYING THE RONGELAP AND UTIRIK QUESTION AND AFTER HAVING MET THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE HYDROGEN BOMB TEST, HE NOW HAS "MORE THAN JUST SIMPLE SYMPATHY FOR THESE PEOPLE."

"I HAVE AN EMOTION WHICH IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE," HE SAID, "AND THE ONLY WAY ALL OF US CAN APPROXIMATELY UNDERSTAND THIS EMOTION IS TO IMAGINE FOR A BRIEF, UNBEARABLE MOMENT HOW WE WOULD FEEL IF OUR SON OR DAUGHTER WERE TO DIE AS THE RESULT OF THE NEGLIGENCE OF ANOTHER PERSON, OR IF OUR FAMILIES WERE TO BE MADE SICK AND WORRY ABOUT THEIR FUTURE HEALTH BECAUSE OF THE FAULT OF ANOTHER PERSON. I COULD GO INTO GREAT DETAIL IN DESCRIBING THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE RONGELAPESE," CONTINUED BORJA, "WHO WERE DISFIGURED BY RADIATION BURNS BECAUSE OF THIS NEGLIGENCE, AND MOST POIGNANTLY I COULD DESCRIBE IN GREAT DETAIL THE PHOTOGRAPHS WHICH SHOW MR. JOHN ANJAIN AT THE BEDSIDE OF HIS DYING SON, LEKOJ."

HOWEVER, ADDED BORJA, IT IS NOT HIS DUTY "TO SPEAK OF UNSPEAKABLE EMOTIONS." INSTEAD, HE SAID IT WAS HIS DUTY TO DO SOMETHING "ABOUT THIS WRONG WHICH HAS BEEN VISITED UPON OUR INNOCENT BROTHERS AND SISTERS."

APOLIGIZING TO THE SENATE FOR TAKING UP ITS TIME CONCERNING THE PLIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF RONGELAP AND UTIRIK, BORJA CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE FELT IT WAS TIME USED FOR A VERY GOOD PURPOSE "...NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS TO MEMORIALIZE A 19 YEAR OLD YOUTH WHO WAS SACRIFICED IN THE NAME OF OUR ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY'S STRATEGIC INTERESTS."

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE INCLUDE PALAU REPRESENTATIVE TIMOTHY OLKERIIL AND REPRESENTATIVE ATAJI BALOS OF THE MARSHALLS.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: THE FOLLOWING STORY DOES NOT RELATE TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA NEWS, BUT IS INCLUDED WITH THIS DISPATCH RATHER THAN MAKE IT THE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE DISPATCH SINCE IT IS QUITE SHORT.)

(REVIEW BOARD MEETING CANCELLED)

SAIPAN, MAR. 2 (MNS)---THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRUST TERRITORY WATER TRANSPORTATION REVIEW BOARD, RALPH F. PAGLEY, JR., OF GUAM, HAS ANNOUNCED CANCELLATION OF THE SCHEDULED MARCH 8, 1974 MEETING OF THE BOARD. AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE BOARD SATURDAY

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(MAR. 2) INDICATES THAT THE MEETING IS BEING CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE RECEIVERSHIP AND DISSOLUTION OF TRANSPACIFIC LINES, INC.

"YOU ARE NOW NOTIFIED THAT THE CONTINUED WATER TRANSPORTATION REVIEWS BOARD, WHICH WAS PLACED IN RECESS FEBRUARY 6, 1974 FOR 30 DAYS AND SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE ON MARCH 8, 1974, IS NOW CANCELLED," THE ANNOUNCEMENT STATES. "THIS ACTION IS TAKEN SINCE TRANSPACIFIC LINES WILL BE IN NO POSITION TO OPERATE VESSELS OR BOOK CARGO FOR ANY FUTURE SHIPMENTS TO TRUST TERRITORY PORTS.

"THE ARRANGEMENT FOR FUTURE SHIPMENTS TO AND FROM THE PORTS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS IS EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON. NOTICE WILL BE SENT TO ALL THE SHIPPERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE," THE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCLUDES.

THE NOTICE IS SIGNED BY BAGLEY AND BY ELIAS OKAMURA, ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT, WHO IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE BOARD. THE THIRD MEMBER OF THE THREE-MAN BOARD IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SHIPPING COMPANY WHICH IS BEING DISSOLVED.

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