

Atalig, Wilson Exchange Words

SAIPAN, Dec. 21. (CONGRESS RELEASE)—A heated exchange of words between Representative Felipe Q. Atalig, who represents Tinian, and Deputy Representative James Wilson of the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations, took place at the close of a party Tuesday night (Dec. 18) at the Royal Taka Hotel.

The exchange took place at a reception hosted by the Marianas Political Status Commission for the U.S. negotiating team and was witnessed by several guests and bystanders.

The following day Atalig wrote a strongly worded letter describing the incident which he set to Wilson with copies to several high officials.

The discussion related to the homesteading program on Tinian which was terminated by the Trust Territory Administration, according to Atalig's letter. What concerned Atalig most was the attitude and behavior displayed by Mr. Wilson in terms of the Marianas/U.S. Negotiations.

During the fiery discussion, the Ambassador's deputy asked if Atalig was in agreement with the work of the Commission. The Congressman responded that he was not if Wilson's attitude was any kind of example of the approach by the United States.

According to Atalig's letter, Mr. Wilson made the statement that if Congressman Atalig does not like it, then he should move out—that he had no business on the island. The Congressman wrote that while he is not Anti-American, he is however, against any person who is disrespectful of the feelings and opinions of another person or other people.

Congressman Atalig's letter further noted that he is not against the goals and objectives of

the current Marianas talks, but rather against the frequently "high-handed approaches and arrogance" displayed in the attitudes of certain people on the U.S. Negotiating Team. "We all realize that America is a powerful nation, but that recognition should never lead one to a belligerent and overbearing attitude when dealing with the citizens of another smaller country," he added.

The verbal exchange started when the Ambassador's deputy asserted that some 83 applicants for homesteads on Tinian were being denied because they failed to improve their property. Atalig refused Wilson's assertions and stated that letters of notice of noncompliance would have been sent to those applicants. Atalig continued that the 83 applicants whom Wilson referred to as having been denied homesteads due to noncompliance were new and thus there was yet no need to prove compliance.

This, according to Atalig, was confirmed by Tinian Mayor Antonio S. Borja. The Marianas Congressman was an invited guest at the reception that evening when the verbal exchange occurred. He noted that he was not making the incident known to the people for the sake of publicity but rather he feels that the attitude and arrogance manifested by high American officials toward his people must be brought to the attention of the public.

The Congressman's letter went on to say, "It is fortunate that Mr. Wilson in his capacity as a subaltern in Mr. William's coterie did not epitomize the approach of the U.S. delegation. If this were true, then I can foresee troubled future for the status negotiations."

Congressman Atalig Con-

cluded by saying indirectly he hoped that Wilson would be replaced and that "it would be unfortunate if any misunderstanding from this incident were allowed to mar in any way (what) I believe to be the pleasant and useful relations between the United States and Micronesia—especially the Marianas District. I look forward to their continuation for the mutual benefit of our respective countries," the letter ended.

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BOTTLING
OF MICRON

WILSON LETTER...

Continued from page 3
 ning differences between the two men that arose out of a conversation at Saipan's Royal Tago Hotel Tuesday evening, December 18, a matter of public record. Miss Trent indicated Wilson had no desire to perpetuate any argument, but simply wishes to clarify differences of opinion which exist over what was said during the conversation.

The Wilson letter states: "My recollection of that conversation and yours, evidently diverge on a number of particulars, and I am distressed that you seem to have taken certain remarks personally. They were not so intended."

"On the subject of homesteads on Tinian, I believe I made the point that there were by our information 83 agricultural and 15 village homestead applications outstanding as of the end of April of the 83. We were advised by Trust Territory officials in Saipan that only a very few of the applications specified the land areas desired by the applicants, thus making it impossible to process them. There was, to my knowledge, no intimation that there were 83 applicants who were denied public lands because they had failed to improve their homestead lots.

"With regard to the latter part of the conversation, I believe I observed in response to your remarks that the U.S. delegation was in Saipan at the request of the Marianas, who had asked that we discuss the means by which they could become members of the American political family. You made clear that you did not wish to become such a member. I acknowledged that there were certainly some like you who did not wish to do so, but pointed out that it would be difficult if not impossible to carry

on discussions on future status unless both sides agreed that membership in the family was the common goal. If anyone felt otherwise, he had no business there and should get out—not of the islands, of course, but of the talks.

"If you understood these remarks otherwise, please accept my apologies. They were not meant personally. Clearly no one would ever want to suggest that you should leave your own island. It was at that point that I was summoned

away and so we had no opportunity to clarify matters.

"Perhaps our difficulty is one of communication and a need to be more sensitive to each other's sensibilities. Certainly we should be able to continue discussions such as these under calmer circumstances and I look forward to doing so at the earliest opportunity."

Wilson's letter concluded by wishing Congressman Atalig best wishes for the Christmas Season.

NEW SCHEDULE

EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 16, 1981

continued from page 3

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*Week in Review
(MUS Summary)
Dec 24-28, 1973*

TAX REMINDER ISSUED

A reminder was issued last week to all employers in the Trust Territory that the end of the tax year is approaching, and they should begin to get their income and gross receipts tax records ready for submission to the Revenue Division of the TT Finance Department before January 31, 1974.

Jesus P. Mafnas, Chief of the Division, noted that all of the required forms have been forwarded to the district Revenue Officers for distribution. He said the TT income tax law provides for a penalty for those who failed to file the proper returns. The law also provided for an extension of the deadline, but Mafnas said such an extension may only be granted for justifiable reasons, and must be applied for through his office on Saipan.

Generally, most taxpayers will receive a refund this year, and Mafnas noted that government employees do not need to file for this refund as it will be distributed automatically. Refunds to employees of private businesses depend on the filing of the appropriate tax reports and records by each employer, and employees with questions about their refunds or taxes should first check with their employer.

BRIEFLY, HERE ARE SOME OTHER ITEMS THAT MADE NEWS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY LAST WEEK:

The District Administrator's Representative on Rota in the Marianas, Prudencio T. Manglona, was awarded a U.S. State Department International Visitor Grant. The Grant will enable Manglona to travel through the United States for a thirty-day period at the expense of the State Department, observing U.S. government agencies and institutions in operation.

Continental Air Micronesia announced that the float entered by Continental Airlines in the prestigious tournament of roses parade on New Years Day in Pasadena, California will have Micronesia as its theme. The float will depict beaches, palm trees, typical Micronesian native housing and waterfalls, and will be entirely decorated with orchids and other tropical flowers. Two Air Micronesia employees from the Trust Territory, Lucy L. Kono of Palau and Remy C. Cabrera of Saipan, have been selected to ride on the float. The parade will be seen by millions of television viewers in the U.S.

An exchange of letters between Marianas Congressman Felipe Q. Atalig and U.S. Deputy Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations James M. Wilson became public last week. The two men had a disagreement following a reception held at Saipan's Royal Taga Hotel during the final week of the Marianas status negotiations, which ended December 19. It appeared, however, that the problem was mostly one of communication, with the two men not in agreement over just what the other meant.

It was actually a little surprising that there was as much news last week in Micronesia as there was, considering that it was Christmas week. Government employees enjoyed a four-day weekend, with the day before Christmas declared an official holiday, and they looked forward to another long weekend over New Year's. Holiday messages of greeting went out over the communications wires to the people of Micronesia from, among others, President Richard M. Nixon, High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston, Secretary of Interior

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