

PRESS RELEASE



TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

96950

RELEASE: 86-67

SEVERE DROUGHT THREATENS KOROR

Marianas

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Apr. 19 . . . A severe drought is imminent in Koror, according to a dispatch received today from Palau District Administrator J. Boyd Mackenzie. Since April 14, water has been limited to $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour per day on this most populous island of Palau District. The Babelthuap Dam which impounds the water for Koror's piped water system has dried out. The original 20-foot, Japanese-constructed dam was damaged severely during World War II and only repaired to a height of four feet following the end of hostilities.

Truk

Ponape

Marshall's

Yap

According to District Administrator Mackenzie, there has been no rainfall in Palau, except for scattered showers, since Typhoon Sally battered the district center on March 2. Due to the typhoon, which caused severe destruction of private water catchments throughout Koror, it is estimated that Koror's Micronesian population of 5,000 has been making increased demands on the piped water supply which serves the hospital, administration, and a limited number of homes and facilities in Koror.

Palau

Russell Smith of Austin and Smith of Honolulu, employed as a consultant on water utility by the Trust Territory, is scheduled to depart Thursday for Koror to survey water facilities of the island. He will submit recommendations to the High Commissioner.

###