

1975
DISTAD ADA SIGNED FULL-TIME LEGISLATURE BILL)

SAIPAN, APR. 7 (MNS)---MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR FRANCISCO ADA THURSDAY (APR. 3), SIGNED INTO LAW A LEGISLATURE BILL ESTABLISHING FULL-TIME POSITIONS FOR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE. THE MEASURE PROVIDES SALARIES FOR THE POSITIONS. ONLY THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN SERVING ON A FULL-TIME BASIS PRIOR TO THE ENACTMENT OF THE NEW LAW. THE ACT, WHICH IS NOW DISTRICT LAW 4-84, BECAME EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1975.

ACCORDING TO A SPOKESMAN FROM THE MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE NEW LAW WOULD AFFECT NINE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES PRESENTLY SERVING AS MEMBERS OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE. THEY MUST DECIDE NOW WHETHER TO REMAIN AS LEGISLATORS OR RESIGN TO KEEP THEIR GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE WILL EXPIRE AFTER THE NEXT DISTRICT ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER, 1976.

THE NEW LAW PROVIDES THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATURE WITH AN ANNUAL SALARY OF \$12,000, AND \$8,000 EACH FOR THE OTHER 15 MEMBERS.

(PONAPE LEGISLATURE SALARY BILL PASSED)

PONAPE, APRIL 7 (MNS)---THE PONAPE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE THURSDAY, (APRIL 3), PASSED A COMPREHENSIVE SALARY BILL FOR FULL-TIME LEGISLATORS BY A 19-4 VOTE PROVIDING AN ANNUAL SALARY OF \$6,000 FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND \$7,000 FOR THE SPEAKER.

ALTHOUGH LEGISLATIVE OFFICERS EXPRESSED OPTIMISM FRIDAY MORNING, (APRIL 4), THAT PONAPE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR LEO A. FALCAM WILL APPROVE THE BILL, DEPUTY DISTAD BERWIN WEILBACHER SAID THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE WILL PROBABLY BE "NEGATIVE." "THE CHANCES OF THIS BILL BEING LINKED INTO LAW ARE NOT GOOD" WEILBACHER SAID. THIS IS NOT DEFINITE, BUT THAT IS THE WAY IT LOOKS NOW," HE ADDED.

ALTHOUGH WEILBACHER WOULDN'T OFFER SPECIFIC REASONS, PRESUMABLY THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS THE SALARY FIGURES TOO HIGH.

JUST MINUTES BEFORE THE BILL CAME UP FOR THE FINAL VOTE LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON (APRIL 3), THE ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED A COMPROMISE SALARY LEVEL OF \$5,000 FOR LEGISLATURE MEMBERS AND \$6,000 FOR THE SPEAKER. THE ADMINISTRATION PROPOSAL CAME SEVEN DAYS AFTER IT HAD BEEN PROMISED TO THE LEGISLATURE, ACCORDING TO WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KASIANO JOSEPH.

FALCAM WAS ON SAIPAN FRIDAY MORNING (APR. 4), AND WAS UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT. THE NEW SALARY PACKAGE IS THE SECOND TO BE PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE. A PREVIOUS MEASURE FAILED TO GET BY FALCAM'S SIGNATURE BECAUSE HE FELT THE DISTRICT DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE REQUESTED SALARY LEVELS.

EARLY IN THE CURRENT SESSION, THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE CUT A \$20 PER DAY MEETING ALLOWANCE IN HALF. LATER, THE LEGISLATORS DROPPED IT ENTIRELY HOPING TO MAKE THE BILL MORE PALATABLE TO THE ADMINISTRATION. THEY ALSO PENCILLED OUT SPECIFIC AMOUNTS FOR EXPENSE ALLOWANCES AND PER DIEM RATES. THOSE AMOUNTS WOULD BE DETERMINED ANNUALLY ON A "FUNDS AVAILABLE" BASIS.

THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE JUSTIFIED THE NEW SALARY LEVELS IN A LENGTHY REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE SAYING THAT AS FULL-TIME LEGISLATORS, THEY WILL BE RESTRICTED FROM HOLDING GOVERNMENT JOBS AND THAT THE NEW "FULL-TIME STATUS WILL BRING WITH IT AN INCREASED BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIRECTING THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FUTURE OF PONAPE DISTRICT."

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IF IT IS APPROVED BY DISTAD FALCAN, THE BILL WILL TAKE EFFECT ON JANUARY 3, 1976, TWO DAYS AFTER THE LEGISLATURE BECOMES A FULL-TIME LAW-MAKING BODY.

(U.S.-MARIANAS SEPARATE TALKS CRITICIZED)

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PONAPE, APRIL 7 (MNS)---POLITICAL RUMBLINGS JARRED THE USUALLY SERENE PONAPE DISTRICT THURSDAY AFTERNOON, (APRIL 3), AS THE LEGISLATORS SLAMMED THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION WITH A CHARGE OF DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTING TO DISUNIFY MICRONESIA.

THE CHARGE CAME IN THE FORM OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE PONAPE DISTRICT LEGISLATURE AIMED AT HALTING THE SEPARATION OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS FROM THE OTHER DISTRICT IN THE TRUST TERRITORY.

IN THE STRONGEST STATEMENT FOR UNITY IN MICRONESIA EVER EXPRESSED BY THE PONAPE LEGISLATURE, THE RESOLUTION CALLS FOR THE UNITED STATES TO IMMEDIATELY DISCONTINUE "ALL ACTIVITIES AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SEPARATE (DISTRICT) OF MICRONESIA WHICH DISRUPT THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF MICRONESIA."

OFFICIALS FROM THE MARIANAS AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE ALREADY NEGOTIATED AND SIGNED A COMMONWEALTH COVENANT WHICH, IF APPROVED DURING A PLEBISCITE TO BE HELD IN JUNE, WILL LEAD TO THE COMPLETE SEPARATION OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT FROM THE TRUST TERRITORY.

THE RESOLUTION, INTRODUCED BY LEGISLATORS JOANES EDMUND AND KASIANO JOSEPH, ACCUSES THE UNITED STATES OF "PROMOTING ITS OWN TERRITORIAL AND MILITARY INTERESTS IN THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS." IT FURTHER STATES THAT THE UNITED STATES ACTION IN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT "HAS UNWITTINGLY ENCOURAGED VARIOUS INTEREST GROUPS WITHIN THE OTHER DISTRICTS OF MICRONESIA TO EXPLOIT THE POSSIBILITIES OF ASSERTING THE RIGHT OF SEPARATE STATUS NEGOTIATIONS AT A TIME WHEN THE TRUST TERRITORY IS FACED WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS."

UNITED STATES NEGOTIATORS, THE RESOLUTION ALLEGES, HAVE FAILED TO CONSIDER THE "CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC VITALITY OF THE REMAINDER OF MICRONESIA."

PRIOR TO VOTING, LEGISLATOR SOSIRO ELIAM URGED HIS COLLEAGUES TO ACT SWIFTLY AND ADOPT THE RESOLUTION WITHOUT DELAY. ELIAM SAID THE UNITED STATES "HAS DELIBERATELY INITIATED AND ENCOURAGED SECTIONALISM THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT OF MICRONESIA."

POINTING OUT THAT ALTHOUGH MICRONESIA'S LAWMAKERS AND TRADITIONAL CHIEFS HAVE CONSISTENTLY URGED UNITY IN THE TERRITORY, ELIAM SAID, "THE UNITED STATES HAS DEEMED IT FIT AND PROPER IN ADVANCING ITS NATIONAL AND GLOBAL INTEREST, TO DIVIDE AND CONQUER WITHIN MICRONESIA."

ELIAM ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME PEOPLE MAY CONSIDER THE RESOLUTION AN ACT OF MEDDLING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT, BUT, HE SAID, "LET ME REMIND THOSE CRITICS THAT THE MARIANAS ISLANDS ARE STILL VERY MUCH A PART OF MICRONESIA. WHATEVER HAPPENS THERE CARRIES A HEAVY IMPACT ON THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FUTURE OF ALL THE DISTRICTS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY."

(TENORIO SCORES CONGRESS LEADERSHIP)

SAIPAN, APR. 7 (PNS)--MARIANAS SENATOR PEDRO A. TENORIO HAS ACCUSED THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA LEADERSHIP OF TRYING TO "UNDERMINE THE MARIANAS PEOPLE'S DESIRE TO FREELY EXPRESS THEIR CHOICE FOR POLITICAL STATUS."

IN A STRONGLY WORDED LETTER TO HOUSE SPEAKER BETHWEL HENRY AND SENATE PRESIDENT YOSIMO NAKAYAMA, TENORIO EXPRESSES "GRAVE DOUBTS AND DISBELIEF" ON THEIR AUTHORIZATION OF \$10,000 TO CERTAIN MARIANAS RESIDENTS TO CONDUCT A POLITICAL EDUCATION AIMED AT ACHIEVING "UNITY" WITH THE "HIDDEN MOTIVE TO UNDERMINE THE MARIANAS' DESIRE FOR COMMONWEALTH."

CONGRESSMEN OSCAR C. RASA AND JOSE P. MAFNAS RECENTLY RECEIVED \$10,000 FROM THE CONGRESS UNITY FUND FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION IN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT.

TENORIO SAID THAT WHILE HE HAS NO OBJECTION REGARDING THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA'S INTEREST TO UNDERTAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TOWARD UNITY, HE NEVERTHELESS CHARGED THAT THE CONGRESS IS "USING SOME OF OUR PEOPLE AS A TOOL TO GET AT THE MARIANAS DISTRICT FOR ITS 'SEPARATIST' ATTITUDE..."

"IF UNITY FUNDS IS TRULY FOR AN OPEN-MINDED POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE MARIANAS," HE POINTED OUT, THEN THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HEADQUARTERS EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT STAFF, OR THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN TO THE STAFF OF A LOCAL NEWSPAPER "WHOSE AIM HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN THE PRESENTATION OF DISTORTED AND BIASED INFORMATION AND THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF CREATING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHAOS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT THE MARIANAS PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR DESIRE TO BECOME PART OF THE UNITED STATES."

THE MARIANAS SENATOR WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE CONGRESS AUTHORIZED THE FUNDS TO BE USED FOR WHAT HE CALLED "SUBVERSIVE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE MARIANAS."

"I SAY SUBVERSIVE," TENORIO ADDED, "AND ATTACH DEEP MEANING TO IT BECAUSE I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE AIM OF SUCH PROGRAM IS DESIGNED WITH A MALICIOUS INTENTION OF UNDERMINING THE COMMONWEALTH MOVEMENT IN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT."

"IT IS VERY CLEAR," CONTINUED THE FRESHMAN SENATOR, "FROM THE ACTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP THAT ITS PAST PRETENSE FOR 'NON-INVOLVEMENT' AND IMPARTIAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WISHES OF THE MARIANAS PEOPLE HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED AND REINCARNATED INTO A MOST VIOLENT, DANGEROUS AND COORDINATED SUBVERSIVE EFFORT TACTICALLY CAMOUFLAGED IN THE NAME OF UNITY."

THE MARIANAS SENATOR TOLD THE CONGRESS LEADERSHIP THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE UNITY FUNDS OF THE CONGRESS WAS TO BE USED TO PROMOTE TRADITIONAL DISCUSSION "WHICH MAY LEAD TOWARD BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION AMONG THEM."

HE REMINDED THEM THAT "UNITY CANNOT BE BOUGHT, BUT CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY MUTUAL RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER..."

"I FELL VERY STRONGLY," THE LETTER STATED, "THAT THE PUBLIC FUNDS AUTHORIZED AND APPROPRIATED BY YOUR OFFICES FOR ITS INTENDED PURPOSES IS A FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF OUR SOLEMN OATH WHEN WE TOOK OFFICE, AND FURTHERMORE, A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF INTENTIONAL ABUSE OF OUR TAXPAYERS' MONEY."

CALL USERS: PLEASE CREDIT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA)
(CONGRESSMAN WILL SUPPORT STRIKING TEACHERS)

SAIPAN, APRIL 7 (CONGRESS RELEASE)---MARIANAS CONGRESSMEN OSCAR RASA AND JOSE MAFNAS ISSUED A STATEMENT MONDAY, (APR. 7), SAYING THAT THEY INTEND TO "FULLY SUPPORT" THE EFFORTS OF THE TEACHERS OF SAIPAN IF THEY DECIDED TO CARRY OUT PLANS TO GO ON STRIKE THIS WEEK.

THEY SAID ALL SCHOOL TEACHERS, NOT ONLY ON SAIPAN BUT IN THE REST OF MICRONESIA, WERE PROMISED RECLASSIFICATION OF THEIR JOB STATUS AND RETROACTIVE PAY FIVE MONTHS AGO, BUT TO DATE ONLY FOUR SAIPAN TEACHERS HAVE BEEN RECLASSIFIED.

THEY ADDED THAT DURING RECENT MEETINGS ON SAIPAN WITH DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS, ONLY MORE PROMISES HAVE BEEN MADE. RASA AND MAFNAS SAID IT IS NOT APPARENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT NOW "DOES NOT POSSESS" THE MEANS TO KEEP ITS PROMISES BECAUSE OF THE RECENT "FREEZE" ON HIRING AND RECENTLY ORDERED CUT-BACKS ON ALL TRAVELS BY IT OFFICIALS.

THE MARIANAS CONGRESSMEN SAID THAT THERE HAVE EVEN BEEN "ATTEMPTS TO INTIMIDATE CERTAIN TEACHERS BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO FORCE THEM NOT TO STRIKE ON SAIPAN."

THEY ADDED SUCH ACTIONS ONLY "CONFIRM SUSPICIONS THAT THE AMERICAN--CONTROLLED ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT HAVE HONORABLE INTENTIONS" TO SETTLE THE RECLASSIFICATION PROBLEM.

"I BELIEVE ALL AVENUES OF SETTLEMENT WITH THE ADMINISTRATION ARE CLOSED," RASA SAID. "WHY DO SOME AMERICANS IN THE ADMINISTRATION MAKE PROMISES TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES WHEN THEY KNOW THEY CANNOT KEEP PROMISES?" HE ASKED.

RASA SAID TEACHERS HAVE OCCUPIED A LOW PLACE ON THE GOVERNMENT PAY SCALE "TOO LONG" AND THAT "CAPABLE, DEDICATED MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION DESERVE FAIR COMPENSATION FOR THEIR EFFORTS." HE SAID "TOO LARGE OF A PERCENTAGE" OF THE IT EDUCATION BUDGET CONTINUES TO GO TO AMERICAN CONTRACT PERSONNEL, AND NOT TO LOCAL MICRONESIAN CLASSROOM TEACHERS.

RASA ADDED THAT ANOTHER MAJOR REASON WHY HE IS SUPPORTING THE TEACHERS IF THEY DECIDE TO STRIKE IS BECAUSE IF THE PROPOSED COMMONWEALTH COVENANT IS APPROVED IN THE PLEBISCITE IN JUNE, "THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS CAN EXPECT MANY AMERICAN TEACHERS FROM GUAM, HAWAII AND THE MAINLAND COMING TO THE MARIANAS SEEKING JOBS."

"AMERICAN TEACHERS SIGN A "NO STRIKE" AGREEMENT IN THEIR CONTRACTS BEFORE THEY ARE HIRED," RASA SAID. "IF THE MARIANAS PEOPLE BECOME AMERICAN CITIZENS UNDER COMMONWEALTH, WE CAN EXPECT AMERICAN CONTRACT TEACHERS WHO HAVE AGREED NOT TO STRIKE TO REPLACE MICRONESIAN TEACHERS."

RASA SAID THE MARIANAS PEOPLE "MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT WILL AFFECT EVERYBODY IN THE MARIANAS IN MANY IMPORTANT WAYS, AS IT WILL AFFECT OUR TEACHERS IF THE MARIANAS BECOMES A COMMONWEALTH."

RASA SAID JOINING THE SO-CALLED "AMERICAN POLITICAL FAMILY" WILL GIVE 200 MILLION 'OTHER' AMERICAN CITIZENS CERTAIN RIGHTS IN THE MARIANAS AND THAT THE MARIANAS PEOPLE BETTER ASK THEIR STATUS COMMISSION MEMBERS EXACTLY WHAT RIGHTS THESE 'OTHER' AMERICAN WILL HAVE IN THE MARIANAS.