

Central Committee declared in favor of Borja, but Tenorio is fast adopting a high-profile campaign stance. On the other side, Republicans and former governors Pedro P Tenorio and Lorenzo I Guerrero declared their candidacies. Washington Representative Juan Babauta initially announced his candidacy, but withdrew a couple of months later. The campaign season is already launched and the campaign promises to be interesting and ardent.

The good news was that a new resort opened on Rota, and the new port on Saipan is already partly operational. Tourism is up to more than 600,000 visitors a year. Japanese still account for the largest number of visitors, but Korean numbers are growing fast, and there is a concerted effort to attract tourists from mainland China. Road construction continues, and the economy seems to be recovering from the depression that followed the amendments to the previous tax law that was driving businesses out of the area.

Disputes involving the estate of DHL founder and business tycoon Larry Hillblom attracted much attention in 1995–96. Hillblom disappeared in March 1995 while flying his fifty-year old amphibian airplane over the northern islands of the Marianas. The bodies of two of the plane's passengers, the pilot, and Legislative Vice Speaker Jesus Mafnas, were found in the ocean several days later. Hillblom's body was never found, but a local court declared him officially dead.

Hillblom's estate, valued at between \$450 million and \$1 billion, includes

holdings in United Micronesia Development Association (including Continental Micronesia Airlines), various overseas branches of the international courier company DHL, a bank, hotel interests, a resort in Vietnam, as well as property in the Philippines, France, and elsewhere. Because there was no current will, a probate court has taken on the responsibility of determining the division of the estate. Claimants include several children who claim Hillblom paternity; two young women who claim common law spouse status; two members of the Saudi royal family who claim the deceased promised them a part of his fortune; the University of California hospital, which claims Hillblom promised money for a medical research center after treatment following an earlier plane crash; and numerous business associates seeking various types of compensation.

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GUAM

The accomplishments and activities of Guam's governor, its member of congress, the controversial land trust issue, and the territory's quest for commonwealth status, were the major events on Guam during 1995–96.

In January, Governor Carl Gutierrez awarded his administration an A-plus for its first year's performance evaluation. He identified his two goals for 1996 as completing the strategic plan for implementing his Vision 2001 concept announced in November, and growing the economy. Vision 2001 requires specific action plans to

improve the island's health care, education, infrastructure, public safety, housing, and work force, and also places emphasis on community and cultural values. This comprehensive five-year plan, the territory's first, will be the chief means for improving Guam's quality of life as the island enters the twenty-first century. Efforts to achieve economic growth include privatizing some of Guam's government services, and expanding tourism.

Gutierrez made progress in reducing government expenditures, improving executive-branch efficiency, and getting movement on a planning vision. However, he and the Guam Legislature butted heads with the Chamoru Nation, one of three indigenous nationalist groups, concerning the rules for returning land to residents of Chamorro (also Chamoru) ancestry. The Chamorro Land Trust Act was passed in 1975, but lay unimplemented for nearly twenty years until political activist and cofounder of the Chamoru Nation Angel Santos decided to activate it via a court suit. In order to implement the Act, the legislature and governor wrote three bills that had opposing views of the land trust concept. To focus attention on the plight of landless Chamorros, on 7 June the Chamoru Nation set up a protest encampment on the parade grounds of the governor's office and stated that the group would protest until the land trust act was implemented (via amendments providing rules and regulations). Early in the protest, dressed in loin-cloths with shell adornments, the leaders paid a surprise visit to Governor Gutierrez, who agreed to write to the legislature about the pending land

bills. He also agreed to work with the Nation in helping indigenous people, and suggested the protesters "Go sleep at the Legislature until they pass the bill" (*Pacific Daily News*, 11 July 1995, 3). Prior to the visit, the governor had submitted a bill to the legislature outlining rules and regulations for the land trust.

Angel Santos, now a senator, authored some of the implementing legislation and called for a public hearing on it at the encampment site. Some weeks after the hearing, the encampment site was declared a health hazard by Guam public health officials, and the supervisor of the governor's complex ordered the Chamoru Nation to break camp and leave the parade grounds. The protesters responded by serving eviction notices to non-Chamorros occupying government land. The governor then agreed to delay eviction of the protesters and asked the vice speaker of the legislature to speed up consideration of the land trust enabling legislation. However, on 1 September the protesters received a court summons, which they decided to ignore. Ten days later, the legislature began three days of debate and discussion on the final language of the three land trust bills. The protesters assembled at the legislature hall and after listening to some of the debate began pounding on doors and windows, blowing conch-shell horns, and chanting "Chamorro power," disturbing the debate. On two occasions, Senator Santos left the session hall to request that the protesters stop interrupting debate, and one senator claimed protesters threatened to take his life if he did not vote in favor of the

land legislation (*Pacific Daily News*, 13 Sept 1995, 5). During the third day of debate, the senators passed the bill establishing the amended rules and regulations for land applications, and a bill transferring 4336 lots from the abolished Land for the Landless program to the Chamorro Land Trust program, enlarging the amount of land in the trust. The bill introduced by the governor, changing some of the land trust arrangements, was defeated. With a unanimous supporting vote by the senators on the two land trust bills, anger was transformed to elation.

Later the same day, the legislation moved to the governor's office, where he signed the rules and regulations bill into law, but stated he needed a day to review the land transfer bill because of the many land lot numbers involved. This delay, although short, caused the protesters' mood to turn sour again. They pushed their way into the governor's office, where some angry words were exchanged. The confrontation overflowed into the parking lot, where security staff and police officers had to physically restrain the protesting crowd. The next day, with tempers cool, Governor Gutierrez signed the land transfer bill into law, and soon after the Chamoru Nation began breaking camp and clearing the parade grounds. Although democratic practices came under some stress, the 71-day protest ended in success. The Chamorro Land Trust Commission could begin accepting applications for land lots at \$1 per year for 99 years, and landless Chamorros would be given preference.

The Republic of Guahan emerged during 1995 as Guam's third indige-

nous movement (the Organization of People for Indigenous Rights, OPIR, being the oldest of the three). The new small group, while desiring to retain US citizenship, declared its independence, wrote a constitution, and created a decision-making organization. In an open letter of 14 August, Mike deCastro, the group's minister of finance, called for the abolition of the Commission on Self-Determination and the Guam Finance Commission, and for Governor Gutierrez to resign and let the republic and its president, Norbert Perez, take over political control of Guam. This call was not heeded, and the movement has generated little support.

Governor Gutierrez began a number of initiatives to maximize the economic benefits of base closures on Guam, encouraged placement of essential government information online, and established the Guam Crime Commission for the purpose of waging war on crystal methamphetamine, also known as "ice." During the year, he went public in strong opposition to nuclear testing by the French at Moruroa. Gutierrez urged President Clinton to extent Guam most-favored-community status, which would delay the shutdown of naval base activity until 1999. The governor's suggestion that contributions to the Clinton-Gore reelection campaign would assure such treatment generated some criticism locally. The governor has also been taken to task over his suit against the elected Board of Education, in which he claims the 1950 Organic Act provides his office sole authority for the supervision and control of education, and thus supersedes a 1993 law estab-

lishing the elected board, a law that he and his lieutenant governor, Madeleine Bordallo, had cosponsored when members of the Guam Legislature. This situation has led to some confusion in the huge Department of Education.

Throughout the period under review, residents of Guam have paid higher water, sewer, and electric power bills, yet these essential services have declined in quality. The governor and the legislature have responded by providing funds for improvement and expansion of this infrastructure. Another significant problem for elected leadership is the financial crisis at the Guam Memorial Hospital. This government-run institution remains unaccredited and apparently unable to dig itself out of the red, with some \$20 million owed by former patients, \$17 million owed by health insurance organizations, and \$24 million owed by the hospital to various vendors for supplies and equipment.

Governor Gutierrez realized some limited success in external relations. In January he sponsored a meeting of ten regional chief executives. This historic initiative brought together presidents and governors from the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Kiribati, Belau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These leaders identified a number of urgent social and economic issues that had regional implications, and agreed to formalize their relationship through a Council of Micronesian Chief Executives. The group met a second time in Hawai'i in April, to sign a founding charter and to confirm unified support for Guam in its attempts to gain relief from an

annual 10 percent shipping-fee increase, and for the territory's push for reimbursement from the federal government for the costs of supporting migrants to Guam from the freely associated states. It is estimated that about eight thousand individuals from the surrounding states have come to Guam since 1986, the year the Compacts of Free Association came into force.

The other external affair of import is Guam's future political status. Governor Gutierrez serves as chairman of the Commission on Self-Determination, which for nearly ten years has been negotiating a new commonwealth status with the US federal government. This effort has spanned the administrations of governors Paul Calvo, Ricardo Bordallo, and Joseph Ada, and is now into the Gutierrez term.

During the period under review, there was a great deal of solid talk but not a great deal of progress toward completing a draft agreement between Guam and the Clinton administration. The US side went through three negotiators in six months, until Deputy Secretary John Garamendi, of the US Department of Interior, accepted the position in January 1996. While a series of substantial discussions on all the hard issues took place soon after the appointment, it took another five months to get Garamendi to Guam. He stated that President Clinton "wants to get a commonwealth agreement done." Given limited progress lately on the thorny issues of the character of Chamorro self-determination, the extent of applicability of federal law under a new political relationship, and immigration control, it appears

that Washington's bureaucratic wheels, particularly those in the Justice and State Departments, have recently ground to a halt. Congressman Underwood noted that the timeline for delivery of a draft agreement to President Clinton has slipped, and, with the political season replacing the policy season in Washington, DC, the chance for further movement on these difficult issues until after the 1996 US elections appears small. Nevertheless, Representative Elton Gallegly, chair of the House Resources Committee, stated that his committee is ready to consider the commonwealth package as soon as it clears the administration. That pushes the status issue into 1997, just a year from the centennial of the American takeover of Guam.

Delegate Underwood's effort assisting Guam's Commission on Self-Determination was just one of many initiatives he pursued during 1995-96. Although the five territorial delegates lost their vote in the Committee-of-the-Whole of the House of Representatives with the 1995 change to a Republican-dominated majority, Underwood found new ways to accomplish his goals, one of which was to establish solid working relationships with the congressional leadership and President Clinton. Underwood's second method for selling Guam's needs was to find common ground with the new majority on various issues.

These approaches resulted in success on the issue of Compact impact aid to Guam. Underwood persuaded both the House Appropriations Committee and the Resources Committee that the impact aid was a federal obligation, arguing the distinction between

impact from illegal immigration as opposed to that from legal migration, as has occurred under the Compacts of Free Association. Securing the funds involved a floor fight, and Underwood got the impact aid funds restored after they had been cut. He gained key support from Senator Akaka in moving the impact aid legislation through the Senate, getting it annually for six years, and, with the help of Alaska Senator Murkowski, persuaded the House-Senate conference committee that impact aid was a federal obligation that could not be ignored. With the momentum going his way, Underwood next gained the support of the Clinton administration. Through these efforts, the congressman secured for Guam \$4.58 million for each year, 1996-2001.

Guam's delegate took a very strong stand in opposition to the English-only legislation in Congress. His public statements were particularly powerful, combining his considerable expertise in bilingual education, keen insight, and humor. His point of view gained considerable respect, being broadcast over CNBC and CNN, and appearing in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, and *Chicago Times*. The absurdity of the legislation becomes clear in its punitive aspect, which would allow citizens to sue over the use of languages other than English.

Citizens of Taiwan and South Korea have been extended visa waiver privileges for tourist visits to Guam, and Congressman Underwood has worked hard to obtain approval of a draft pilot Guam-only visa waiver program for visitors from the Philippines. While the program may not significantly increase

tourist numbers, it will, when approved by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, allow families to get together on important occasions. Given Guam's sizable population with roots in the Philippines, this program will be important.

Locally, Underwood has worked closely with Governor Gutierrez to lessen the economic impact of base closures. In amendments to this year's \$265 billion defense authorization act, Underwood obtained funding for a study to determine if a veterans wing should be added to the Guam Naval Hospital. The act also designates Guam's Apra Harbor a US port that military ships could enter for nonemergency repairs, extends commissary and exchange benefits for Guam veterans, and allocates \$1.3 million for an environmental baseline study of 3 200 acres of military land. In addition, the legislation calls for a clearly defined role for the Guam Air National Guard as part of the US Air Force presence in the western Pacific, and reconfirms the obligation of the US Navy to upgrade the Piti Power Plant before handing it over to Guam's civilian power authority. Further, in a meeting with President Clinton, Delegate Underwood called on the administration to give Guam "most favored base closing treatment" as a means of lessening the economic impact of the closings.

In international issues, Underwood was in the forefront of a call to boycott French President Jacques Chirac's appearance before a joint session of Congress because of French nuclear device testing at Moruroa in French Polynesia. Underwood was also highly critical of the US mission to the United

Nations for its attempts to abolish the United Nations decolonization committee, and of the mission's maneuverings to alter committee resolutions benefiting Guam. He was alarmed that the US mission attempted to modify safeguards regarding indigenous property rights and sought to remove mention of the Chamorro right of self-determination in committee resolutions.

The United States federal government controls over 30 percent of Guam's total land area of 220 square miles, and much of that land is unused. Congressman Underwood, working with Governor Gutierrez, made progress during his first term in getting some of the excess land returned. During the period under review, Underwood succeeded in getting 90 acres of Guam port land exempted from a federal law requiring the sharing of profits that may accrue from development. Working with Senator Murkowski in May and June, Underwood introduced legislation calling for the release of excess federal land to the Government of Guam rather than to other federal agencies such as the Fish and Wildlife Service. Underwood, Murkowski, and Gutierrez were highly critical of attempts by federal agencies—termed "alien predators"—to gobble up excess federal land before the local government could get it. This is a supreme example of the critical need to relocate the locus of political power from Washington, DC, to Guam—Underwood's fundamental mission.

In May and June, multicolored campaign billboards began popping up along Guam's main roads and intersections. Some fifty-four candidates will

vie for the twenty-one seats of the Guam Legislature through a September primary and November general election. The voters will also consider four proposals that have reached the ballot through popular initiative. The first asks the electorate if it desires to allow a casino gambling control act that would, among other things, legalize casino gambling. Legalized gambling has been a very controversial issue on Guam and has met with very strong opposition among the Catholic community.

Two of the three other proposals will ask voters to consider changing the basic structure of the Guam Legislature: reducing the number of its seats from twenty-one to fifteen, staggering its terms, lengthening terms from two to four years, and limiting terms to no more than three complete successive four-year terms. The fourth proposal will ask voters if they wish to limit the annual budgetary ceiling of the legislature so as not to exceed 2.5 percent of the total government of Guam revenue projections for the same fiscal year. Given the past year's events, Guam will continue to enjoy interesting political times.

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KIRIBATI

Following the defeat of a motion of confidence in May 1994, the national legislative body, the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, was dissolved prior to normally scheduled elections. New elections were called for 22–29 July 1994. Between this dissolution of the *Maneaba* and the elections, Kiribati was governed by an interim Council of State made up of the Speaker of the old *Maneaba*, the Chief Justice, and the Chair of the Public Service Commission.

The national election saw the previous opposition party, the *Maneaban te Mauri* (Christian Democratic Party), winning 13 of 37 seats, compared with only 8 seats for the previous governing party, the National Progressive Party. Popular support of *Maneaban te Mauri* was reinforced on 30 September 1994 with the election of its presidential candidate, Teburoro Tito. The new president defeated three other rivals with 10,834 votes or 51.1 percent of those cast. This result was particularly significant because the National Progressive Party had effectively been in power since the country became independent from the United Kingdom in 1979.

Since taking office for a four-year term, the new government has initiated a special inquiry into the misuse of government travel allowances by members of the previous government. It has also encouraged the idea of constitutional reform, and appointed a Constitutional Review Committee for this purpose.

Overseas, the new government has moved to seek compensation from