

(SENATE REJECTS COMPACT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE) 1975

SAIPAN, MAR. 2 (MNS)---THE DAY BEFORE THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA IS DUE TO END, TWO BILLS WERE PASSED TO BE TRANSMITTED TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, AND THE SENATE ADOPTED A JOINT RESOLUTION TO REJECT TITLE IV (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE) OF THE DRAFT COMPACT ON FREE ASSOCIATION. THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS (JCFS) CHAIRMAN LAZARUS SALII SATURDAY (MAR. 1) SUBMITTED AS A "PROGRESS REPORT" THE DRAFT COMPACT AND A DRAFT LETTER OF GOVERNMENT TRANSITION TO THE SENATE.

ON SUNDAY (MAR. 2) DURING THEIR MEETING THE SENATE DISSOLVE INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND THEN INTO A CLOSED CAUCUS TO DISCUSS THE RESOLUTION TO REJECT TITLE IV OF THE DRAFT COMPACT ON FREE ASSOCIATION CONCLUDED BY THE JCFS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND DIRECTING THE JCFS TO RENEGOTIATE A NEW PROVISION GOVERNING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MICRONESIA, (SJR 6-45).

DURING DEBATE ON THE THE RESOLUTION SEN. SALII EXPLAINED THE POSSIBILITIES IF THE RESOLUTION WERE TO BE PASSED. "THE REJECTION OF ONE TITLE WOULD AFFECT THE WHOLE DRAFT COMPACT," HE STATED. "THE NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE REOPENED IF THE CONGRESS REJECTS A TITLE AND IF THE AMERICANS ARE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE ON THAT ISSUE." HE WENT ON.

SEN. SALII COMMENTED THAT IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE U.S. WOULD THINK THE PRESENT TITLE IV FIGURES ARE THE BEST OFFER THEY CAN MAKE. HE SAID IT IS ALSO CONCEIVABLE THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD WANT TO RENEGOTIATE OTHER TITLES IF THE JCFS WANTED TO RENEGOTIATE TITLE IV.

BUT SEN. SALII ALSO DECLARED THAT "GIVEN THE FIGURES IN TITLE IV MICRONESIA WILL BECOME MORE DEPENDENT ON THE U.S. FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT. AND IT IS THE AGREED GOAL THAT THE FUTURE MICRONESIAN GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY SHOULD CONTINUE TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

TRUK SEN. NICK BOSSY AGREED WITH THE PALAU SENATOR THAT THE PRESENT FIGURES FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT "ARE NOT REASONABLE" AND WOULD PROMOTE MORE DEPENDENCY ON THE U.S. BY MICRONESIA.

SEN. SALII INTRODUCED A BILL ON THIS SUBJECT TO CREATE A POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION OF MICRONESIA AND TO APPROPRIATE \$100,000 FOR ITS WORK, (SB 6-199), BUT THE PRESENT CONGRESS SESSION IS NOW TOO FAR ALONG FOR ANY BILL TO BE PLACED ON FIRST READING AND TO BE PASSED INTO LAW. MARSHALLS SEN. KABUA QUESTIONED SEN. SALII ON THE PROPOSED COMMISSION. THE BILL CALLS FOR A COMMISSION COMPOSED OF SIX CONGRESS MEMBERS TO BE CHOSEN BY THE PRESIDING OFFICERS, ONE DEPARTMENT HEAD OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH CHOSEN BY A MAJORITY OF THE HEADS, AND ONE MEMBER CHOSEN BY EACH DISTRICT LEGISLATURE.

SEN. SALII STATED THAT REJECTION OF ANY PART OF THE DRAFT COMPACT BY CONGRESS WOULD BE BINDING ON THE COMMISSION.

AT THE REQUEST OF SENS. KABUA AND PRESIDENT NAKAYAMA, THE SENATE CONTINUED THEIR DISCUSSION IN CLOSED CAUCUS BEFORE THE JOINT RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

THE TWO BILLS TO BE TRANSMITTED TO THE HICOM THAT WERE PASSED DURING THE AFTERNOON BY THE HOUSE AND SENATE WERE TO AMEND SECTIONS OF PUBLIC LAW 5-37 RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ANGAUR HOUSING AUTHORITY, (SB 6-97); AND A BILL TO AMEND THE TT CODE TO ALLOW STUDENTS ON TT SCHOLARSHIPS TO RECEIVE PER DIEM WHILE IN DISTRICT CENTERS WHILE TRAVELLING TO THEIR SCHOOLS, (HB 6-46); WANGEFEL VOTED NO ON THE LATTER BILL.

OTHER BILLS PASSED ON FINAL READING TO BE TRANSMITTED TO THE HOUSE WERE: A BILL ESTABLISHING A TT SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, (SB 6-164); APPROPRIATING \$50,000 FOR THE STUDENT LOAN FUND, (SB 6-145); TWO NATURALIZATION BILLS, (SB 6-188, 6-189); A MEASURE RELATING TO PUBLIC LAW 5-60, THE CONCON LAW, WITH

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REGARD TO PAYMENT TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHO ARE DELEGATES TO THE CONCON, (SB 6-186), MANGEFEL VOTED AGAINST; AND FINALLY A HOUSE BILL PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENTAL POLICY FOR MICRONESIA, (HB 6-97). A SENATE DRAFT WILL BE SENT TO THE HOUSE FOR THAT BILL.

SEVEN OTHER JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED DURING THE AFTERNOON SESSION. THEY WERE: TO REQUEST THE HICOM AND THE TRUK DISTAD TO RENDER AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE OUTER ISLANDS OF TRUK, (HJR 6-12); EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO JOSEPH R. SMITH FOR HIS SERVICE IN THE TT, (HJR 6-82); AUTHORIZING THE HICOM TO ACCEPT A GRANT OFFER FOR AN AIRPORT SYSTEMS PLAN FOR THE TT, (HJR 6-56); REQUESTING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SPONSOR THE TT FOR MEMBER SHIP IN THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, (HJR 6-67); REQUESTING THE U.S. CONGRESS TO EXTEND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO FISHERIES IN MICRONESIA, (HJR 6-68); REQUESTING THE HICOM AND THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING TO MAKE BUDGETARY ALLOWANCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOLEAI ATOLL, YAP, AS A SUBDISTRICT, (HJR 6-36); AND FINALLY A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION INTRODUCED SUNDAY (MAR. 2) TO REQUEST THE U.S. CONGRESS TO AMEND THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT OF 1970 TO EXCLUDE MICRONESIA FROM ITS PROVISIONS, (SJR 6-46).

THE SENATORS DEFEATED A JOINT RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE REQUESTED THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO AMEND SECRETARIAL ORDER 2918 TO PROVIDE FOR A UNICAMERAL CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, (SJR 6-44). IN DISCUSSION BEFORE THE VOTE, SEN. MANGEFEL ARGUED THAT "IT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE CONCON TO COME UP WITH A FORM OF GOVERNMENT" FOR MICRONESIA. TO CHANGE THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONGRESS NOW, HE ASSERTED, WOULD RESULT IN CONFUSION IF THE CONCON DECIDED THAT ANOTHER FORM SHOULD GO INTO THE CONSTITUTION.

SEN. BOSSY POINTED OUT THAT THE "ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY INSISTED THAT THE CONGRESS BE ONE HOUSE" AT THE TIME OF THE CREATION OF THE BODY, BUT THE CONGRESS MEMBERS ARGUED AGAINST A ONE HOUSE IDEA. SEN. BOSSY ALSO ARGUED AGAINST THE PROVISION IN THE RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE LOWERED THE CONGRESS SALARIES TO \$3,000. "I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE REASON FOR THIS RESOLUTION," HE STATED.

ALSO DEFEATED WAS A JOINT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF ASSEMBLING SMALL TRUCKS IN MICRONESIA, (HJR 6-72). SEVERAL SENATORS HAVE ARGUED CONTINUOUSLY AGAINST THE PROLIFERATION OF FEASIBILITY STUDIES, AND THE DEARTH OF RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR ACTION.

IN THE LATE AFTERNOON SESSION SUNDAY (MARCH 2), THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSED A TOTAL OF FIFTEEN (15) BILLS ON SECOND READING AND SENT THEM TO THE SENATE FOR FURTHER ACTION.

AMONG THEM WAS THE ADMINISTRATION BILL TO PROVIDE A NEW SALARY SCHEDULE AS WELL AS NEW POLICIES AND STANDARDS WITH RESPECT TO THE COMPENSATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES COVERED BY TITLE 61 (HB 6-219). THE BILL HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY AMENDED BY THE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE HEADED BY REP. POLYCARP BASILIUS OF PALAU DISTRICT. THE COMMITTEE AMENDED THE BILL INCORPORATING THE "DIVERGENT VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH" AS WELL AS VIEWS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

UNDER THE ORIGINAL BILL THE TASK FORCE ON WAGES AND SALARIES COMPOSED OF MEMBERS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES RECOMMENDED THAT THE MINIMUM WAGE WOULD BE 80 CENTS PER HOUR. THE PRESENT MINIMUM WAGE IS \$.61 PER HOUR. THE BILL HAS BEEN AMENDED TO INCREASE IT TO \$1.05 AN HOUR. 13771

IN A DEBATE ON THE BILL. CONG. SASAHO HARUO URGED THE HOUSE MEMBERS TO BE "VERY CAUTIOUS" IN PASSING SUCH MEASURE. HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT AGREE WITH THE PROPOSED PAY INCREASES

FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES REASONING THAT IT WILL MAKE MICRONESIA "MORE DEPENDENT ON THE UNITED STATES IN THE FUTURE." THE TRUK CONGRESSMAN VOICED HIS CONCERN IN THE "UNWARRANTED PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT" TO SEVERAL EMPLOYEES IN THE GOVERNMENT. HIS COLLEAGUE, REP. RAY SETIK POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED INCREASE IN SALARIES TOTALED \$1.6 MILLION AND ASKED WHERE CAN THE MONEY BE FOUND TO ACCOMMODATE THE INCREASES.

MARSHALLS CONGRESSMAN CHARLES DOMNICK ALSO SPOKE AGAINST THE BILL SAYING THAT THE INCREASE WILL HAVE A "LONG-RANGE EFFECT ON OUR ECONOMY" AND THAT THE MINIMUM WAGE OF \$1.00 AN HOUR WOULD RESULTED IN AN INCREASE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN MICRONESIA. HE EXPRESSED THAT THE CONCERN INCREASE WOULD FURTHER RESULT IN MORE MICRONESIANS LOSING THEIR JOBS TO OUTSIDERS WHO ARE MORE QUALIFIED IN SOME OF THE JOBS AND URGED THAT CONGRESS TO GO BACK TO THE PROPOSED \$.80 AN HOUR. FURTHER, DOMNICK ASSERTED, THE PAY INCREASE MIGHT ALSO RESULT IN REDUCTION-IN-FORCE OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

REP. OSCAR RASA OF THE MARIANAS STRONGLY URGED THE HOUSE TO PASS THE BILL. HE SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE CONGRESS FOR JUSTIFYING STRONGLY THE SUPPORT OF SALARY INCREASES AND OFFICE EXPENSES OF THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. "NOW WHEN IT COMES TO RAISING GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SALARIES, REPORT AFTER REPORT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED OPPOSING THE MEASURE," RASA SAID. HE FURTHER SAID THAT IF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA SHOULD BE ABOLISHED TO AID THE POOR PEOPLE, "LET IT BE DONE."

REP. JOAB SIGRAH OF PONAPE INFORMED THE CONGRESS THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT CUT OFF SOME CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE SALARY INCREASES AND RECOMMENDED TO DEFER ACTION FOR MORE STUDIES.

THE MEASURE PASSED WITH REPS. BIGLER, SETIK, DOMNICK, SIGRAH AND ALBERT DISSENTING. THE BILL WILL NOW BE TRANSMITTED TO THE SENATE FOR FURTHER ACTION.

OTHER BILLS THAT PASSED SECOND READING ARE: A BILL TO APPROPRIATE \$95,000 TO DEFRAY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES OF THE DISTRICT HOUSING AUTHORITIES AND TO ALLOW YAP HOUSING AUTHORITY TO UTILIZE THE FUNDS IT PRESENTLY HAS ON HAND DURING FISCAL YEAR 1976 TO PREVENT THESE FUNDS FROM REVERTING TO THE GENERAL FUND AT THE END OF FY 1975, (HB 6-249); TO EXEMPT SEAMEN FROM THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 61 UNDER THE GOVERNMENT SALARY PLAN, (HB 6-157); A BILL TO ALLOW TAX DEDUCTION ON SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP GRANTS, (HB 6-155); APPROPRIATE \$253,764 TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES OF THE MICRONESIAN CONCON AND THE EXPENSES OF THE DISTRICT DELEGATIONS, (HB 6-197); EARMARK \$50,000 TO SURVEY, DESIGN, CONSTRUCT AND IMPROVE ROADS, BRIDGES AND CAUSEWAYS IN THE FAICHUK AREA, IN TRUK, (HB 6-93); ESTABLISH PROCEDURES WHEREBY SPECIES OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS ARE IN DANGER OF BECOMING EXTINCT CAN BE PROTECTED, (HB 6-243); APPROPRIATE \$111,000 FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN PALAU DISTRICT, (HB 6-299); APPROPRIATING \$52,000 FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN KUSAIE ISLAND, (HB 6-159); PROVIDE \$430,000 FOR PROJECTS IN PONAPE DISTRICT, (HB 6-296); AND TO CREATE A REVOLVING FUND IN EACH DISTRICT; AUTHORIZE THE COLLECTION OF LANDING FEES ON AIRCRAFT; EARMARK LANDING FEES FOR MAINTENANCE OF AIRPORTS, (HB 6-263).

(MSC TO SELECT ATHELETES)

SAIPAN, MARCH. 2 (MNS)---THE MICRONESIAN SPORTS COUNCIL WILL CONDUCT FINAL SELECTION OF ATHELETES TO REPRESENT MICRONESIA IN THE 5THE SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES DURING THE MONTHS OF APRIL AND MAY. THE ATHLETES WILL BE CHOSEN BY A FINAL SELECTION COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE HEAD VOLLEYBALL COACH, THE HEAD BASKETBALL, THE HEAD SOFTBALL COACH, AND THE SPORTS DIRECTOR FOR THE COUNCIL.

THE ATHLETES CHOSEN DURING THIS FINAL SELECTION PROCESS WILL COME TO SAIPAN FOR TWO MONTHS OF TRAINING DURING JUNE AND

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JULY TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES TO BE HELD ON GUAM, AUGUST 1-10.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS FINAL SELECTION, YOU SHOULD CONTACT YOUR DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MICRONESIAN SPORTS COUNCIL. FOR OTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT STEVE REMLEY, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT OR KURT BARNES, SPORTS DIRECTOR FOR THE COUNCIL.

THE DATES FOR SELECTION IN EACH DISTRICT ARE: TRUK, APRIL 22, 23, 24, AND 25; EBEYE, APRIL 26, 27, AND 28; MAJURO, APRIL 29, 30, AND MAY 1; PONAPE, MAY 2, 3, AND 4; TT STUDENTS ON GUAM, MAY 5, 6, AND 7; PALAU, MAY 9, 10, AND 11; YAP, MAY 12, 13, AND 14; ULITHI, MAY 15; AND MARIANAS, MAY 16, 17, AND 18.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS WILL MEET IN DOUBLE SESSION SUNDAY. MNS WILL PUT OUT TWO SEPARATE RELEASES ON THIS DAY. CHECK YOUR COMSTATIONS FOR THESE RELEASES).