

1975

(STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR)

WASHINGTON, D.C. JUNE 26 (MNS)---"ON JUNE 17, 1975, THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT FREELY EXERCISED THEIR RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN A UNITED NATIONS OBSERVED PLEBISCITE AND CHOSE BY AN OVERWHELMING MARGIN TO APPROVE THE "COVENANT TO ESTABLISH A COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS IN POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,"

"THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AGAIN SENDS ITS WARMEST GREETINGS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS. PRESIDENT FORD WILL SOON BE SUBMITTING THE COVENANT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS WITH HIS STRONG ENDORSEMENT. INDICATIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED POINT TOWARD SPEEDY CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON THE COVENANT BY THE U.S. CONGRESS.

*FINAL CONGRESSIONAL ACTION COULD COME AS EARLY AS THIS SUMMER.* THEREFORE, THERE IS A PRESSING NEED FOR FURTHER, IMMEDIATE AND MORE DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR THE FULL SEPARATION OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE TRUST TERRITORY AND FOR THE BEGINNING OF ITS TRANSITION TO A NEW COMMONWEALTH POLITICAL STATUS.

"I REGRET THAT THE SCHEDULE ENVISAGED EARLIER, NAMELY THAT FULL SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARIANAS WOULD OCCUR UPON ACCEPTANCE OF THE COVENANT IN THE POLITICAL STATUS PLEBISCITE, NOW MUST BE ADJUSTED TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR NECESSARY DETAILED PLANNING FOR SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION AND TRANSITION WHILE THE COVENANT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE CONGRESS.

"I AM THEREFORE WITHHOLDING THE ISSUANCE OF A SECRETARIAL ORDER PROVIDING FOR FULL ADMINISTRATIVE SEPARATION PENDING CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE COVENANT. DURING THIS TIME THE DETAILED PLANNING PROCESS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP CAN BE COMPLETED.

"IN ORDER THAT THE FINAL PLANNING PROCESS LEADING TO A NEW POLITICAL STATUS FOR THE MARIANAS CAN BE STARTED RIGHT AWAY, I HAVE REQUESTED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO RECONVENE THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR THE MARIANAS SEPARATION.

"FURTHER, WHILE MY NEW DIRECTOR OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS, MR. FRED M. ZEDER, IS IN THE MARIANAS DURING THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF JULY, I HAVE ASKED HIM TO MEET WITH THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS ITS FURTHER WORK. HE WILL BE REQUESTING THAT THE COMMITTEE, WHICH IS CHAIRED BY DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER COLEMAN, CONSULT FULLY AND MEET AS OFTEN AS NECESSARY WITH THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURES AND THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION, BOTH OF WHICH ARE REPRESENTED ON THE COMMITTEE.

"MR. ZEDER AND MR. COLEMAN WILL ALSO CALL UPON EXPERTS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY AND MARIANAS DISTRICT GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE THEIR SUPPORT AND SERVICES NOT ON A PRIORITY BASIS.

"ADDITIONALLY THE COMMITTEE WILL CONSULT AS APPROPRIATE WITH OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA AND WILL BE ABLE TO CONSIDER THEIR LEGITIMATE CONCERNS. DURING THE COURSE OF THE PLANNING PERIOD, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE WILL REPORT PERIODICALLY TO MR. ZEDER.

"THE AD HOC COMMITTEE WILL USE ITS PRELIMINARY REPORT WHICH WAS FILED LAST MAY 15 AS A BASIS FOR ITS FURTHER WORK AND CONSULTATIONS. IT WILL HAVE AS ITS PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY PLANNING FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF A SEPARATELY ADMINISTERED GOVERNMENT OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT TO COME INTO BEING UPON THE APPROVAL OF THE COVENANT BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. MR. ZEDER WILL PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE WITH THE COMMENTS AND REVISIONS MADE ON ITS PRELIMINARY REPORT BY THE

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OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS.

"THE COMMITTEE'S FINAL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SHOULD COVER:

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT UNDER SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION AND DURING PHASE I TRANSITION, WHICH IS THE TIME BETWEEN THE BEGINNING OF SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION AND THE INSTALLATION OF THE MARIANAS' OWN ELECTED GOVERNMENT UNDER A NEW CONSTITUTION;

-RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MARIANAS AND THE TRUST TERRITORY HEADQUARTERS AND THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA AND THE OTHER DISTRICTS DURING SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION UNTIL TERMINATION OF THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT; AND

-THE APPLICABILITY TO THE MARIANAS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY CODE AND FURTHER WORK ON THE SHARING OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

BETWEEN THE MARIANAS AND HEADQUARTERS GOVERNMENT.

"IN ADDITION TO THESE MATTERS, THE COMMITTEE WILL CONSIDER BUT WILL NOT BE LIMITED TO SUCH OTHER SUBJECTS AS;

-THE IMPACT ON THE MARIANAS OF A FUTURE RELOCATION OF THE TRUST TERRITORY HEADQUARTERS.

-A PHASED SCHEDULE FOR THE TRANSFERRAL OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES FROM HEADQUARTERS TO THE MARIANAS GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THOSE PROGRAMS PRESENTLY ORIGINATING WITH THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA;

-PROVISIONS FOR THE CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT OF THOSE MARIANAS CITIZENS PRESENTLY WORKING FOR THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT WHO WISH TO REMAIN THERE; AND

-THE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL FUND PROVIDED FOR IN THE COVENANT FOR THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF MARIANAS CITIZENS TO ENABLE THEM TO MEET THE EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WILL BECOME AVAILABLE DURING PHASE I TRANSITION AND UNDER THE NEW COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

"DURING THE TIME THE COVENANT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED. THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN ON SAIPAN ISLAND.

"THERE ARE NO INTENTIONS TO RELOCATE THE HEADQUARTERS OR TO REDUCE EMPLOYMENT LEVELS IN THE HEADQUARTERS STAFF IN THE NEAR FUTURE OR EVEN AFTER SEPARATION BECOMES EFFECTIVE. AT SUCH TIME AS THE COVENANT IS APPROVED BY THE CONGRESS, SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION WILL COMMENCE, A UNITED STATES RESIDENT COMMISSIONER FOR THE MARIANAS WILL BE APPOINTED, AND THE MARIANAS DELEGATION TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA WILL LEAVE THAT BODY AND JOIN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE AS MEMBERS-AT-LARGE.

"ALSO AT THAT TIME, THE AGREED PHASE I TRANSITION PROGRAM FOR THE MARIANAS WILL BEGIN AND THE 1.5 MILLION DOLLARS ALREADY AUTHORIZED BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF THE OFFICE OF TRANSITIONAL PLANNING AND STUDIES AND FOR OTHER TRANSITION RELATED ACTIVITIES.

"CLEARLY, THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL BE IMPORTANT ONES FOR THE MARIANAS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE. I HAVE ASKED MR. ZEDER TO REQUEST A MEETING WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LEGISLATURE AND TO BRING TO THEIR ATTENTION SEVERAL VITAL ISSUES WHICH SEEM TO REQUIRE THAT BODY'S THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION AND ACTION.

"AMONG THESE IS A DETAILED REVIEW OF THE TRUST TERRITORY CODE TO DETERMINE WHERE AMENDING PROVISIONS ARE NECESSARY WHEN A FULL SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION OCCURS. THE LEGISLATURE WILL ALSO OF COURSE NEED TO REORGANIZE ITS COMMITTEE AND STAFF STRUCTURE TO ACCOMODATE NEW MEMBERS-AT-LARGE AND ITS GREATLY

EXPANDED RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE AREAS OF BUDGET AND FINANCE.

"AS SOON AS THE LEGISLATURE ORGANIZES THE MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND CORPORATION ACCORDING TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECRETARIAL ORDER NO. 2969 AND THE RECENTLY PASSED ENABLING LEGISLATION, TITLE TO PUBLIC LANDS IN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT CAN BEGIN TO BE TRANSFERRED.

"THE LEGISLATURE MAY WISH ALSO TO PLAN FOR LEGISLATION CALLING A MARIANAS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND REFERENDUM AND TO ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR ITS COORDINATION WITH THE OFFICE OF TRANSITIONAL PLANNING AND STUDIES AND THE JOINT TRANSITION COMMISSION, BOTH OF WHICH WERE PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREED PHASE I TRANSITION PLAN.

"THE ACTIONS I HAVE OUTLINED SHOULD HELP US IN THE FURTHER PLANNING NECESSARY FOR FULL SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION AND THE

BEGINNING OF PHASE I TRANSITION. UPON APPROVAL OF THE COVENANT BY THE U.S. CONGRESS, I WILL ISSUE A NEW SECRETARIAL ORDER PROVIDING FOR THE SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARIANAS DISTRICT. THIS ORDER, ALONG WITH THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERIM SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION GOVERNMENT, WILL BE BASED IN LARGE PART ON THE FINAL REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE.

"I SHOULD LIKE TO THANK THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR ITS EXCELLENT PRELIMINARY REPORT, AND I WILL DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE CONTINUING BEST EFFORTS OF THE MARIANAS LEADERSHIP AND THE TRUST TERRITORY AND THE MARIANAS DISTRICT GOVERNMENT AS WE MOVE TOGETHER TO MAKE FINAL PLANS."

(SENATOR FONG'S STATEMENT ON MARIANAS PLEBISCITE RESULT)

WASHINGTON, JUNE 26 (MNS)---IN A STATEMENT ON THE SENATE FLOOR JUNE 24, HAWAII SENATOR HIRAM FONG REVIEWED THE STATISTICS IN THE FINAL REPORT OF PLEBISCITE COMMISSIONER ERWIN CANHAM AND NOTED THAT 78.8 PERCENT OF VALID VOTES CAST APPROVED THE COMMONWEALTH COVENANT AND THAT MORE THAN 93 PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS HAD CAST THEIR BALLOTS.

SENATOR FONG SAID: "THESE ARE HIGHLY GRATIFYING FIGURES. THEY DEMONSTRATE THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHER MARIANAS WHOLEHEARTEDLY PARTICIPATED IN THE PLEBISCITE AND FREELY CHOSE A CLOSE POLITICAL UNION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

"THE FACT THAT THE BALLOTING WAS OBSERVED BY THE UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVES AND FOLLOWED A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ADDS MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION BY THE PEOPLE FOR THEIR STRONG VOTE. IT CONFIRMS THE SENTIMENT I FOUND IN SAIPAN DURING MY VISIT TO THE TRUST TERRITORY LAST FALL. I EXTEND MY WARMEST ALOHA TO THE MARIANAS PEOPLE, WHO HAVE OPTED SO STRONGLY FOR CLOSER TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND FOR AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP."

SENATOR FONG INSERTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD THE TEXTS OF MESSAGES SENT TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHER MARIANAS BY THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR HATHAWAY, AND AMBASSADOR F. HAYDN WILLIAMS, THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS.

(RASA OPPOSED TO HIRING MORE COM LAWYERS)

SAIPAN, JUNE 26 (MNS)---MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN OSCAR C. RASA CHARGED THURSDAY MORNING THAT THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA IS "REPLETE WITH LAWYERS" WHO POSSESSES LEGAL MINDS BUT THERE IS A "BUNCH OF LAWYERS WHO DON'T EVEN KNOW THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC CHANGES."

REP. RASA SPOKE AGAINST A BILL APPROPRIATING \$208,708

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AS A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE OPERATION AND CONTINGENT EXPENSES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S OFFICE, (HB 6-313).

"IN THE BUDGET SHEET DISTRIBUTED TO EVERY HOUSE MEMBER, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL SHOWS THREE VACANT POSITIONS FOR STAFF ATTORNEY.

HE CHARGED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL IS "BEGINNING TO RUN THE CONGRESS."

ASKED BY REPRESENTATIVE LAMBERT AAFIN (TPUK) TO ELABORATE ON HIS ATATEMENT, RASA SAID THAT "MAJOR DECISIONS" ARE MADE BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL AND STAFF ATTORNEYS AND NOT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

THE MARIANAS CONGRESSMAN ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE CONGRESS IS ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICE IN WASHINGTON D. C. TO ACT AS A "LIAISON" BETWEEN THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA AND THE U.S. CONGRESS WHICH WOULD COST ABOUT \$500,000 A YEAR. HE CALLED THE AMOUNT "UNREALISTIC."

REPRESENTATIVE ATAJI BALOS (MARSHALLS) STRESSED THE NEED TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICE IN WASHINGTON.

RASA ALSO SAID THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA IS PAYING A WASHINGTON ATTORNEY ON A FULLTIME BASIS.

CONGRESSMAN EKPAP SILK (MARSHALLS) WHO IS ALSO THE HOUSE FLOOR LEADER, EXPLAINED THAT THE ATTORNEY IN WASHINGTON, PAUL WARNKE, WAS PAID ONLY FOR THE WORK ACTUALLY PERFORMED FOR THE CONGRESS OR A COMMITTEE BUT NOT HIRED ON A FULLTIME BASIS.

WARNKE, WHO IS THE CONGRESS JOINT COMMITTEE ON FUTURE STATUS LEGAL COUNSEL, IS BEING PAID MONEY ALLOTTED FOR THE JOINT COMMITTEE, EXPLAINED REP. RAYMOND SETIK, (TRUK) WHO IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE.

THE BILL PASSED FIRST READING.

THE HOUSE THEN ADOPTED A RESOLUTION CONVEYING BEST WISHES TO YAP CONGRESSMAN AND MRS. JOHN HAGLELGAM ON THEIR RECENT MARRIAGE.

AFTER THE SELENT PRAYER, ROLL CALL, THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SEVEPAL MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS AND A REMINDER BY TWO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OF THE PENDING COMMITTEE HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY AFTERNOON, THE SENATORS RECESSED UNTIL FRIDAY MORNING AT 10. IT IS ONE OF THE SHORTEST MEETING ON RECORD FOR THE UPPER CHAMBER, ACCORDING TO ONE SENATOR.

ONLY ONE HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION WAS OFFERED IN THE HOUSE. IT DIRECTS AND AUTHORIZES THE PRESIDING OFFICERS OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TO ACT "IMMEDIATELY AND PROMPTLY" TO TRANSFER AND MOVE ALL PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TO PONAPE DISTRICT AND CREATE A COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO ACCOMPLISH THE SAID PURPOSE, (HJR 6-98LM

THE RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED BY PONAPE CONGRESSMAN RESIO MOSES PLUS 12.

BOTH HOUSE WILL MEET AGAIN FRIDAY MORNING AT 10.

#### (SENATE PASSES SALARY BILL)

SAIPAN, JUNE 26 (MNS)---THE SENATE WEDNESDAY NIGHT MET FOR ONE HOUR TO CONSIDER THE NEW BASE SALARY SCHEDULE FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND PASSED IT ON SECOND AND FINAL READING AND SENT IT TO THE HOUSE FOR ITS CONSIDERATION:

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION-SPONSORED SALARY SCHEDULE, IF PASSED BY THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA AND SIGNED INTO LAW BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, WILL RAISE THE SALARIES OF THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES A "CONSIDERABLE" AMOUNT.

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IN THE GENERAL DEBATE ON THE SALARY MEASURE, MARIANAS SENATORS OLYMPIO BORJA AND PEDRO TENORIO BOTH DELIVERED BRIEF REMARKS, SUPPORTING THE SALARY SCHEDULE.

URGING THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL. SENATOR BORJA STRESSED THE NEED FOR INCREASING THE SALARIES OF THE EMPLOYEES IN VIEW OF THE RISING COST OF LIVING NOW APPARENT THROUGHOUT MICRONESIA.

MORE PERSISTENT AND VOCAL IN HIS REMARKS, SENATOR TENORIO SAID THAT THE SALARY BILL IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND HE URGED BOTH THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA AND THE ADMINISTRATION TO JOINTLY WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THE SALARY BILL A REALITY.

SAYING THAT THE CERTAIN BRANCHES OF THE GOVERNMENT MUST "SACRIFICE TOGETHER", THE MARIANAS SENATOR PROPOSED SEVERAL STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW BASIC SALARY SCHEDULE.

FOR THE ADMINISTRATION, HE SAID THAT DUE TO CURRENT BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS NOW AFFECTING THE GOVERNMENT, HE PROPOSED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE BENEFITS GOING TO THE CHILDREN OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPATRIATES BE ELIMINATED, AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION TAKE STEPS TO HIPE-QUALIFIED MICRONESIANS TO REPLACE THE EXPATRIATES.

FOR THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, SENATOR TENORIO URGED HIS FELLOW SENATORS TO LOWER THEIR OWN SALARIES. IF STEPS ARE NOT TAKEN, THE SALARY BILL MAY NOT BECOME A REALITY AND THE CONGRESS MAY NOT BE DOING A GOOD SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA, TENORIO EMPHASIZED.

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