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SAIPAN, FEB. 15 (COM) -- - MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE
OF THE CONGRESS OF MICROMESIA TODAY ENACTED A BILL WHICH WOULD
PROVIDE A 200 MILE ECONOMIC 20NE FOR MICROMESIAN WATERS.

SENATE BILL NO. 7-18. WAS PASSED ON SECOND READING IN THE
HOUSE AS HOUSE DRAFT ONE, AND TRANSMITTED TO THE SENATE WHICH
CONCURRED IN MINCR CHANGES BY THE HOUSE, INCLUDING A LAST-MINUTE

FLOOR AMENDMENT BY REP. KUNIHO NAKAMURA TO CHANGE THE APPROPRIATION AMOUNT TO AN AUTHORIZATION FOR A LATER APPROPRIATION.

THE BILL FACES POSSIBLE VETO BECAUSE OF U.S. OBJECTIONS

TO CERTAIN OF ITS PROVISIONS.

DURING DISCUSSION OF THE BILL IN THE HOUSE, FLOOR LEADER

LUKE THAN READ FROM A PREPARED STATEMENT WHICH HE LATER INSERTED

INTO THE JOURNAL.

IN HIS REMARKS: HE QUOTED FROM THE STATMENT OF THE BILL'S

PURP OS E.

"THE LIVING RESOURCES OF THE SEA OF MICRONESIA ARE A FINITE, BUT RENEWABLE PART OF THE PHYSICAL HERITAGE OF THE PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA. BEING NEARY DEVOID OF LAND BASED RESOURCES, THE SEA PROVIDES THE ONLY FEASIBLE MEANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIS VIABILITY NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION FOR POLITICAL STABILITY."

REP. TMAN ALSO SAID THAT THE STATEMENT NOTES THAT RESCURCES ARE NOW BEING EXPLOITED BY OTHERS "WITH NO BENEFITS TO US" AND

THAT THEREFORE:

THE PURPOSE OF THE (BILL) IS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TO MANAGE AND CONSERVE MICRONESIA'S VITAL SEA RESOURCES BY MEANS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE RESOURCES JURISDICTION OF MICRONESIA OUT 200 MILES FROM ITS SHORES.

TMAN SAID THAT THE MEASURE WAS A RESULT OF "INTENSIVE STUDY BY THE CONGRESS AND TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION PERTINENT LAW OF THE SEA LEGISLATION BY THE UNITED STATES AND ALSO THE REVISED SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT OF THE UNITED NATIONS LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE."

THE YAP CONGRESSMAN, WHO IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE MICRONESIAN DELEGATION TO THE LAW OF THE SEA, EXPLAINED IN HIS STATEMENT THAT THE BILL ALSO HAD INPUT FROM THE TT ATTORNEY GENERAL'S

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OFFICE, THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER SOURCES.

THE BILL HAS PROVISIONS WHICH APPLY TO HIGHLY MIGRATORY
SPECIES OF FISH SUCH AS TUNA, IN THE 200 MILE 20 NE AND IT
PROVIDES FOR A MICRONESIAN MARITIME AUTHORITY TO MANAGE THE
AREA, INCLUDING NEGOTIATING WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS THROUGH
APPROPRIATE CHANNELS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

DISTRICT AUTHORITIES ARE ALSO CREATED BY THE BILL.
ACCORDING TO REP. TMAN" "TO MANAGE AND REGULATE THE HARVESTING

OF THEIR MARINE RESOURCES,"

"FURTHERMORE, THE EFFECTIVE DATES OF DIFFERENT PROVISIONS
OF THIS BILL ARE DESIGNED TO ALLOW THE MARITIME AUTHORITY TO
BEGIN TO ORGANIZE UPON APPROVAL BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, AND
THE ECONOMIC ZONE TO BECCHE EFFECTIVE ON JULY 1, 1978. IN
OTHER WORDS, THE BILL IS DESIGNED SO THAT THE MACHINERY NEEDED
TO REGULATE OUR OCEAN RESOURCES CAN BE SET IN ORDER AND OPERATIVE

BEFORE THE ZONE BECOMES LEGALLY EFFECTIVE," TMAN SAID.

HE ALSO RELATED THAT THE BILL WAS CONSISTENT WITH LAST

ACTIONS OF THE COM LAW OF THE SEA COMMITTEE, AND THE CURRENT

DELEGATION.

CONGRESSMAN TMAN ALSO NOTED COMMENTS BY THE U',S. STATE
DEPARTMENT'S LIAISON OFFICER, IN A LETTER DATED FEBRUARY 14,
1977, WHICH SAID THAT WHILE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT VIEWS THE BILL
AS A "CONSTRUCTIVE STEP" THAT IN ITS PRESENT FORM IT "CONTAINS
CERTAIN PROVISIONS AND LANGUAGE WHICH THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT WOULD BE UNABLE TO ACCEPT."

THE MAIN OBJECTIONS TO THE MEASURE WERE (1) THAT EVEN THOUGH THE BILL PROVIDES FOR THE MARITIME AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AS PROVIDED BY SECRETARIAL ORDER; "THE UNITED STATES CANNOT ACQUIESCE IN THE ASSUMPTION OF THIS RIGHT BY THE AUTHORITY OR THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA", AND (2) "CERTAIN PROVISIONS IN THE BILL CONTINUE TO ASSERT JURISDICTION OVER SUCH SPECIES AS TUNA".

THE U.S. POSITION ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH LIKE TUNA IS, ACCORDING TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE BILL "VERY MUCH ALONE IN THE WORLD OF NATIONS IN REFUSING TO RECOGNIZE ASSERTION OF JURISDICTION" OVER TUNA. THE BILL, IT POINTS OUT, IS HOWEVER, CONSISTENT WITH POSITION OF THE UN SPONSORED LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE.

THE REPORT ALSO CONCLUDES THAT "FOR THE PURPOSES OF APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF THIS BILL WHEN ENACTED . . . THE

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UNITED STATES WILL BE OBLIGATED AND DIRECTED BY THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT AND NOT THE (U.S.) FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976."

(200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE BILL GENERATES DEBATE)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 15 (MNS) --- THE "MARINE SPACE JURISDICTION"
BILL ESTABLISHING A 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE THAT PASSED THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA TUESDAY (FEB. 15) GENERATED LIVELY

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SECTION 02 OF 04 DEBATE AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. THIS BILL IS ONE OF THE MUST SIGNIFICANT PIECES OF LEGISLATION TO PASS THE CONGRESS TO DATE THIS SESSION.

TWO MEMBERS OF THE PALAU DELEGATION, REPS. KUNIWO NAKAMURA AND ISIDORO RUDIMCH SPOKE AGAINST PASSAGE OF THE

RUDIMCH SAID THE CONGRESS SHOULD ACCOMPDATE THE U.S. POSITION ON THE BILL BECAUSE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS BEING ASKED TO ENFORCE THIS MEASURE ONCE IT BECOMES LAW. "AND WE CANNOT JUST BLINDLY, UNILATERALLY ENACT SOMETHING WITHOUT THE INPUT --- SOME WORKABLE ARRANGEMENT --- WITH THE OTHER PARTY, " RUDIMCH SAID.

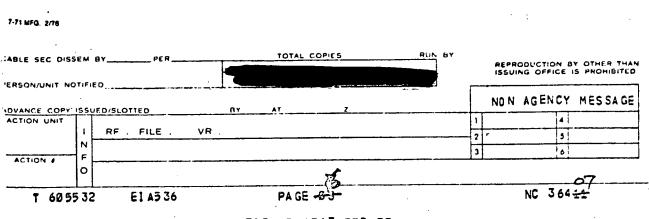
NAKAMURA SAID THE LAW OF THE SEA MATTER SHOULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL MICRONESIA'S POLITICAL STATUS IS RESOLVED. HE SAID THE LAW OF THE SEA ISSUE IS A VERY COMPLEX MATTER BECAUSE IT DEALS WITH INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS. "I FEEL THAT THIS CONGRESS OUGHT TO BE A LITTLE BIT MORE DEPLOMATIC AND TRY TO ACCOMODATE SOME OF THE CONCERNS OF THE UNITED STATES OVER THE MATTER AND THEN COME UP WITH EQUITABLE LEGISLATION WHICH MAY NOT ONLY PROTECT OUR INTEREST BUT AT THE SAME TIME PROTECT THE INTEREST OF SOME OF THE U.S. COMPANIES IN MICRONESIA. .. ", NAKAMURA EMPHAS IZED.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE BILL WERE REPS. LUKE TMAN, HANS

WILIANDER. LAMBERT AAFIN AND EKPAP SILK.

TMAN SAID THE CONGRESS SHOULD APPROVE THE BILL DESPITE THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT'S OBJECTIONS. "... IF WE WERE TO ACCOMODATE THOSE OBJECTIONS AND INCORPORATE THEM IN THE BILL." TMAN DECLARED, "IT WOULD TOTALLY DILUTE AND DESTROY THE INTENT OF THE LEGISLATION AS TO RENDER IT TOTALLY MENINGLESS. IT IS GOING TO BE ONLY A PIEGE OF PAPER WITHOUT ANY (MICRONESIAN) JURISDICTION ."

REP. WILLIANDER INFORMED THE HOUSE THAT THE ONLY U.S. OBJECTION TO THE BILL WAS WITH REGARD TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES, WHICH IS TUNA, BECAUSE IT CONFLICTS WITH THE PRESENT U.S. FISHERIES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (U.S. PL 94-26). "IN (THIS) CASE," WILLIANDER SAID, "THE UNITED STATES IS ALONE TODAY IN THAT AREA BECAUSE ALL THE COASTAL STATES WOULD LIKE TO GET JURISDICTION OR HAVE ENACTED THEIR OWN LAWS HAVING JURISDICTION OVER THE HIGHLY



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HIGRATORY FISH --- WHICH IS TUNA.

"IN SHORT," WILIANDER EXPLAINED, "WE ARE IN CONFORMITY WITH INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW AND (THE) INTERNATIONAL MARITIME MOOD, AND THE MOOD TODAY IS THAT ALL COASTAL STATES WOULD LIKE TO HAVE JURISDICTION OF 200-MILES AND WOULD LIKE TO HAVE JURISDICTION OVER THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES."

REP. EKPAP SILK SAID THAT THE LAW OF THE SEA MATTER IS ONE OF THE REMAINING UNRESOLVED ISSUES IN THE POLITICAL STATUS NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES "DOES NOT SEE FIT" TO SUPPORT THE MICRONESIAN POSITION ON MARINE RESOURCES WHICH ARE VITAL TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. "...UNLESS WE MAKE OUR WISHES KNOWN," HE WARNED. "WE WILL LOSE THE VALUABLE RESOURCES IN THE SEAS SURROUNDING US."

REP. LAMBERT AAFIN REMARKED THAT MICRONESIA'S MARINE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MICRONESIA. "OUR LANDS DO NOT PROVIDE US WITH THE NATURAL RESOURCES THAT OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE. THE SEA IS THE ONLY ONE THAT WE SEE RIGHT NOW. UNLESS THE U.S. CAN GIVE US A BETTER WAY OF ACHIEVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT," AAFIN TOLD THE HOUSE. "THIS BILL MUST BE APPROVED" TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICRONESIA'S ECONOMY.

THE MEASURE PASSED BY A VOTE OF 19-2 IN THE HOUSE, NAKAMURA AND RUDIMCH VOTED AGAINST IT. THE SENATE SUBSEQUENTLY APPROVED THE HOUSE AMENDMENTS WHICH WOULD DELETE THE \$100,000 AMOUNT REQUESTED IN THE BILL BUT WOULD AUTHORIZE SUCH APPROPRIATION AS MAY BE NECESSARY.

IN OTHER BUSINESS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
POSTPONED ACTION UNTIL NEXT YEAR ON A MEASURE WHICH WOULD
PLACE A RESTRICTION ON ALL HIRING AND SALARY INCREASES
EXCEPT WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES FOR ALL POSITIONS IN THE
EXECUTIVE, (SB 7-77) AFTER MEETING CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION.

THE SENATE LAST WEEK PASSED THE BILL AND SENT IT TO THE HOUSE. THE HOUSE APPROVED IT ON FIRST READING AND IT WAS UP ON TUESDAY'S (FEB, 15) CALENDAR FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING. IT NEVER CLEARED THE HOUSE AS MEMBERS IMMEDIATELY ATTACKED THE BILL.

FIRST TO SPEAK WAS REP, RUBEN ZACHRAS OF THE MARSHALLS WHO ARGUED THAT THE CONGRESS HAS SPENT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MICRONESIAN STUDENTS. IF THESE STUDENTS COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION AND RETURN TO

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THE TRUST TERRITORY, THEY COULD NEVER GET A JOB IF THE CONGRESS APPROVED THIS BILL.

REP. DARO WEITAL OF PENAPE ALSO SPOKE AGAINST THE BILL. HE SAID THAT GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES THROUGHOUT THE TRUST TERRITORY HAVE CRITICIZED THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA WHENEVER SALARIES ARE NOT INCREASED. "I WOULD LIKE THE RECORD TO REFLECT THAT THIS BILL IS AN ADMINISTRATION BILL." WEITAL SAID.

REP. SASAUO HARUO SAID: "THE EFFECT THAT WE MIGHT BE FACED WITH AS A RESULT OF LACK OF HIRING COMPEYENT PEOPLE TO BE UTILIZED IN (SUCH) AREAS LIKE PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION MIGHT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON (THESE PROGRAMS)."

AND THER PONAPEAN CONGRESSMAN, EDGAR EDWARDS, STATED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS TRYING "TO PASS THE BUCK" TO THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA BY OFFERING IT TO THE CONGRESS TO ENACT. HE MAINTAINED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION COULD HAVE INSTITUTED A FREEZE WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE CONGRESS, "AND JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID TO GET THE BLAME FROM THE PUBLIC THEY WANT THE CONGRESS TO DO THE ACTION FOR THEM," HE DECLARED, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL IS ALSO "DISCRIMINATORY" IN THAT CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE BILL.

REP. LAMBERT AAFIN OF TRUK, WHOSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS RECOMMENDED PASSAGE OF THE BILL, DEFENDED HIS COMMITTEE'S POSITION. HE

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SAID THE BILL DOES NUT PREVENT HIRING FOR THOSE POSITIONS
THAT ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT AND WILL ALSO NOT PREVENT THE
HIRING OF STUDENTS RETURNING FROM SCHOOL. HE COUNTERED
REP. EDWARDS STATEMENT THAT THIS MEASURE WILL "IN NO WAY
PUT THE BLAME ON THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA." HE ALSO
REMINDED THE HOUSE THAT EARLIER THIS SESSION, IT PASSED
A RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL TO
CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON REDUCING SALARIES OF ALL
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. "PASSAGE OF THIS BILL WILL
ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL ENOUGH TIME TO MAKE
THAT STUDY, " AAFIN SAID,

REP. KUNIWO NAKAMURA THEN MADE A MOTION TO POSTPONE ACTION ON THE BILL UNTIL NEXT YEAR. HIS MOTION PASSED. THE HOUSE PASSED THREE OTHER MEASURES AND SENT THEM TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HIS CONSIDERATION. THEY ARE: TO MERGE THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON INTO A SINGLE DIVISION TO BE KNOWN AS THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION, (SB7-53): TO APPROPRIATE \$39.139 TO PROVIDE 25 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL FUNDING OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE'S OPERATIONAL EXPENSES, (HB 7-26) AND TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE BASE SALARY SCHEDULE AND MARKET PLACE DIFFERENTIAL SCHEDULE APPLICABLE TO EMPLOYEES OF THE TRUST TERRITGRY GOVERNMENT UNTIL OCTOBER 7, 1978, (SB 7-76).

THE SENATE TUESDAY (FEB. 15) REJECTED A BILL THAT WOULD MONETARILY PENALIZE CONGRESSMAN, WHO, WITHOUT AUTHORIZED EXCUSES FAIL TO ATTEND SESSIONS OR FORMALLY SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD WHILE CONGRESS IS NOT

IN SESSION, (SO 7-14).

THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, HEADED BY SENATOR
BAILEY OLTER OF PONAPE URGED THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL
CITING ABSENTEEISM AS "AN EVER INCREASING PROBLEM IN THE
CONGRESS." DURING THE EARLIER PART OF THE SESSION THE
SENATE WAS WITHOUT A QUORUM FOR FIVE DAYS. "IN BOTH
HOUSES ACTION HAS BEEN DELAYED BECAUSE SOME CONGRESSMEN
FAILED TO ARRIVE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION,"
OLTER'S COMMITTEE REPORTED.

YAP SENATOR, JOHN MANGEFEL, IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL. ASSERTED THAT CONGRESSMEN, LIKE OTHER GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES THE STATE OF THE S

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SHOULD NOT BE PAID IF THEY DO NOT WORK.

WHILE CONCURRING THAT "SIMILAR TREATMENT WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES" IS NECESSARY, SENATOR AMATA KABUA OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS REJECTED THE BILL IN FAVOR OF A MORE EXTENSIVE ONE.

BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE "EXTENDED FAMILY" IN MICRONESIA THE BILL IS NOT APPROPRIATE, ARGUED PALAU SENATOR, KALEB U DU 1, REFERRING TO A SECTION OF THE MEASURE STATING THAT ONLY THE DEATH OF AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER WOULD BE EXCUSABLE.

THE DEATH OF A MEMBER OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY, SUCH AS AN UNCLE, WOULD WARRANT HIS ABSENCE FROM THE SENATE, UDUI SAID, STATING THAT IN SUCH A CASE HE WOULD LEAVE REGARDLESS THE PENALTY.

SENATOR NICK BOSSY OF TRUK UPHELD AN EARLIER AGREEMENT MADE BY THE SENATORS IN AN EXECUTIVE SESSION. IT WAS DECIDED THAT AS SOON AS A SENTOR TAKES THE OATH OF OFFICE HE DRAWS A SALARY, WHETHER HE IS IN ATTENDANCE OR NOT.

VOTING FOR THE MEASURE WERE SENATORS HIROSI ISMAEL AND JOAB SIGRAH OF KOSRAE DISTRICT, SENATOR AMBILOS IEHSI OF PONAPE, AND SENATOR JOHN MANGEFEL OF YAP.

VOTING AGAINST THE BILL WERE TRUK SENATORS, NICK BOSSY AND SENATE PRESIDENT TOSIWO NAKAYAMA, SENATOR UDUI, SENATOR KABUA, AND SENATOR PETRUS TUN OF YAP.

ABSENT FROM TODAY'S SESSION WERE SENATORS ROMAN THETUCHL OF PALAU AND BAILEY OLTER OF PONAPE. ALSO MISSING WAS SENATOR WILFRED KENDALL OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, WHO ATTENDS SCHOOL ON THE MAINLAND. SENATOR KENDALL ARRIVED ON SAIPAN LAST WEEK AND WAS PROMPTLY SWORN INTO OFFICE. HE RETURNED TO THE MAINLAND ON MONDAY (FEB. 14).

A BILL TO APPROPRIATE \$82.000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND OF THE CONGRESS TO BE USED TO UPDATE AND REVISE THE EXISTING TRUST TERRITORY CODE (SB 7-63) PASSED IN THE SENATE WITHOUT DEBATE AND WAS SENT TO THE HOUSE. THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS REPORTED THAT "THE EXISTING CODE IS NOT ONLY OUT-OF-DATE, BUT ALSO AT TIMES ACTUALLY MISLEADING. SUCH ASSITUATION WORKS AN INJUSTICE ON THOSE PEOPLE THO THE TO BE GOVERNED BY THESE LAKS."

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SENT BACK TO THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION WAS A BILL PROVIDING THAT THE PROCEEDS OF A FORFEITURE AND SALE OF A VESSEL, PURSUANT TO A LIBEL ACTION, SHOULD BE PAID TO THE DISTRICT TREASURY WHERE THE SEIZURE OCCURRED, INSTEAD OF TO THE TRUST TERRITORY TREASURY, (SB7-39). THE GOMMITTEE ORIGINALLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE BILL BE FILED. INSTEAD, IT WAS DECIDED THAT A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE BILL WAS IN ORDER.

CONSIDERATION OF THO APPROPRIATION BILLS, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WAS DEFERRED UNTIL A LATER DATE. (HB 7-51, HD1 AND HB 7-48, HD1).

DATE, (H8 7-51, HD1 AND H8 7-48, HD1).

PASSED AND SENT TO THE SENATE WERE: A MEASURE TO APPROPRIATE \$250,000 TO RENOVATE AND CONSTRUCT TEMPORARY OFFICE FACILITIES ON PONAPE FOR USE BY THE TT HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE BRANCH; THE HIGH COURT AND THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, (H8 7-15); AND A BILL TO ESTABLISH THE OFFICE OF DISASTER CONTROL, (H8 7-120).

THE HOUSE MEMBERS ALSO KILLED A BILL WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE EXPENSE ALLOWANCE OF MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS BUT WOULD ALSO DECREASE THEIR SALARIES, (HB 7-89), IN FAVOR OF A SIMILAR MEASURE BEING CONSIDERED BY THE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE. (SILK REBUTS BALOS REMARKS ON MILNE)

SAIPAN, FEBRUARY 15 (MNS) -- -HOUSE VICE-SPEAKER EKPAP SILK OF THE MARSHALLS TOOK THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TUESDAY AFTERNOON TO REBUT A STATEMENT MADE

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FINAL SECTION OF 84
HONDAY (FEB. 14) BY REP. ATAJI BALOS CONCERNING THE
MARSHALLS SEPARATION ISSUE.

BALOS, IN A SPEECH MONDAY, MADE REFERENCE TO JAMES MILNE, HEAD OF THE "VOICE OF THE MARSHALLESE" ORGANIZATION OPPOSING SEPARATION DURING A HEARING BEFORE THE U.S. CONGRESS SUB-COMMITTEE ON TERRITORIAL AND INSULAR AFFAIRS CONDUCTED LAST JULY BY CONGRESSWOMAN PATSY MINK OF HAWAII AND CONGRESSMAN ANTONIO HON PAT OF GUAM. IN HIS STATEMENT, BALOS QUOTED MILNE AS SAYING HE (MILNE) HAD APPROXIMATELY 2.000 SIGNATURES OPPOSING SEPARATION AND THAT IT HOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO HAKE A PHOTOCOPY OF THE PETITION BEARING THE SIGNATURES UNTIL A LATER DATE.

"IN THE INTEREST OF FAIR PLAY AND FAIRNESS TO HIM."
SILK SAID. "I HOULD REQUEST THAT ANY STATEMENTS MADE ABOUT
HIM IN THE (HOUSE) JOURNAL SHOULD BE RENDERED INOPERATIVE.

"...CRITICIZING HIM IN A CHAMBER OR FORUM WHERE HE (DOES NOT) EVEN HAVE A CHANCE TO (REDUT) IS LIKE CRITICIZING A DEAD PERSON WHO CANNOT COME BACK IN LIFE TO DEFEND HIMSELF, "SILK SAID.

THE VICE-SPEAKER ALSO SAID WITHOUT NANING NAMES, THAT IT IS "UNFORTUNATE" THAT AN ADVISOR WHO CAME TO THE MARSHALLS TO "DISPENSE ADVICE" HAS TURNED AROUND AND "MEDDLES IN OUR AFFAIRS..." SILK SAID THAT AS A CONGRESSMAN, HE KNOWS WHAT "IS BEST FOR THE PEOPLE" HE REPRESENTS.

"THE QUESTION IS NOT WHO IS RIGHT; WHETHER THE MAJORITY IS RIGHT OR WHETHER THE MINORITY IS RIGHT. THE QUESTION IS WHAT IS RIGHT. IN ALL THE YEARS (THAT) I HAVE SERVED IN THIS CONGRESS, I FEEL AND THINK THAT I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, " SILK POINTED OUT.