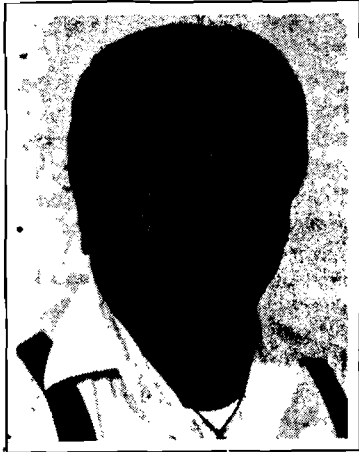


# Balanced budget amendment pushed



David Q. Maratita.



Bennet Seman

THE COMMITTEES on Legislative Branch and Public Finance and on Executive Branch and Local Government have tentatively decided to recommend constitutional amendments requiring a balanced budget and reducing the deficit.

For several sessions, the Committees have been considering the problems the Commonwealth has faced by the inability of the governor and the legislature to agree on a balanced budget.

As a result, the government has operated under continuing resolutions which have encouraged budget deficits.

Convention delegates have dealt with this problem in several ways.

First, the Committee on Executive Branch and Local Government had proposed an amendment that requires a balanced budget.

Delegates concluded that the

best way of eliminating deficits is by preventing them from occurring in the first place. Balanced budgets prevent deficits they say.

The most important responsibility of the legislature is to produce a balanced budget" said Delegate David Q. Maratita.

The proposed amendment would eliminate the practice of basing a budget on taxes which the legislature has not yet passed, believed to be major cause of the existing deficit. If a balanced budget is not passed by the start of the fiscal year, the government will continue to operate based on a formula that limits spending.

Next, the Committee recommended changes that would prevent the government from spending over budget.

"We need some teeth in the budget process" said Delegate Bennet Seman. One "tooth" would hold persons with spend-

ing authority responsible if they exceed the budget she said.

I would terminate anyone who spends over budget," said Delegate Tom Aldan. The Committee did not go quite that far, but is recommending that persons with spending authority be held personally liable for spending money that is not available.

Finally the Committee on Legislative Branch and Public Finance has proposed a deficit reduction provision that would require that deficits be eliminated within two years of their occurrence.

The Committee has also proposed a general hiring freeze while a deficit exists as a way of reducing it.

Both Committees welcome comments on these major proposals.

Comments may be addressed to Committee chairs Tomas B. Aldan and Felix Nogis.

## Extinct bird species may be found in FSM

By Tom Panholzer  
for the Variety

POHNPEI - A species of bird some biologists consider extinct on Pohnpei Island may be alive and winging it in

Buden said he will prepare the specimen for shipment to a research museum in the United States to confirm identification and to store as a voucher specimen.

