

(EDLF DECISION PROTESTED)

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SAIPAN, JAN. 6 (MNS)---THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MANAGERS OF THE MICRONESIAN FISHING AUTHORITIES HAS PROTESTED A DECISION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND (EDLF) BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOT TO GRANT LOANS FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT UNLESS THE HIGH RATE OF DELINQUENCY IN COMMERCIAL LOANS IMPROVES, ACCORDING TO A FRONT PAGE STORY IN THE MARIANAS VARIETY NEWS AND VIEWS, ONE OF SAIPAN'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER.

THE COMMITTEE'S PROTEST WAS CONTAINED IN A LETTER BY FRANCISCO T. ULUDONG, THE COMMITTEE'S CHAIRMAN, TO HIGH COMMISSIONER EDWARD E. JOHNSTON.

"WE WISH TO PROTEST THE BOARD'S DECISION LINKING THE POSSIBILITY OF DENYING LOANS FOR PROJECTS IN MARINE RESOURCES DUE TO THE HIGH RATE OF DELINQUENCY OF COMMERCIAL LOANS," THE LETTER STATES. "IT APPEARS THAT THE BOARD IS PENALIZING THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN FISHERY PROJECTS BECAUSE SOMEONE WHO HAS LOANED MONIES FOR IMPORT BUSINESS OR WHOLESALE BUSINESS IS BEHIND IN HIS LOAN PAYMENTS," THE LETTER ADDED.

"AS MANAGERS OF THE DISTRICT FISHING AUTHORITIES, WE SUGGEST THAT THE EDLF BOARD DO ITS JOB BY COLLECTING THE DELINQUENT LOANS, INCLUDING THOSE MADE FOR MARINE RELATED PROJECTS, BEFORE CLOSING THE DOOR TO THOSE MICRONESIANS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN LOANS FOR FISHERIES BUT HAVE NOT SUBMITTED THEIR APPLICATIONS," THE LETTER POINTED OUT.

THE LETTER ALSO SAID THAT THE COMMITTEE SUPPORTED THE EDLF BOARD DECISION TO ALLOCATE 30 PERCENT OF ITS LOAN PROGRAM FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT.

"THE DECISION DEMONSTRATES, AT LEAST, TO US THE MANAGER OF FISHING AUTHORITIES, THAT THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT IS NOW BEGINNING TO DEVELOP MICRONESIA'S MOST IMPORTANT ASSET--THE OCEAN AND ITS RESOURCES."

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MANAGERS OF MICRONESIAN FISHING AUTHORITIES WAS FORMED WHEN THE MANAGERS OF THE SIX FISHING AUTHORITIES HELD THEIR FIRST CONFERENCE IN SAIPAN. LAST MONTH.

THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE, ACCORDING TO ULUDONG, ITS PRESENT CHAIRMAN, WAS TO UNITE THE MANAGERS OF THE FISHING AUTHORITIES IN ONE ORGANIZATION TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT IN ALL SIX DISTRICTS OF MICRONESIA.

ULUDONG ALSO ADDED THE COMMITTEE WILL SOON PUBLISH A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH WERE ADOPTED DURING THE CONFERENCE ON SAIPAN, THE VARIETY STORY STATED.

(NEW RELEASE FORM FOR CLAIMS COMMISSION)

SAIPAN, JANUARY 6 (MNS)---IN AN EFFORT TO MINIMIZE CLAIMANT CONFUSION, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR HAS DRAFTED A NEW RELEASE FORM AND FORWARDING LETTER TO CLAIMANTS WHO ARE ENTITLED TO RENUMERATION FOR DAMAGES SUFFERED DURING AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER WORLD WAR II.

ACCORDING TO A STORY PUBLISHED IN THE MARIANAS VARIETY NEWS AND VIEWS, ONE OF SAIPAN'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER, THE RELEASE WILL BE DELIVERED SEPARATELY FROM THE DECISIONS RENDERED BY THE MICRONESIAN CLAIMS COMMISSION, THE BODY APPOINTED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS TO ADJUDICATE THE CLAIMS.

LAST YEAR, FORMER COMMISSION ATTORNEY WILLIAM CARTER AND THE MICRONESIAN LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION ALLEGED THAT THE CLAIMS RELEASES CONCURRENTLY WITH DECISIONS WAS "FRAUDULENT" AND "COERSIVE."

THE MICRONESIAN CLAIMS ACT OF 1971 NAMES THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AS THE BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR DISTRIBUTING THE THIRTY MILLION DOLLARS ALLOTTED BY THE U.S. AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS FOR THE "EX-GRATIA" PROGRAM. AS PROVIDED UNDER THE ACT, A FULL RELEASE OF LIABILITY IS REQUIRED OF CLAIMANTS

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PRIOR TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AUTHORIZING ANY PAYMENT TO THE CLAIMANT FOR HIS LOSSES.

MCC PREVIOUSLY DELIVERED THE RELEASE FORM TO THE CLAIMANT AT THE SAME TIME THE DECISION WAS DELIVERED TO HIM. IN SOME CASES, THE CLAIMANT SIGNED THE RELEASE AS WELL AS THE RECEIPT OF DECISION NOT REALIZING THAT HE WAIVERED HIS RIGHT TO APPEAL. NORMALLY THE CLAIMANT COULD MAIL IN THE FORM LATER VIA A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED BY THE FIELD REPRESENTATIVE, ACCORDING TO THE VARIETY STORY.

IN A LETTER TO RONALD PETERSON, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TO DAVID HOLLAND, CHIEF COUNSEL FOR THE CLAIMS COMMISSION, EDWARD KING, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE MICRONESIAN LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION POINTED OUT MUCH CONFUSION HAS ARISEN BECAUSE OF THE POLICY OF THE COMMISSION'S REPRESENTATIVE SEEKING SIGNATURES FOR THE RELEASE AT THE TIME HE SEEKS A SIGNATURE FOR THE CLAIMANTS RECEIPT OF THE DECISION.

"OUR OFFICES HAVE RECEIVED SEVERAL COMPLAINTS OF PERSONS WHO ONLY AT SOME LATER DATE CAME TO REALIZE THAT THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY SIGNED A RELEASE," STATED KING IN HIS LETTER. SIGNING OF THE RELEASE ESSENTIALLY NEGATED ANY APPEAL THE CLAIMANT MIGHT HAVE HAD.

IN THE NEW PROCEDURE, PETERSON STATES THAT THE RELEASE FORM WITH A COVER LETTER FROM HIMSELF, WILL BE SENT VIA THE U.S. MAIL RATHER THAN HAND DELIVERED. THE FINANCE HEAD CITED TWO MAJOR DRAWBACKS TO THIS SYSTEM. (1.) THAT MAILING OUT THE RELEASE WILL ADD ANOTHER STEP TO THE PROCEDURE, THUS PRODUCING FURTHER DELAY IN PAYING THE CLAIMANT AND 2), THAT WITHOUT THE MCC FIELD REPRESENTATIVES NEARBY TO TRANSLATE THE PURPOSE OF THE RELEASE, THERE WILL BE MORE CONFUSION AMONG THE CLAIMANTS AS TO THE MEANING OF THE DOCUMENTS.

DAVID ROGERS, CHAIRMAN OF THE MICRONESIANS CLAIMS COMMISSION VIEWED THE CHANGE "FOR THE BETTER" EMPHASIZING THAT THE NEW PROCEDURE RECOGNIZES THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AS THE GOVERNMENT BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENTS. HE ALSO FELT THAT THE FORM LETTER SATISFIES QUESTIONS OF CLAIMANTS AND THAT IT INCORPORATES THE LANGUAGE SUGGESTED BY MLSC.

THE NEW RELEASE FORM, ACCORDING TO PETERSON, WILL NOT BE USED FOR TWO MONTHS WHILE THE TECHNICAL LANGUAGE OF THE FORM IS FINALIZED AND TRANSLATED INTO THE LOCAL VERNACULAR.

PETERSON ACKNOWLEDGED THAT 4,000 DECISIONS HAVE BEEN RENDERED BUT A LITTLE OVER A THOUSAND HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED FOR PAYMENT. ROGERS EXPLAINS THE DELAY IN CERTIFICATION IS DUE TO LACK OF STAFF BUT HE STATES HIS OFFICE WILL BE UP TO DATE ON THIS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

THE CLAIMS COMMISSION MUST COMPLETE ALL CLAIMS (10,700) BY OCTOBER 15, 1976, THE DEADLINE IMPOSED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS.

(DEMAPAN PROMOTED)

SAIPAN, JAN. 6 (MNS) ---ALEX P. LUZAMA, STATION MANAGER AIR MICRONESIA, ON SAIPAN, ANNOUNCED THE PROMOTION OF IGNACIO DLG. DEMAPAN, SUPERVISOR ACCOUNTING TO ASSISTANT STATION MANAGER, SAIPAN.

DEMAPAN JOINED AIR MICRONESIA IN JULY 1973 AS CUSTOMER SERVICE AGENT. HE HAS TAKEN FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE "IN-HOUSE" TRAINING PROGRAM IN TERMINAL SUPERVISING AND TICKETING TRAINING. HE WAS ONE OF THE 12 MICRONESIAN STUDENTS SPONSORED BY CONTINENTAL/AIR MICRONESIA TO PARTICIPATE IN A TWO-YEAR MANAGEMENT CREDIT PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM.

IN JULY, 1974, HE WAS PROMOTED TO SUPERVISOR-TRUST TERRITORY ACCOUNTING AND HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GENERAL OPERATIONS OF THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT.