

# Week in Review

SUMMARY OF NEWS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS  
Prepared by Micronesian News Service

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## UN TRUSTEESHIP HEARINGS BEGIN

The 41st session of the United Nations Trusteeship Council began in New York last week with presentations by U.S. representative Ambassador Barbara White and Trust Territory High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston.

Ambassador White told the Council that, during her recent tour through the TT, she saw "impressive examples of democracy in action." The Ambassador summarized the progress of the Micronesian status negotiations in both the Marianas and the free association discussions in the Marshalls and Carolines.

Concluding her presentation, she said, "I wish each of you could see in operation, as I did, the Congress of Micronesia, a legislative body conducted with a professionalism and seriousness of which many larger and longer established countries can be proud."

High Commissioner Johnston described for the Council the progress of the Trust Territory government over the past year. Some of the major accomplishments included: the lifting of restrictions on foreign investments in Micronesia; the funding of the Palau bridge and Ponape hospital capital improvement projects; the establishment of the TT Housing Commission; and, the launching of Micronesia's first new field trip ship, the MV Micronesian Princess.

The Constitutional Convention, the HiCom said in conclusion, was probably the single most important event to take place during the past year.

Two Congress of Micronesia representatives, Senator Wilfred Kendall and Congressman Joab Sigrah also spoke to the Trusteeship Council. Kendall in his first appearance before the Council, said that he believed that it was time that the Congress shoulder a great share of the burden for governing Micronesia. He noted that while the Trusteeship Council had recommended that the power of the veto be restricted, some important pieces of legislation had been disapproved.

Representative Sigrah, who focused his comments on development planning and economic and social advancement, said "what is needed is an overall developmental scheme and specific goals to be achieved by a certain time period. This sort of planning can be based on what kind of development each district and all of Micronesia needs at once." This is his second

appearance before the Council.

The U.N. hearings were to continue through the early part of this week.

#### SPECIAL SESSION CALLED

A special 15-day session of the Congress of Micronesia will be held on Saipan beginning July 23. Deputy High Commissioner Peter T. Coleman issued a proclamation last week calling for the session at the request of Congressional leaders.

The special session will consider the following areas of legislation: return of public lands, reapportionment; amendments to the Constitutional Convention law; congressional revenues and pending appropriation bills; future political status; contract employee compensation; and, other legislation which the HiCom may request in a special message.

All the areas of concern, with the exception of contract employee compensation, were included in the Congressional request. The compensation question was included by the TT administration because many badly needed contract employees, including teachers and medical personnel, are being forced to accept salary reductions under the present salary act.

The special session will probably be the final one for the Fifth Congress as the general elections for the next Congress will be held in November. The Sixth Congress will convene on Saipan in January, 1975.

#### US TO COMPENSATE BIKINIANS

The United States has agreed, in principal, to compensate the people of Bikini atoll for hardships suffered as a result of their long displacement from their home. In response to a question from Australia's representative to the UN Trusteeship Council, U.S. Ambassador Barbara White said that the Department of the Interior has favorably considered a request from the Bikini Council for an ex gratia payment of \$3 million.

According to a letter sent to Marshallese Representative Ataji Balos from the Office of Territorial Affairs, "There is adequate support within the United States government to agree that there are sufficient grounds for an equitable ex gratia payment to the people of Bikini."

The Ambassador said that a joint departmental review in Washington, along with final approval by the United States Congress, was necessary to determine the exact amount of the payment.

#### BRIEFLY, HERE ARE SOME OTHER ITEMS THAT MADE NEWS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY LAST WEEK:

International Shoppers, Limited of Guam submitted the highest bid for construction of the prime concession building at Saipan's new International Airport. Their bid of \$5 million included the highest figure, \$400,000, for minimum improvements. Other bidders included Vicente D. Sablan of Saipan who submitted a \$2,817,000 bid, and a \$2,266,500 bid from Saipan Duty-Free Shops Limited. Final determination of the award will be made in 60 days.

Marshall's District Attorney Russell Walker represented the TT government last week in its efforts to have the Trust Territory High Court dismiss the case of Chief Public Defender Roger L. St. Pierre, who has been dismissed from his position. Walker said, among other points, that the court lacked jurisdiction to hear St. Pierre's request for a temporary restraining order. Benjamin Abrams, representing St. Pierre, told the court that he had been informed by phone from Lawrence Speiser, St. Pierre's Washington Attorney, that the Federal District Court in Washington, D.C., had deferred action on the case pending the TT High Court ruling. Chief Justice Harold Burnett ordered Abrams to obtain this ruling in writing. Burnett will determine if the High Court has jurisdiction sometime this week.

Twelve Taiwan fishermen were captured on Helen Reef by crewmembers of the MV Hafa Adai as their ship fled from the scene. According to a radio report from the TT field trip ship last week, the twelve were observed allegedly poaching turtles, shells, birds and eggs on the remote reef in Palau District.

The Joint Committee on Administrative Appointments of the Congress of Micronesia confirmed three key nominations last week. The committee announced that Philip Chamberlain had been confirmed as the TT Territorial Planner, Carl Heine as Deputy Director of the Public Affairs Department, and Hilary Tacheliol as the Deputy District Administrator of Yap.

The Territorial Planning Office announced that the annual Micronesian Planning Conference will be held on Saipan from June 24 thru the 28<sup>th</sup>. A number of issues, including the implementation of new field trip ships, the use of a new microfilm system, and the possible implementation of international road signs will be discussed.

A former U.S. Marine said last week that the Marianas may become the focal point for America's Pacific military presence within the next 15 years. James H. Webb, speaking before the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, said that "there is nowhere else for the U.S. to go beyond the Marianas" if it wants to remain a Pacific power. Webb, while stating that he believed it was necessary for the U.S. military to establish bases in the Marianas, cautioned those gathered that he did not feel the people of Saipan and Tinian fully realized all the implications of such a move.

Two former residents of Rongelap Atoll, in the Marshalls, underwent surgery in the United States last week to remove small thyroid growths caused by exposure to radioactive fallout 20 years ago. Jebora Kasva and Amon Anjain are patients at the Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital. They were exposed to fallout from U.S. hydrogen bomb tests conducted on Bikini atoll.

A canoe carrying four men disappeared last week on a trip from Ifalik to Woleai, in Yap District. Navy sea and air rescue units failed to discover any trace of the 22-foot craft. It is believed that the lost canoe carried very little food or water.

A team of University of Hawaii researchers will conduct further studies on Tinian during June, it was announced last week. The consultants are preparing an environmental impact statement on the effects of a joint-service

American military base on the island. The group includes experts in field research, economics, agriculture, sociology, and education.

Three Ponapeans were ordained deacons during ceremonies conducted on Ponape last week. Manuel Amor, Koropihh Kerman, and Miseal Pelep were ordained as more than 3,000 people gathered at the Kolonia mission grounds.

The South Pacific Commission announced that two food legislation experts will be touring the Trust Territory as part of a Pacific-wide survey. Dr. C. Jardin and Mr. E. Dunn will help Pacific governments prepare food legislation compatible with local conditions.

The Territorial Planning Office announced last week that James F. Hendricks is the new Palau Planning Officer. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Malaysia, Hendricks replaced Hal Hallonquist.

Associate Professor of Anthropology, Dr. Sachiko Hatanaka, arrived on Saipan last week to begin a study on culture change in Micronesia during the Japanese administration. Dr. Hatanaka, a professor at the University of Kanazawa in Japan, has done similar research on New Guinea.