

Sept 1976

(PALAU APPROVES SEPARATE STATUS TALKS)
SAIPAN, SEPT. 27 (MNS)---THE PEOPLE OF PALAU DISTRICT VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY SEPTEMBER 24 IN FAVOR OF CONDUCTING SEPARATE POLITICAL STATUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. ACCORDING TO UNOFFICIAL RESULTS RECEIVED FROM PALAU.

AS OF LATE MONDAY AFTERNOON, WITH THE TABULATING NEARLY COMPLETED, ABOUT 88 PERCENT OF THE VOTES CAST WERE IN FAVOR OF SEPARATE NEGOTIATIONS, ONLY 12 PERCENT VOTED AGAINST IT.

VOTES FROM THE SOUTHWEST ISLANDS OF TOBI, SONSOROL AND PULO ANA WHICH HAS A POPULATION OF MORE THAN A HUNDRED WILL BE COUNTED ON WEDNESDAY (SEPT. 29) WHEN THE FIELD TRIP SHIP GETS IN KOROR.

REPORTS REACHING SAIPAN INDICATED THAT PALAU HAS ABOUT 6,100 REGISTERED VOTERS. ACCORDING TO RAYMOND ULUCHONG, ACTING DIRECTOR OF PALAU'S PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, MANY ELIGIBLE VOTERS WERE AWAY AND WERE NOT ABLE TO CAST THEIR VOTES IN THE REFERENDUM. THESE INCLUDED CLOSE TO FIVE HUNDRED PALAUANS WHO ARE ON SAIPAN, OVER THREE HUNDRED STUDENTS VOTERS PRESENTLY ATTENDING SCHOOLS IN HAWAII AND THE U.S. MAINLAND, AND OTHERS WHO ARE IN THE OTHER DISTRICTS. "AS FAR AS THOSE ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN PALAU WERE CONCERNED, THE TURN-OUT WAS VERY HIGH, AND THE PALAU POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION MADE EVERY EFFORT TO BRING VOTERS TO THE POLLS. IN MANY CASES, THEY SENT CARS AND BOATS TO BRING VOTERS TO THE POLLING PLACES", ULUCHONG SAID.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FROM THE REFERENDUM INDICATED THAT ABOUT 3,270 REGISTERED VOTERS ACTUALLY CASTED THEIR BALLOTS. THIS IS LESS THAN THE 4,200 VOTES CAST LAST YEAR DURING THE ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PALAU LEGISLATURE. DURING THE 1974 ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, 4,534 VOTERS CASTED THEIR BALLOTS.

WITH ABOUT 70 VOTES FROM THE SOUTHWEST ISLANDS OF PALAU YET TO BE COUNTED, THE RESULTS OF THE REFERENDUM ARE AS FOLLOWS: YES VOTES, 2,720; NO VOTES, 389, WITH 24 VOIDED BALLOTS.

THE PALAU "GENERAL REFERENDUM" WAS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH A BILL PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE MAY 21, AND SIGNED JULY 20 BY DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR THOMAS O. RENGESAB.

DESPITE REQUEST BY THE PALAU POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REJECTED A REQUEST TO SEND DOWN OFFICIAL OBSERVERS FOR THE PLEBISCITE NOR TO TRANSMIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS REQUEST FOR UN OBSERVERS.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT POSITION IS TO SUPPORT MICRONESIAN UNITY AND LET THE COMMISSION ON FUTURE STATUS AND TRANSITION CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS FOR MICRONESIA AS A WHOLE.

(A NEW VESSEL FOR IT)

SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 27 (MNS)---A BRAND NEW VESSEL FOR THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT ARRIVED ON SAIPAN MONDAY MORNING, SEPT. 27, FROM OSAKA, JAPAN, WHERE IT WAS BUILT.

THE 50-METER SHIP, CALLED "MS. CAROLINE ISLANDS," WILL LEAVE SAIPAN SEPT. 29 FOR ITS FIRST ASSIGNMENT IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

A SPOKESMAN FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SAID THE NEW SHIP CAN CARRY 1,000 TONS. IT COSTS THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT CLOSE TO \$1 MILLION DOLLARS, HE ADDED.

THE NEW VESSEL IS MANNED MOSTLY BY MICRONESIANS FROM THE MARSHALLS, TRUK, AND PONAPE. THE CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP IS A NONPACER.

"MS. CAROLINE ISLANDS" IS ONE OF THE TWO NEW VESSELS PURCHASED BY THE IT GOVERNMENT THIS YEAR, THE OTHER, "MS. MARSHALL ISLANDS", WILL BE ARRIVING IN THE TRUST TERRITORY EARLY NEXT MONTH.

(FISH KILLED BY CHEMICALS)

SAIPAN, SEPT. 27 (MNS)---UNKNOWN CHEMICAL MUST HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF DEATH OF A LARGE NUMBER OF FISH FOUND AT SAIPAN ROQUE BEACH ON SAIPAN FRIDAY MORNING (SEPT. 17).

ACCORDING TO SEBASTIAN UNGESII, ACTING CHIEF OF THE T.T. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION, IT IS SUSPECTED THAT WORLD WAR II CHEMICALS BURIED MUST HAVE WASHED INTO A SMALL STREAM LEADING TO THE OPEN SEA SOMETIME THURSDAY NIGHT

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(SEPT. 23) DURING HEAVY SHOWERS. THE FISH KILLED WERE MOSTLY SMALL MULLET.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND MARINE RESOURCES STAFF CONDUCTED AN INVESTIGATION AROUND THE NEARBY FARM AREA IN SAN ROQUE TO SEE IF CHEMICALS WERE USED IN THEIR PLANTS BUT FOUND NONE.

ALTHOUGH CHEMICAL WAS SUSPECTED, ONGESII SAID IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE TYPE INVOLVED BECAUSE THERE ARE SEVERAL KINDS ON THE ISLANDS.

THE SOURCE IS STILL BEING INVESTIGATED, ONGESII ADDED, BECAUSE THE NEXT HEAVY RAIN COULD WASH AGAIN THE CHEMICALS BACK INTO THE 30-FOOT WIDE STREAM IN THE AREA.

ONGESII AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO CONTROL THE IMPORTATION AND USE OF PESTICIDES IN MICRONESIA. HE SAID ONE WAY TO CONTROL THESE CHEMICALS IS TO REPORT THEM TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD IN EACH DISTRICT AND IDENTIFY THEIR TYPE AND USES. IF THEY ARE NO LONGER NEEDED, THEY CAN EITHER BE BURNED, BURIED OR STORED IN SAFE PLACES IN PROPER CONTAINERS.

(JULY GOOD MONTH FOR TOURISTS)

SAIPAN, SEPTEMBER 27 (MNS)---JULY WAS A GOOD MONTH FOR TOURISM IN MICRONESIA ACCORDING TO STATISTICS RELEASED BY THE IMMIGRATION DIVISION OF THE TRUST TERRITORY AND NORTHERN MARIANAS GOVERNMENTS. VISITOR ENTRIES FOR JULY WERE UP 67 PERCENT OVER JULY, 1975.

THE GREATEST GAIN CAME IN THE MARIANAS WHERE THE INCREASE REGISTERED 90 PERCENT. THIS WAS DUE PRIMARILY TO THE ARRIVAL OF MORE THAN A DOZEN CHARTER FLIGHTS FROM JAPAN.

WHILE THE OTHER DISTRICTS OF MICRONESIA RECEIVED NO CHARTER FLIGHTS, THEIR TOURISM, ALSO SHOWED GAINS FOR THE MONTH. PALAU WAS UP 39 PERCENT; TRUK 29; MARSHALLS 14; AND PONAPE 12. ONLY YAP SHOWED DECREASE FOR THE MONTH.

TOURISM IN MICRONESIA ALSO IS UP ON THE LONGER TERM. WHEN MEASURING THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JULY 31, 1976 WITH THE PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS, THE OVERALL GAIN IS FOUR PERCENT. THERE WAS LITTLE CHANGE REPORT IN THE BREAKDOWN OF NATIONALITIES, WITH U.S. AND JAPANESE VISITORS EACH MAKING UP ABOUT 47 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL.