

# Kusaie District Bill Is Passed ✓

SAIPAN (MNS) — The Congress of Micronesia in the closing hours of its 50-day session passed and sent to the High Commissioner a bill to establish a separate Kusaie District—the seventh of the Trust Territory.

The congress also adopted a resolution requesting the Interior Secretary through the High Commissioner to establish a Kusaie order to that effect.

For many years, the people of Kusaie Island have pressed for the creation of a separate district.

The Ponape District Legislature endorsed the plan as did the Congress of Micronesia eastern district subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Future Status which toured Kusaie last year.

Kusaie Island is the fourth largest in Micronesia, with a population of more than 4,000.

According to the senate Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations

which studied the bill, "The people of Kusaie are not Ponapeans; they are administered as part of Ponape District by virtue of a historical accident. Their language is unique, being related more closely to Marshallese than to Ponape, but identical to neither.

"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 committee reported.

When Kusaie becomes a separate district in 1977, the people will be able to elect one representative to the house of representatives and two senators. They will have their own district administrator and district legislature.

Kusaie Leader Dr. Hiroshi Ismael, a former senator who helped push the measure to passage, was in the gallery when the historic action came.