

SAIPAN, FEB. 7 (MNS) ---AS THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA (COM) HEADED INTO THE SECOND HALF OF ITS CURRENT SESSION, SENATE DEBATE PRECEDED PASSAGE OF A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE HICOM, PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING OFFICER, AND JOINT COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR A NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA (COM) IN PONAPE.

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WHILE ALL THE SENATORS AGREED WITH THE INTENT OF THE RESOLUTION, TO GO ON RECORD AS ENDORSING \$8 MILLION PROJECT, SOME OF THEM FELT THAT THE RESOLUTION SHOULD HAVE MORE STUDY.

PONAPE SEN. BAILEY OLTER STATED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO FUND THE BUILDING OF THE NEW SCHOOL WITHOUT APPROVAL OF COM. SEN. PETRUS TUN (YAP) TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES THAT "SOME PEOPLE FEEL THAT MONEY FOR THE BUILDING IS NOT A PROBLEM, BUT WONDER WHETHER THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF MICRONESIA WILL BE ABLE TO FINANCE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL."

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT YEARLY OPERATION WILL RUN FROM \$700,000 TO \$1 MILLION, BUT SEN. OLTER NOTED THAT U.S. FEDERAL GRANT MONEY WOULD PROBABLY BE AVAILABLE, "PERHAPS \$2,500 PER STUDENT PER ANNUM."

THE SENATE ROUTINELY PASSED ONE BILL AND FILED ANOTHER DURING THE AFTERNOON SESSION, WITH ONLY SEN. OLTER VOTING AGAINST, THE SENATORS PASSED ON SECOND READING A BILL WHOSE INTENT IS TO AMEND THAT PROVISION OF THE TT CODE WHICH RELATES TO THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF INTEREST WHICH MAY BE RECOVERED IN THE TT COURTS ON LOANS MADE IN THE TRUST TERRITORY. THE EFFECT OF THE BILL WOULD BE TO RAISE THE MAXIMUM INTEREST RATE RECOVERABLE ON LOANS ABOVE \$300 FROM ONE PERCENT TO 1 1/2 PERCENT. THE BILL WILL BE SENT FOR FURTHER ACTION TO THE HOUSE, WHERE A SIMILAR MEASURE HAS ALREADY BEEN FILED.

THE SENATE VOTED, TO FILE A MEASURE TO AUTHORIZE AND EMPOWER THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PRE-CONVENTION COMMITTEE OF THE MICRONESIAN CONCON TO INVITE CERTAIN PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVENTION. IN A REPORT TO FILE FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS IT STATED, "WE ARE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH THE INTENT OF THE BILL... , BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SUBJECT BILL IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THIS PURPOSE." THE PRE-CON COMMITTEE AND THE CONVENTION BOTH HAVE THE POWER TO INVITE ANYONE TO THE CONVENTION, THE REPORT NOTED.

THREE BILLS AND TWO SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED DURING THE SESSION. THE BILLS WOULD: MAKE ADDITIONAL FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE MARSHALL ISLANDS DISTRICT FISHING AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN LOANS, (SB 6-111); EARMARK \$26,514 TO SUPPORT THE OPERATION OF THE TRUK YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU, (SB 6-112); AND REPEAL CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE TT CODE REGARDING THE MANNER OF APPOINTMENT TO CERTAIN SENIOR POSITIONS IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE TT GOVERNMENT, (SB 6-113).

THE SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS CALL FOR CONFIRMATION OF MITARO S. DANIS AS TRUK DISTAD, (SJR 6-19); AND CONFIRMATION OF ELIAS OKAMURA AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, (SJR 6-20).

TWO SENATE BILLS INTRODUCED THURSDAY (FEB. 6) WERE INADVERTENTLY OMITTED FROM THE CONGRESS REPORT. THEY WERE: REQUIRING THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF COM ON CERTAIN APPOINTEES TO HIGH OFFICERS, (SB 6-109); AND AMENDING PUBLIC LAW 5-108 CONCERNING APPROPRIATIONS FOR YOUTH AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE MARSHALS, (SB 6-110). 13545

THE HOUSE SESSION WAS VERY BRIEF FRIDAY AFTERNOON. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE SUBMITTED TWO REPORTS ON THE TRUST TERRITORY BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 1976 AND THE BUDGET SUPPLEMENTAL REQUESTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1975.

SPEAKER BETHEL HENRY APPOINTED FOUR MEMBERS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE TO MEET WITH THE SENATE'S CONFERENCE COMMITTEE TO GO OVER THEIR DIFFERENCES ON THE SENATE'S AMENDMENTS TO SEVERAL HOUSE APPROPRIATION BILLS. THEY ARE CONGRESSMEN RAYMOND SETIK, (TRUK); JOSE P. MAFNAS, (MARIANAS); KUREND NAKAMURA, (PALAU) AND LUNE TMAN (YAP). REP. MAFNAS DELIVERED A SHORT SPEECH COMMENTING ON THE PRESENT SALARY SYSTEM WHICH HE SAID WAS "INADEQUATE" TO MEET CURRENT DEMANDS AND CALLED FOR HIGHER WAGES FOR MICRONESIAN EMPLOYEES. (SEE FOLLOWING STORY FOR FURTHER COVERAGE OF HIS SPEECH)

NINE BILLS, SIX OF THEM APPROPRIATIONS, WERE INTRODUCED FRIDAY. THE APPROPRIATION MEASURES WOULD: PROVIDE \$26,914 TO SUPPORT THE OPERATION OF THE TRUK YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU, (HB 6-184); EARMARK \$68,000 FOR IMPROVING AND PAVING THE BACK ROAD BETWEEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT 1 AND DR. TORRES HOSPITAL ON SAIPAN, (HB 6-185); SPEND \$200,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF TELEPHONE, SEWER, LIGHT AND WATER SYSTEMS AND OTHER PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ON SAIPAN, (HB 6-186); APPROPRIATE \$15,000 TO DEFRAY ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATING EXPENSES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROTA, MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT, (HB 6-189); SUPPLY \$28,700 TO DEFRAY EXPENSES OF THE DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARDS, (HB 6-191); AND EXPEND \$303,000 TO SUPPLEMENT THE LOAN FUNDS OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS HOUSING AUTHORITY, (HB 6-192).

THE OTHER THREE INCLUDE A MEASURE TO PRESCRIBE A MINIMUM WAGE OF \$1.50 AN HOUR AND OVERTIME COMPENSATION STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYEES, (HB 6-190); AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE TT CODE TO EXTEND COVERAGE OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM TO ALL PERSONS WORKING FOR TRUST TERRITORY EMPLOYERS, (HB 6-188); TO AMEND A SECTION OF THE CON CON LAW (5-69) URGING THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING OF THE CONGRESS TO MAKE A THOROUGH STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE MEANS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE FINANCING FOR THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF MICRONESIA, (HB 6-187).

THE JOINT RESOLUTIONS ARE: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MITARO S. DANIS AS THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR OF TRUK, (HJR 6-47); CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ELIAS OKAMURA AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT, (HJR 6-45); AND REQUESTING THE INTERIOR SECRETARY THROUGH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO AMEND SECRETARIAL ORDER 2918 TO PROVIDE FOR TWO REGULAR SESSIONS EACH YEAR FOR THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, (HJR 6-46).

THE HOUSE RESOLUTION INTRODUCED IS TO DIRECT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS TO INVESTIGATE THE PRESENT POLICY OF THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT REGARDING LIVING QUARTER ALLOWANCES FOR OFF-ISLAND EMPLOYEES AND WHY LOA LOAS, AN EMPLOYEE IN THE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS, IS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN IT COMES TO SECURING DECENT HOUSING FOR HIS FAMILY, (HR 6-13).

THE SENATE WILL MEET AGAIN AT 10:00 A.M. AND THE HOUSE AT 3:00 P.M. MONDAY (FEB. 10).

(ALL USERS: PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)

(MAFNAS CRITICIZES PRESENT PAY-SCALE)

SAIPAN, FEB. 7 (CONGRESS RELEASE) --- MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN JOSE P. MAFNAS FRIDAY (FEB. 7) SPOKE IN FAVOR OF HIGHER WAGES

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FOR MICRONESIANS AND CONDEMNED THE PRESENT SALARY SYSTEM WHICH HE SAID IS "INADEQUATE" TO MEET THE CURRENT DEMANDS ON THE COST OF LIVING THROUGHOUT MICRONESIA.

IN HIS REMARKS DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAFNAS SAID HE STRONGLY FEELS THAT CONGRESS MUST NOT ALLOW ITSELF TO "OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT WHILE MONEY IS BEING EXPENDED IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS," THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA "ARE SUFFERING" BECAUSE OF THE INADEQUATE SALARIES THEY BRING HOME TO FEED THEIR FAMILIES.

CONGRESSMAN MAFNAS ALSO TALKED ABOUT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS SUCH AS THE CONSTRUCTION OF BETTER ROADS, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, AMONG OTHERS AND ASKED "WHAT IS THEIR VALUE... WHEN OUR CHILDREN ARE NOT RECEIVING PROPER, ADEQUATE AND NUTRIOUS FOOD..." WHEN THEIR PARENTS DO NOT MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO PROVIDE THEM THE BASIC NECESSITIES.

MAFNAS SAID: "I CONDEMN THE PRESENT SALARY SYSTEM... THOSE WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS PASSAGE... AND THOSE WHO TOLERATE THE EXISTING SALARY SYSTEM."

THE MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN ALSO URGED HIS COLLEAGUES "TO CONDEMN THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATION IF THE SALARY REMAINS BELOW SUBSISTENCE LEVEL," REFERRING TO A TASK FORCE INITIATED BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO STUDY AND EVALUATE CURRENT SALARIES AND THE COST OF LIVING AND RECOMMEND TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA A SALARY PAY SCALE.

(DANIS' NAME RESUBMITTED)

SAIPAN, FEB. 7 (MNSL)---HIGH COMMISSIONER EDWARD E. JOHNSTON HAS SUBMITTED FOR ADVICE AND CONSENT BY THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA (COM) THE NAME OF TRUK'S ACTING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE POSITION OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR.

MITARO S. DANIS, WHOSE NAME WAS SUBMITTED TO THE COM LAST SEPTEMBER, WAS DISAPPROVED BY THE CONGRESS BECAUSE HE LACKED THE NECESSARY SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT IN TRUK DISTRICT, INCLUDING THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, VILLAGE MAGISTRATES, AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION CABINET MEMBERS, ACCORDING TO THE REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS.

IN RESUBMITTING DANIS' NAME FOR THE POST, THE HIGH COMMISSIONER NOTED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A RESOLUTION FROM THE MOEN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL IN TRUK "ENDORING THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. MITARO DANIS TO THE POSITION..."

THE HICOM NOTED THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR IN TRUK, SINCE FORMER DISTAD JUAN A. SABLAN HAS COME TO SAIPAN AS TT EXECUTIVE OFFICER. "WE ARE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN CORRECTING THIS AND WE CAN THINK OF NO BETTER NOMINEE THAN MITARO DANIS," THE HICOM CLAIMED.

PUBLIC HEARINGS ARE SCHEDULED FOR FEB. 15 ON THE QUESTION, AT WHICH TIME DANIS, FORMER DISTAD SABLAN, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE ARE EXPECTED TO TESTIFY. A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM DANIS FOR THE POST WAS INTRODUCED FRIDAY (FEB. 7) BY SEN. ANSILOS IEHSI (PONAPE) ON REQUEST.
(SUMMARY OF FIRST HALF OF THE SESSION)

SAIPAN, FEB. 7 (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 FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE SIXTH CONGRESS HAS NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE SO FAR, ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF PIECES OF LEGISLATION TECHNICALLY UNDER CONSIDERATION EXCEEDS 300.

AS OF THE COMPLETION OF THE 25TH DAY OF THE 50-DAY SESSION, ONLY ONE BILL HAD PASSED FINAL READING OF BOTH HOUSES AND HAD BEEN SENT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.

IN THE TWO HOUSES, THE ACTION LOOKS LIKE THIS: THE SENATE HAS PASSED SIX BILLS ON FINAL READING, AND ADOPTED TWO JOINT RESOLUTIONS; THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS PASSED 11 BILLS ON FINAL READING, AND ADOPTED EIGHT HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS.

IN ADDITION, THREE BILLS HAVE BEEN FILED, ALL OF THEM IN THE HOUSE.

WHEN IT COMES TO INTRODUCING NEW LEGISLATION, THE CURRENT SESSION HAS BEEN EXTREMELY ACTIVE. DURING THE FIRST HALF, NEARLY 370 PIECES OF NEW LEGISLATION WERE INTRODUCED. IN THE HOUSE, THERE WERE 183 BILLS OFFERED, ALONG WITH 44 JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND 12 HOUSE RESOLUTIONS. IN THE SENATE, 109 BILLS WERE INTRODUCED, 18 JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND TWO RESOLUTIONS.

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

(TT ACQUIRES FISHING VESSEL)

YAP, FEB. 7 (MNS)---FOR THE FIRST TIME A JAPANESE SHIP INCLUDING ALL BELONGINGS ON BOARD HAS BEEN FORFEITED TO THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT AFTER ITS CAPTAIN AND TWO OTHERS WERE CONVICTED ON TWO COUNTS OF ILLEGAL ENTRY AND UNLAWFUL REMOVAL OF MARINE RESOURCES IN YAP DISTRICT LAST TUESDAY (FEB. 4).

THE DEFENDANTS, RUYHEI KAMIOKA, A BUSINESSMAN WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF THE EXPEDITION, CAPTAIN SADAO MAESATO AND FISHING MASTER EISHI KURAMORI PLEADED GUILTY TO THE TWO COUNTS AND ASSOCIATE HIGH COURT JUDGE ROBERT HEFNER SENTENCED THEM ON EACH COUNT TO ONE YEAR, SUSPENDED ON CONDITION THAT EACH DEFENDANT PAY A FINE OF \$2,000 FOR EACH COUNT, A TOTAL OF \$12,000.

ACCORDING TO TESTIMONY GIVEN AT THE TRIAL, THE SHIP, WHICH WAS SUPPOSEDLY SAILING TOWARD A FISHING AREA NEAR THE PHILIPPINES, ENTERED YAP DISTRICT WATERS ON NOVEMBER 16, 1974. IT PROCEEDED TO ULITHI WHERE ONE OF THE CREW WAS TREATED FOR BURNS ON HIS ARM. THE SHIP ALSO ILLEGALLY VISITED FAIS, EABRIFIK, WOLEY, LAMOTREK AND SATAVAL, ALL IN YAP DISTRICT. THE SHIP THEN SAILED ON TO PALAU WHERE IT WAS APPREHENDED BY AUTHORITIES.

FOUND ON BOARD THE VESSEL, ACCORDING TO YAP DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL PHILIP JOHNSON, WAS SOME "PRECIOUS CORAL," PRESUMABLY FISHED OUT OF YAP TERRITORIAL WATERS.

THE THREE DEFENDANTS LEFT YAP FOR PALAU WEDNESDAY (FEB. 5) TO REMAIN IN JAIL UNTIL THE FINES ARE PAID.

JOHNSON HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE VESSEL BE ASSIGNED TO YAP FOR FISHING ACTIVITIES. ACCORDING TO JOHNSON, YAP DISTRICT WILL REIMBURSE PALAU FOR EXPENSES SUCH AS POLICE GUARDS.