



Herman Taitano proudly holds this unusual butterflyfish. Note the expanse of its fins -- wider than Herman's chest. (photo by J. Pua)

LEGISLATURE ADOPTS MARIANAS CON CON BILL

SAIPAN--The Northern Mariana Islands Legislature this week approved a measure calling for a Constitutional Convention for the Northern Marianas.

Final Action came following days of heated and see-saw debate on whether to accommodate or defeat Saipan's ethnic group (Carolinian Community)

request for three guaranteed seats in that forum.

The measure provides for a convention of thirty-nine delegates elected at-large: 25 from Saipan; Five from Tinian; Eight from Rota and one from the Northern Islands.

But of the 25 delegates from Saipan to be elected at large, three "shall be of Ca-

rolinian ancestry..." The measure further provides that the three Carolinian candidates who receive the highest votes shall be "declared elected delegates to the Convention."

The measure (Act No. 1-1976) authored by the Political Committee provides that the election of delegates

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Senator's Appropriations Exceed Revenue

Saipan--The Northern Marianas Legislature will be running into some serious deficit by the time the current session ends, according to its Appropriations Committee report.

In other words, the legislature has already exceeded its anticipated revenue well through the end of this year by about \$120,000. It leaves the forthcoming August session and other sessions with no money

for appropriations.

The only anticipated revenue which would be available for appropriations is half of the estimated \$391,400 in revenue for the remaining quarter of this fiscal year -January to March 1977.

At one point, the 21 Senators engaged in an exchange on whether to defer action on several appropriation bills up for second and final reading with the idea not to exceed what is and will act-

ually be available in the general fund for this year. But by voting time, the majority supported bringing out the remaining appropriation measures for final action.

For fiscal year 1976-77, the estimated revenues for the general fund of the Legislature is about \$1.5 million dollars. But by the end of the session the total appropriation measures will amount to about \$1,071,791, in excess of

\$120,000 in anticipated revenue by Dec.

The Appropriation Committee has reportedly warned the full house to cut down in the introduction of appropriation measures in view of the total amount which would have been appropriated beyond what is and will be available.

The committee pointed out that should the current trend continue there will be no money left for appropriations in case of an em-

ergency.

Furthermore, the committee warned the house of possible danger in continuing to appropriate money, which may exceed the anticipated revenues, in view of the fluctuation of the economic situation in the Marianas, and plans to lay off some T T employees which may indirectly affect the revenue situation from taxes and other things.

5-18-76

Marianas Con Con Bill...

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to the Northern Mariana Islands Constitutional Convention will be held on July 12 of

Oleai's Micro Cultural Day

Saipan—The Second Annual Micronesian Cultural Day Program of Oleai Elementary School will be held here Friday, May 21.

The children will perform native dances and demonstrate native skills and crafts for all districts in Micronesia from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon.

They will sing, cook and work in native costumes in a Micronesian Village as their fathers did a long time ago. In the evening, at 6:00, the pupils will perform Micronesian dances.

Fresh fruits and local delicacies will be on sale. School authorities say, bring your family and your camera for an unforgettable experience.

this year. It also appropriated \$10,000 dollars to fund the election of delegates this July.

The Marianas ConCon will also have a Pre-Convention Committee consisting of the Speaker of the Northern Mariana Islands Legislature and the three chairmen of each municipality's delegation. This committee is primarily charged with the duty to lay out the ground work of the Convention and to specify the actual date for the convening of the Convention no later than August 2nd of this year. The convention will run no longer than 50 days.

The election of delegates to the Northern Mariana Islands ConCon will be conducted by the Resident Commissioner. The Res-Com is also charged with the responsibility to conduct a referendum on the finished Marianas Constitution. Ratification of the Constitution would require 60 percent of those who voted in the referendum.

Gardner S...

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while conducting themselves in a lawful and orderly manner."

Gardner, in his suit claims damages for: Injury to his reputation, mental anguish, aggravation, embarrassment and humiliation - \$250,000.00; Injury to the reputation of his wife, Jackie Gardner, and her mental anguish, aggravation, embarrassment and humiliation - \$250,000.00; Unlawful arrest, imprisonment and confinement of Gardner, causing him not to be able to perform and transact his necessary affairs and business, resulting in expenses and losses - \$100,000.00; Exemplary and punitive damages - \$50,000.00; Retaining counsel, and recovering reasonable attorney's fees - \$6,000.00.

Abrams has demanded "Trial by Jury" on behalf of his clients.

After Gardner's arrest, he and his family were housed at the Continental Hotel, at government expense,

until the settled. On and 19th, brought to the High Court Associate Judge Ald William. Charges brought Gardner Attorney General were documents, of letters, agreements, for proposals, inquiries, billings, complaints, comparative to on liveryies, b selection c purchase or the named and others, date, catalog named supply other, and nonpayment lings." C. ence between and Michael another form Territory p. was also "s among the m. uments." Oti against Gar. sisted of "i in public of forgerly".

 **MAZDA**

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in fact the "Isias Delas Lagriones"

The Marianas Legislature has approved a measure which would create a Constitutional Convention for the future Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The measure, if signed into law, will create a convention of 39 delegates to meet for fifty days. It will cost the taxpayers \$30.00 per day for each delegate, plus per-diem, travel and other expenses.

The 39 delegates will draft a Constitution subservient to the U. S. Constitution and the Marianas Covenant. Furthermore, the task is not that difficult since the Covenant outlines about two-thirds of what should be included in the Constitution.

For instance, a Legislature source said there is already a proposed written Constitution (ready-made) for the Marianas now being studied by a prestigious Washington Law firm.

From a more critical perspective, if you combine the fifty-days for each of the 39 delegates, you will come up with 1,950 actual working days (5 years and 4 months). And at \$30.00 per delegate, it will cost us \$58,500 for their actual working days not to mention other expenses which altogether could run as high as \$75,000 or more.

In other words, to draft one-third of a Constitution and rewrite the other two-thirds out of the Covenant, it will take one individual person about 1,950 days to complete it at the cost of \$75,000; which would be followed by a referendum for purposes of ratification.

How about retaining three local lawyers or constitutional lawyers to draft about a dozen constitutions? It would not only take less time, but less expense too and such would afford the people here to study, select and ratify a constitution they see fit. Doesn't this make more sense?

he said.

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We think it is high time that the Northern Marianas District Legislature begins worrying about the 500 Northern Marianas people who will eventually lose their jobs from the Trust Territory Government as a result of the change of government in the Northern Marianas. Many things are being discussed in the current Legislature's session these days. But only a few sporadic discussions about the massive lay-off of Saipanese was being discussed. Why is it that the Legislators choose to ignore or rather neglect to talk about this glaring issue during their deliberation these days? Is this because they are afraid they would reveal one of their dirty secrets?

Mr. Gil Ada
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people

Dear Editor: