

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Part III: Micronesia

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Micronesia. The tiny islands. The Lilliput of Oceania lying just north of the equator, some of whose citizens are now trying to tie down their Gulliver. For the past 31 years, Gulliver has been the United States government, first through its Department of Navy (1944-1951), and later through the Department of Interior, with close supervision and support from the Departments of Defense and State, and the CIA. While there have been three previous Gullivers, none has the unique relationship that the United States has had with the 123,000 inhabitants (1973) of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (as the islands are known officially).

The more than two thousand islands of Micronesia are indeed small, appearing as mere specks on wall-sized maps. By far the biggest is Guam, which has but a minuscule 225 square miles, much of which is in steep volcanic hills (1,300 feet maximum). The smallness of the other 200-plus inhabited islands is difficult to grasp, especially the tiny coral atolls that provide the only land area for the 25,000 Marshallese and large numbers of Carolinians. The islands of Polynesia and Melanesia appear as veritable land masses in comparison.

In the emerging game of the International Law of the Sea, it may not be the size of the individual islands that counts, but the amount of water they embrace. Micronesia covers more than three million square miles of it stretching nearly halfway across the North Pacific. Economic control of these waters is one of the important items that the Micronesians are especially concerned about in their discussions with the United States about the future political status of their islands.

The term Micronesia can be misleading. Political Micronesia, which is the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI), and Cultural Micronesia in

its broadest sense are not synonymous. Cultural Micronesia would have to include the Gilbert Islands and Nauru, which are not part of the TTPI. If the Marianas are to be considered Micronesian (some would argue on linguistic grounds that they are not), we must include Guam in Cultural Micronesia but not as part of the TTPI. The TTPI also includes two inhabited atolls whose people are pure Polynesian (Kapingamarangi and Nukuoro). When most people today (excluding anthropologists and linguists) use the term Micronesia, they mean the TTPI, which is the way we shall use the term in this paper to include the Caroline, Marshall, and Mariana Islands, but excluding Guam.

The first of the 2,241 islands of Micronesia to be visited by a European were the Marianas, when Magellan reportedly landed on Guam in 1521, just prior to going to the Philippines, 1,500 miles to the west. Spanish missions were established in the Marianas as early as 1668, which sealed Spain's long unchallenged claim until 1898, when she gave up Guam to the United States and sold her remaining Pacific possessions to Germany. Even though she got an early start in Micronesia, Spain did not move into the Caroline Islands, eastern and western, until much later in the nineteenth century, and she never entered the Marshall Islands, which form the third group of present-day political Micronesia. While Spain was laying claim to the Carolines, Germany in 1885 assumed the Marshalls as a Protectorate, primarily to safeguard German business interests already established there and in Nauru.

While Spain concentrated her efforts in the Carolines and Marianas on establishing missions and Christian education for a few, Germany was developing her efforts toward making the Marshalls pay off through copra production. After Spain was forced out of the Pacific in 1898,

Germany made a rather weak attempt to exercise indirect control through traditional chiefs and to initiate economic development (mainly copra) among her new possessions in the Carolines and the Marianas, but with little success. The United States, meanwhile, established her part of the Spanish-American War spoils as a military base (Navy), which Guam has been ever since.

The brevity of German control of Micronesia (1898-1914) was no doubt largely responsible for the lack of any significant development or lasting influence in the Carolines and Marianas. For the most part, the Micronesians of these two areas were left with their own political systems to continue their subsistence style of living, with a few of them being sent to attend the few German schools provided by the Protestant and Catholic missionaries. What little the Germans had accomplished in 1914 was swept under by the comparatively long period of Japanese rule from 1914 to 1945. Upon being awarded control by a League of Nations mandate, the Japanese, who treated Micronesia as an integral part of Japan, entered into a development scheme which provided a considerable amount of economic support for the islanders as well as for thousands of Japanese and Okinawan expatriates. By 1938, 58 percent of the population of Micronesia was Japanese.

Nostalgic Micronesians still rave about the Japanese period of civil administration as one of bustling activity and prosperity, much of it the result of enforced, though usually compensated, labor. A fully Japanese-staffed education system to the sixth grade was established in each of the district centers, a system which produced, especially in Palau and the Marianas, the basis for further education of a core of elite whose continued fluency in spoken and written Japanese attests to the quality of their training.

Vestiges of the Japanese period are evident everywhere, from such names as Tosiwo Nakayama, the Trukese President of the recent Constitutional Convention, to the ubiquitous *soba*, the Japanese noodle soup so popular in Palau and the Marianas. Vocalists in the nightclubs of Koror, Palau's District Center, wail out love songs of Palauan lyrics set to Japanese pop songs of the 1930s, and in Yap and the Marianas one still hears such terms as *benjo*, *kachido*, and *gurobu* in everyday speech

along with "bathroom," "movie," and "baseball glove."

The most evident of the Japanese vestiges are the material remnants of World War II, ranging from sunken aircraft carriers in the Truk lagoon to the tibias and femurs that are still being picked from the jungles and waters of Saipan, Peleliu, Yap, and Truk. Such souvenirs provide the main attraction for the thousands of Japanese veterans, mourners, and priests who can be seen in virtually all parts of Micronesia visiting battlegrounds and war memorials, thereby reviving the memories of middle-aged Micronesians for the bygone days.

The World War II years were hard on the Micronesians. Many were forced into labor by the Japanese in preparation of their defenses. When the fighting came to the islands it caused widespread devastation and loss of life, partly because the islands are so small that they afford little room for protection. Food supplies became scarce as the Japanese supply lines were cut off and everyone was forced to turn to the land and sea for survival. Micronesians could not understand why they should have to pay such a high toll for a war between two foreign powers who were using their islands as the battlefield, and who killed more than 5,000 Micronesians in the process.

At the end of World War II Micronesia came under the aegis of still another caretaker—the fourth in less than a century. By a special arrangement, unique in the history of colonialism, the islands of Micronesia were placed in the hands of the United States as a Strategic Trusteeship of the United Nations. While there were 11 trusteeships following World War II, all but one having now been terminated, there was only one Strategic Trust, the status of which can be changed only by a unanimous vote in the United Nations Security Council. This regulation requiring unanimity of the Security Council is probably the most crucial factor in determining Micronesia's future political status, for no matter what the Micronesians may desire, either the United States or the Soviet Union is almost sure to veto.

The reason for the strategic nature of this trusteeship becomes apparent when one considers the enormous area of water surrounding the islands. Even in the innocent days of 1945, before

people realized that fishing areas were being depleted or that seabed mineral deposits held enormous potential, the U.S. government was convinced of Micronesia's military importance, and was determined to retain in safe hands what had been gained through the greatest military effort of all time. While the United States could not simply take possession, as was done during the colonial period, she managed to gain close control with UN blessing. Still, accusations of postwar colonialism are increasing as United Nations membership includes a growing number of recently decolonized countries, and as the anticolonialist wave sweeps from the south into the north Pacific. Since the U.S.-TTPI relationship comes ultimately under the Security Council, however, the charges thus far in the Trusteeship Council of the UN General Assembly have brought little response. Today the pressure is intensifying from both within the TTPI and without—often from the UN visiting teams—for a change in the political status. The debate on what the outcome will be has been the preoccupation of Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams (recently replaced by Philip Manhard) and the Micronesian Political Status Commission since 1971 when President Richard M. Nixon appointed the President of the Asia Foundation to this special ambassadorial post. The negotiating team on the Micronesian side consisted of 12 appointed members of the Congress of Micronesia.

Two negotiators were selected from each of the six official districts of Micronesia: Marianas, Yap, Palau, Truk, Ponape, Marshalls. Had they followed the original UN trusteeship agreement, negotiators on both sides should be aiming toward some form of self-government. For the past seven years, however, negotiations have been carried on, under CIA surveillance, as though the two parties had entirely different goals, for they seem to be no closer to an agreeable termination of the trusteeship status than they were seven years ago. And, while the negotiators continue to use the terms Commonwealth, Free Association, and Independence, the political unit known as the TTPI appears to be heading toward fragmentation.

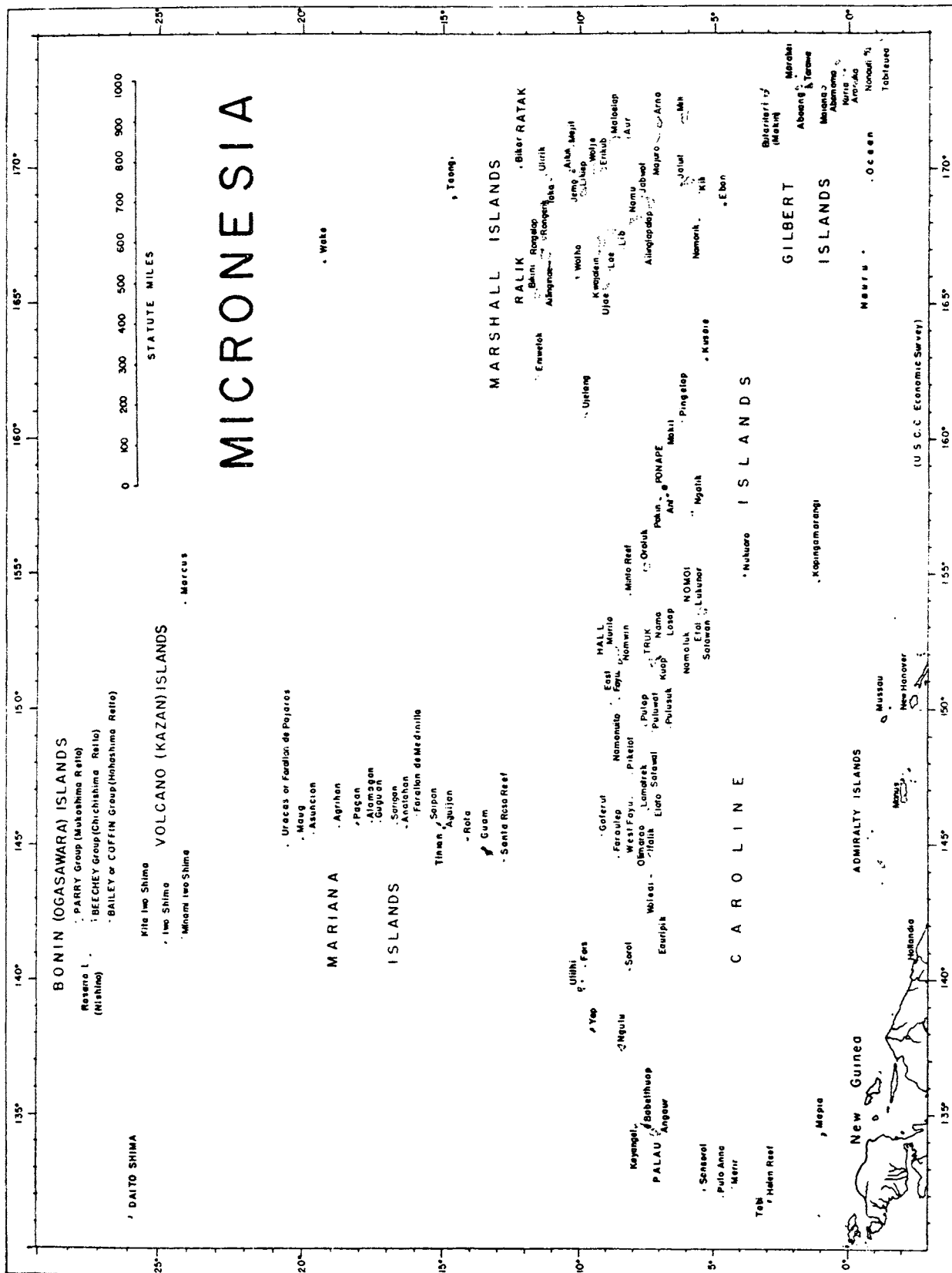
Although the trusteeship agreement does not stipulate the political unity of Micronesia, the United States has always acted as if it did. And at the same time, the United States has obviously assumed that self-government, which is clearly

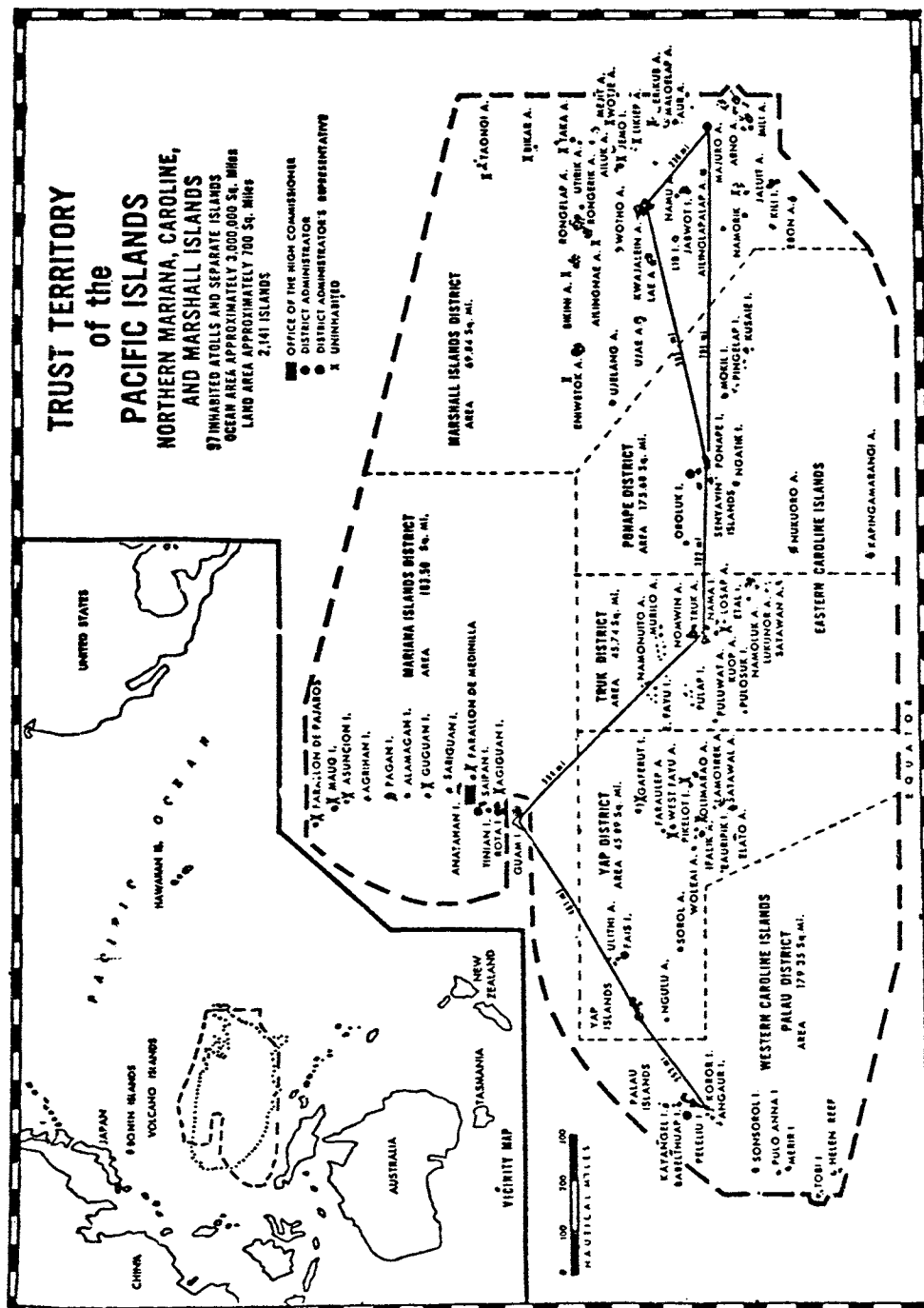
stipulated in the trusteeship agreement, meant following the American model.

In 1949, under the Naval administration, the democratic secret ballot system was introduced for purposes of forming legislative bodies in each of the six districts. Their initial functions were largely advisory and, except in the Marshall Islands, no provisions were made to include any significant participation by traditional Micronesian leaders. By 1965, the bicameral Congress of Micronesia (COM) was formed, with new senators and representatives from all parts of the TTPI meeting at the former CIA complex on Capitol Hill in Saipan, where the High Commissioner and the TTPI headquarters are located. This attempt to create unity out of the dozen scattered cultural groups of Micronesia brought together the first batch of young, American-educated Micronesians in a political body whose charge was to start the long process toward a new, self-governing political entity, the pattern for which had been cut and laid out by the United States. The pieces were far from being sewn together.

During the first decade of its life, the COM tried hard but unsuccessfully to hold the six districts together. Despite the genuine efforts of Micronesian congressmen from all six districts, the underlying resistance to unity finally surfaced in 1972, and in 1976 the first fragment broke off. The Marianas moved out of the TTPI framework and into a Commonwealth association with the United States. The move, which was strongly encouraged by the United States, has precipitated demands for separate status talks by the political leaders of Palau and the Marshall Islands. Defying all logic, however, the United States has stiffly refused to consider separate negotiations with other individual districts on the basis of the U.S. commitment to unity. But having set a precedent with the Marianas, it is most likely that the United States will be forced by international judgment to consider separate negotiations with the two dissenting districts, whose basic issues will be discussed later in this Report.

The concept of a unified, self-governing Micronesia was naive from the start. The organization of the far-flung, disparate island groups into one idealized group may have simplified the administration (although the army of bureaucrats in







Bureaucracy flourishes in Micronesia, where it is fed by \$80 million in annual appropriations. Photo courtesy Floyd Takeuchi.

Saipan would belie it), but it could not erase the very real differences caused by linguistic and geographical factors.

The almost 3,000 miles separating Palau from the Marshall Islands seem but a short step in comparison with the remoteness between their languages, social organization, and traditional political systems. Until the colonial period, there was practically no awareness of each other's existence. And in areas where there was precontact interaction, such as that between Truk and Ponape, the traditional relationship was marked by hostility, some of which persists today. Even the new proximity provided by jet aircraft (Continental Airlines) and electronic communications does little to diminish each district's awareness of a separate identity which translates into suspicion of their once-distant neighbors.

Beginning with the Kennedy administration in the early '60s, the United States began to realize that Micronesia could not be kept secluded forever,

as it had been since the end of World War II. When the Department of the Interior took over the administration of Micronesia in 1951, it simply followed the Navy's practice of restricting travel within Micronesia to government employees who usually traveled on the once-weekly 13-passenger SA-16 seaplanes from Guam, the headquarters from 1954 to 1962, to the districts. Indeed, Interior's administration was so similar to the Navy's that no one thought it strange that the Northern Marianas alone (except for Rota) was under Navy administration from 1953 to 1962, long after the rest of the islands of Micronesia had been transferred to Interior. Only later was it acknowledged that it wasn't really the Navy after all, but rather the CIA which had appropriated nearly half of Saipan to conduct a massive training project for Nationalist Chinese whose plan was to retake the People's Republic of China.

Developments in other parts of the colonial Third World, including those in Polynesia, jolted the new Democrats in Washington into awareness

that the United States, during more than 15 years of postwar administration, had done absolutely nothing toward helping Micronesia develop toward economic self-reliance and political self-government as outlined in the Trusteeship Agreement. Western Samoa was granted full independence in 1962, Tonga in 1965, the same year in which the Cook Islands became self-governing. By comparison, the United States was obviously extremely slow in the process of decolonization, and the UN Committee of 24 on Decolonization, established in 1960, would serve as a constant reminder.

With characteristic Kennedy fervor, the United States set out to make up for lost time, and in the process made many large errors, some tragic, others humorous in retrospect. Stories of both types have become modern legends throughout Micronesia, and serve as common fare for barroom chatter.

Many of the false starts—such as the ferro-cement boatyard in Truk and the miracle rice in Ponape—resulted from the recommendations made by well-meaning economists from Nathan Associates and a team of experts who produced a document called the *Solomon Report*, which remained highly classified before its cover was blown ten years later by a Palauan student of journalism at the University of Hawaii. Among the recommendations of the Nathan and Solomon studies were: (1) Move all outer-islanders to district centers for convenience of management; (2) Saturate the islands with American teachers, preferably Peace Corps, whose primary function would be “to teach the English language, and patriotic songs and rituals.”

The Peace Corps was alerted to go to Micronesia as early as 1962. The plan did not materialize on the grounds that the two government departments—Interior and Peace Corps—would be, in effect, competing. Instead of sending Peace Corps, Washington increased the annual budget for the TTPI from \$5 to \$15 million (plus supplements) in order to permit, among other things, the hiring of 300 more American contract teachers, and provide new housing for them, even on outer islands. The houses, built by a Guam contractor, were ordered to be first class, American style, complete with indoor plumbing and a private generator which could fuel the electric stove, freezer, washer and dryer which came with each house. (Most of

the houses on the outer islands were occupied by contract teachers for less than two years, stood for several more years as empty monuments to another scheme that failed, then were finally occupied by Micronesian residents.)

While the accelerated (and usually frantic) teacher program was under way, other types of developmental activity suddenly began to blossom. On the political front the most important event was the formation of the Congress of Micronesia (COM) which held its first session in Saipan's Capitol Hill complex in the summer of 1965. Its 12 senators and 21 representatives, most of them young and American educated, entered the arena rather timidly, knowing that the all-powerful High Commissioner, a Washington appointee, could veto anything since he exercised absolute control over the purse strings. The first few sessions of the COM were hardly more than rehearsals for the day when the administration would be forced to shift its attitude toward accepting the Micronesian lawmakers as something other than a bunch of polite native boys with engaging smiles. Indeed, most of the smiles have been lost during the educational process which is still going on.

Efforts at economic development during the 1960s were more diffuse, more costly, and, aside from the price support of copra and the establishment of a fish storage facility in Palau, a total failure. Job opportunities grew proportionately to government growth, which was considerable during the expansive years of the 1960s, when annual Congressional appropriations were increased by as much as 300 percent. Most of the new jobs were, not surprisingly, in the Department of Education, whose 2,500 employees (more than one-third of the 7,000 salaried government employees in Micronesia) work toward the U.S.-transplanted goal of free, universal education through the secondary level for all Micronesians. (There are now 30 high schools in Micronesia, of which 14 are private.)

Other economic development schemes have included trochus shell farming, ramie, fishponds, crocodile farms, miracle rice, ferro-cement boats, and a handicraft industry. Aside from a small handicraft shop in each district center, all efforts have resulted in failure. Even today, Micronesia's exports, except for copra (and, as of December 1976, coconut oil from Palau's new processing plant), fish (caught by Okinawan and Taiwanese

fishing boats and stored in Palau's freezer), and a few boxes of Ponapean pepper, have been nil, while imports have steadily climbed.

Such a drastic imbalance can last only as long as the government provides jobs, a situation that has begun to look gloomy indeed, especially to the 3,000 high school graduates of the class of 1976, more than half of whom have gone abroad on government scholarships for some type of tertiary education, thereby postponing the day when they and many hundreds of other Micronesians return home with college degrees and certificates in search of nonexistent white collar jobs. Such hopeless prospects may be partly responsible for the phenomenally high suicide rate in Micronesia in the 16 to 26 age group (70 per 100,000 in 1975). Surprisingly, the bleak employment situation has not yet led to any outmigration to the United States, except for the 3,000-4,000 Palauans now living abroad, either in the United States or other parts of Micronesia.

In sum, the American economic development plans of the 1960s did not work in Micronesia, despite the infusion of nearly 800 Peace Corps Volunteers in 1966, most of whom were already in training before the COM agreed to accept them. Under direct orders from President Lyndon B. Johnson, the Peace Corps dredged through its files of new and previously rejected applicants to fill the largest Peace Corps contingent of any place in the

world to serve a total population of 100,000. (Had the PCVs been sent to India in proportionate numbers, there would have been five million of them!)

Unfortunately for the Johnson administration, the Peace Corps scheme in Micronesia did not accomplish its mission of winning the hearts and minds of Micronesians. Young Peace Corps lawyers, who were advising the COM and individuals on legal matters, especially those relating to land, became a thorn in the side of the TTPI administration, which demanded their removal. Upon learning of this, the COM demanded retention of the lawyers or removal of all Peace Corps Volunteers. The Peace Corps remained with lawyers, but in somewhat reduced numbers. Growing disillusionment among the PCVs over Vietnam and America's colonialist policy in Micronesia began to find its way into the Micronesian community in the late 1960s, as did marijuana and other "radical" elements.

The young Micronesian students who were returning in ever-increasing numbers from American universities during the late 1960s and early '70s were also bringing ideas to Micronesia which were leading to a more critical look at America's policy there. In their eyes, the young men of the first COM, who were educated during the previous decade, became the "old men" of Micronesia, legislators and "localized" administrators who had



"Modern" Micronesian house in Palau, where native materials have been replaced by corrugated iron and plywood from the United States.

fallen neatly in step with the American system. According to the young turks, only a few of whom have succeeded to even minor political positions, the American system should be scrutinized much more closely before any serious and permanent political decisions can be made.

Whether it was the influence of the Peace Corps, the young radical Micronesians, or simply the changing times, Micronesians, through the COM and other bodies, began to press for an end to stagnation in Micronesia. Talk about a termination date for the Trusteeship—a question that the United States has assiduously tried to avoid until recently—began to surface, as did rather loud demands for economic activities to help support the 70 percent of working age people who do not have jobs in what is coming to be a money-based (as opposed to subsistence-based) economy. By 1971, the rumblings had grown pretty loud. The small trickle of tourism developed by Continental and Japan Airlines was far from satisfying the economic demands. The question of future political status had to be squarely faced.

Sensing that the Micronesians had perhaps reached a turning point, and pressed by developments in the UN, the United States began to move more quickly on several fronts. While Ambassador Williams and the 12 Micronesians of the Joint Political Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia proceeded to talk seriously about Micronesia as a political entity, most Micronesians already felt that TTPI fragmentation was inevitable.

In a 1960 island-wide referendum, the inhabitants of the Marianas had indicated a desire to join their Guamanian brothers as permanent citizens of the United States. The electorate in Saipan, Rota, and Tinian voted overwhelmingly in favor; the Guamanian voters, smug and protective of their decade-old U.S. citizenship, turned it down flat (ironic in view of Guam's current pleas for reintegration and the Northern Marianas' resolute resistance). In 1972, when the Marianas began asking for separate negotiations, they got a positive response. In the face of criticism from the UN and the COM, the United States, seeing that fragmentation might lead more quickly to strong political alliances, arranged for a separate Marianas covenant to be drafted and voted upon, the terms of

which would place the Marianas in a permanent Commonwealth relationship with the United States. With 90 percent of the registered voters casting 78 percent of their ballots in favor of the Commonwealth status in June 1975, the first fragment of Micronesia fell into the U.S. basket.

While dealing separately with the Marianas on the one hand, the United States persisted in its position demanding unity for Micronesia, or what was left of it, in the political status negotiations. The Micronesians, on the other hand, sought a relationship with the United States—termed Free Association—patterned after the Cook Islands agreement with New Zealand. (J.W. Davidson, advisor to Western Samoa and the Cook Islands when their constitutions were drafted, was retained by the Micronesians on the Political Status Commission.) Under this proposed arrangement, the Free Association status could be terminated unilaterally by either party. Finally, the United States compromised on "Free Association" status for the remaining five districts, insisting still on a unified Micronesia (less the Marianas), and rejecting outright the requests for separate negotiations with Palau and the Marshall Islands.

In an effort to prevent further fragmentation, or perhaps to settle the status question before Palau and the Marshalls became completely intractable, the United States pushed for a Micronesia-wide referendum and a 90-day, million dollar Constitutional Convention, which began one week after the referendum in summer 1975. Micronesians voted overwhelmingly for the unity of Micronesia, while the delegates to the Con-Con suppressed their differences long enough to produce a draft constitution for the Federated States of Micronesia. The ink from the 43 signatures was hardly dry before the document was rendered meaningless by the withdrawal of the Marshalls and Palau.

The hypocrisy of separate negotiations with the Marianas while pleading for unity in the political status negotiations for Micronesia, bolstered by a sham Constitutional Convention, did not go unnoticed by the Micronesians. As Carl Heine, a Marshallese author and political scientist put it: "As the United States sees it, the current negotiations are not so much about the future of Micronesia, as they are about the future role of Micronesia as a military base in the Pacific." While

such insight is not new to Micronesians, public expression of it is a fairly recent phenomenon, and may be one of the primary reasons for the stepped-up U.S. efforts to settle the political status issue by 1981, a date which some Micronesians, especially those from the nonseparatist bloc (Yap, Truk, and Ponape), view as too soon.

Undaunted, the U.S. administration carries on its program of Education for Self-Government which is supposed to lead to a Micronesia-wide plebiscite on the draft constitution. The United States originally wanted the political education program conducted by the United States Information Service (USIS), but in the face of Micronesian opposition settled for an ex-Peace Corps Volunteer as director, whose work is carefully screened by Washington before being distributed to the people. Intentionally noncontroversial in content, the posters, pamphlets (translated into different languages when translators are available), and radio programs of the Education for Self-Government Project are described as stilted, boring, and communicating very little meaningful information to the majority of Micronesians.

Parallel to the crash program in the political arena is a development program bolstered by millions of U.S. dollars, some bestowed through direct appropriations and others by such means as the military Civic Action Teams which, since the

early 1970s, have been conducting spectacular building programs resulting in new roads, bridges, docks, irrigation systems, and athletic fields, to name but a few of the more visible projects, none of which included any Micronesian training or participation.

While the budget appropriations for the TTPI went from \$15 million per annum in 1963 to \$80 million in 1976, more and more federal programs were extended to Micronesia. Head Start, Bilingual Education, school lunch programs, USDA surplus food, and food stamps are but a few of the many federal programs that have become available in the past few years. The most recent and conspicuous bonanza is in the war claims payments made in 1976, 31 years after the end of the fighting. Individual checks of up to \$180,000 are exchanged for automobiles, pickups, plane tickets, and lots of booze.

The overall effect of this new American largess in Micronesia is greater dependency than ever, a far cry from the self-reliance that was stipulated in the UN mandate. One hears quite frequently the charge that the United States does not want economic development in Micronesia, preferring to buy the people off. Such criticism no doubt persuaded the administration to allow the UNDP to comply with the COM's 1974 request to produce a truly Micronesian economic development plan.



Medical care in Micronesia is free, while the growing malnutrition eats away at modest salaries which buy imported foodstuffs. Photo courtesy Floyd Takeuchi.

The result was the Five Year Indicative Development Plan for Micronesia completed in July 1976.

The UNDP team was the first non-U.S. organization to make such a study in Micronesia since 1945. The authors view it as the "first attempt by Micronesians to chart their own economic and social development in the thirty-one years since the end of World War II." The report went on to observe that, "Micronesia finds itself with an economy that is grossly distorted in favor of a large cadre of highly paid government workers, while sixty percent of its people still live in subsistence economy." Seeking remedies, the Five Year Indicative Development Plan stresses the absolute need to cut back on government bureaucracy, extreme belt-tightening in social services, lowering of expectations, and an increase in production of Micronesia's resources, copra and fish, both of which require backbreaking, unsophisticated work. Some Micronesians have praised the plan as being the first realistic one in the history of the American administration. The more cynical shrug it off as another study that is unlikely to change the ways in their 31-year-old welfare state, parts of which have developed a Micronesian-styled cargo cult that would match any in Melanesia in terms of strength (not surprising in view of the amount of cargo during the past five years).

There has never been much doubt about the U.S. intention to keep Micronesia within the American domain in perpetuity. During the Republican administrations of the 1950s the Strategic Trust Agreement was sufficient to maintain control at a reasonably low cost. But with the establishment of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization in 1960 and the beginnings of change in the Third World order, the new Kennedy administration had to act to keep the critics at bay: President Kennedy commissioned a Task Force that produced the highly classified *Solomon Report*.

In approving the Task Force in NASN No. 145, according to the *Solomon Report*,

The President...set forth as U.S. policy the movement of Micronesia within our political framework. In keeping with that goal, the memorandum called for accelerated development of the area to bring its political,

economic and social standards into line with an eventual association.

The question of how much it would cost to buy off the Micronesians through the respectable democratic process of a plebiscite, rather than holding on by force, was given careful thought by the authors of the *Solomon Report*.

What should be the content and cost of the minimum capital investment and operating program to insure a favorable vote in the plebiscite, and what should be the content and cost of the maximum program that could be effectively mounted to develop the Trust Territory more rapidly.

And as the pressure mounts for a resolution of the question of the future political status for Micronesia, the annual cost of the cargo goes up appreciably.

The Nixon administration believed that the islands of Micronesia should be able to pay for themselves, at least in part by serving as cheap-rent military bases to replace some of those lost, or becoming more expensive, in Southeast Asia. The Pentagon expressed its desire for permanent military bases in Palau and the Marianas, to balance the one on Kwajalein Atoll, the missile receiving site in the Marshalls, which has been under absolute military control since the end of World War II, its former inhabitants having been relocated long ago. Surveys were made of the proposed sites (the Air Force for Tinian Island in the Marianas, and the Marine Corps for Babelthuap Island in Palau), and high military brass began to appear in Micronesia's airports and new Continental Hotels.

President Gerald R. Ford, upon assuming office, soon hired a Texas-bred financial wizard, Fred M. Zeder, as Director of the Office of Territorial Affairs (DOTA), who foresaw other economic potential, particularly in the Marianas and Palau, and who claimed to know what was best for Micronesia.

One of DOTA's major economic proposals is for the development of a multimillion dollar "superport" (supertanker exchange facility and petrochemical complex) in Palau, by far the most ambitious and formidable development plan in all of

Micronesia, probably in the entire Pacific. This joint venture between mega-corporations and the governments of Japan, Iran, and the United States has already caused deep cleavages among Palau's 13,000 people, and the issues are far from being resolved. The superport is also a key factor in Palau's current turmoil over the question of future political status.

To handle such projects as the Palau Superport, DOTA recently established an office in Honolulu called the Hawaii Economic Development Office (HEDO). Headed by a former Peace Corps Regional Representative in Truk, who later became the District Administrator, and later still the Trust Territory liaison man in Okinawa (handling millions worth of surplus military equipment as the United States was dismantling there), the HEDO exists "to promote and solicit foreign investment for the Trust Territory," which has been permitted only since 1974. The HEDO has no Micronesian employees or consultants.

In short, the United States is determined to keep Micronesia—in whole or in parts—not for any direct benefit to the United States or to the Micronesians, but mainly to keep others out. The United States has been willing to pay a growing price to keep things under control, but would like to see some economic development, U.S.-style, which would help pay the maintenance costs, regardless of whether the development is suitable for small and fragile island social and ecological systems.

What do the Micronesians want? A brief, generalized summary follows:

- The Marianas want Commonwealth status within the United States, expecting that such a status will bring more prosperity to the islands through additional federal programs, minimum U.S. wage scale, and continued welfare programs such as USDA surplus food and food stamps.

- Palau wants separation from the TTPI and a new, but as yet undetermined political status which would maintain some, though not exclusive, relations with the United States. Determination of the superport question is all important in working out the future status.

- The Marshall Islands want separation from the TTPI and independence. The Marshallese are convinced that they can develop in their own style and under their own steam once they are freed from the Interior Department's shackles and have worked out satisfactory financial terms for the continued U.S. occupation of the Kwajalein Missile Base.

- Yap, Truk, Ponape. The three remaining districts (joined by Kusaie,* formerly a subdistrict, in January 1977) are reasonably content with the status quo, and will probably go along with any change in name of their relationship with the United States, as long as it does not result in any reduction of U.S. financial support. The leaders from these island groups decry the separatist moves of the other three districts. The Ponapeans, however, are being mollified by the proposed shift of the bureaucratic headquarters from Saipan to Ponape, which promises a massive infusion of federal money. The Trukese would welcome almost anything—military, tourism, slot machines—to help boost the economy in their poor and overpopulated islands. And the 7,000 tradition-bound Yapese, who currently receive more than \$1,000 per capita annually in direct federal appropriations, just want to maintain the present levels of subsidy and be left alone.

Clearly, a number of problems need to be resolved. The new Commonwealth status of the Marianas must be formally ratified by the President of the United States and, at least in theory, by the UN. Congress could create problems by insisting on reintegration of all the Marianas, including Guam, a move that the United States is certain to demand sooner or later, possibly at the first ten-year review period. The Security Council will very likely oppose the formal separation of the Marianas from the TTPI, but a veto by Russia would probably make no difference since the move toward Commonwealth has already progressed so far.

The remaining districts of the TTPI are likely to remain docile as long as current levels of funding are maintained, or, it is hoped, sweetened, since there are no viable get-rich schemes in the offing. The 31 years of the welfare lifestyle has had a decidedly debilitating effect on the energies and aspirations that may once have existed in the Carolinian communities of Truk and Yap, and the

*Official spelling is now Kosrae.

prospects of the new Trust Territory capital in Ponape is enough to keep Ponapeans happy.

Sadly, the little islands of the Caroline group have almost no choice since their potential for economic development is the most meager. The leaders of the Marianas, Marshalls, and Palau, as the following brief review indicates, feel they have other options.

The Marianas

The almost official Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas consists of the principal island of Saipan (population ca. 12,000), the secondary islands of Rota (1,400) and Tinian (750), and 10 other mostly uninhabited islands to the north of Saipan. Both Saipan and Tinian won recognition during World War II, with Saipan being the site of some of the most brutal island fighting in the Pacific, while Tinian served as the take-off point for the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 bomber which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

The indigenous and current majority population of the Northern Marianas is Chamorro, virtually all of whom claim blood relatives among the Guamanian Chamorros, from whom they were politically separated in 1898 when Guam, the southernmost island of the chain, went to the United States, while the northern islands were sold to Germany. The close genetic relationship of the Guamanian/Saipanese Chamorros was strengthened earlier in the eighteenth century when all of the Chamorros north of Rota were brought to Guam by the Spanish government and held there for nearly 100 years to facilitate control of their sometimes unruly (and "un-Christian") behavior. The Rotanese, being only 40 miles distant from Guam, proved more manageable and were allowed to stay on their island. During the century spent on Guam, the Chamorros—those few thousand who survived of an original 100,000—were thoroughly Christianized, which was the main purpose for bringing them to Guam in the first place.

Before the Chamorros began returning to Saipan in the mid-nineteenth century, some Carolinians from the atolls lying between Yap and Truk were permitted to settle on Saipan after fierce typhoons had destroyed virtually all vegetation on their home islands. These people formed the nucleus of what

has now become a Carolinian community on Saipan of 3- to 4,000 comprising more than 25 percent of the population, enough to cause a rather delicate minority issue as the Northern Marianas move into Commonwealth status. The fact that some of the Carolinians were there before the Chamorros repatriated further complicates the issue.

During the Japanese period (1914-1945), large portions of Saipan's 47 square miles were planted in sugar cane and other agricultural products, which generated enough economic activity to support a prewar Japanese/Okinawan population of more than 45,000. Older Saipanese recall this period as the halcyon days during which there were schools, jobs, and a momentum which was never regained after the American invasion.

The fierce fighting on Saipan and the postwar occupation caused physical and social chaos throughout the island. New villages were built where none had existed, and some old ones never quite revived. Vast tracts of fertile farmlands—the entire northern third of the island—were appropriated for the CIA training grounds, and the entire island was considered "Off Limits" until 1962, when Saipan joined the rest of the TTPI under the Department of the Interior.

Those were puzzling days for the Saipanese, some of whom continued farming while others were employed by the "Navy," which never explained what was inside the thousands of canopied personnel carriers that shuttled back and forth between the airport and the tightly guarded headquarters which now hosts the TTPI. Complete with more than 300 residences, including a rambling one for the High Commissioner (who is known throughout Micronesia as the almost legendary and all-powerful "Hicom"), this sprawling headquarters complex has already emerged as a political football in the new Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

When the U.S. government finally gave up the notion of aiding the Nationalists in retaking Communist China, the gigantic complex on Saipan's tallest hill seemed logical as the site for the TTPI Headquarters, which had been occupying a small set of frame buildings on Guam since 1954, when it was moved from Honolulu. With the new spirit of

the 1960s, action in the TTPI was bound to get heavier, which obviously meant that the relatively small bureaucracy had to grow. And grow it did, thereby making Saipan, the new capital, the most prosperous of the TTPI's six districts.

Saipan's relative prosperity has long been conspicuous. Even in the early 1960s Saipan had an airport while the other districts received only infrequent seaplanes. Saipan had miles and miles of paved roads, while Micronesians in the other districts bounced through muddy potholes and choked in the dust, and still do. Saipanese were wearing shoes and sitting in chairs while the others were just discovering rubber thongs and lounging comfortably on woven mats. The Saipanese, like their Guamanian brothers before them, were learning fast how to fall in step with an American system which seemed, somehow, to lead to greater prosperity.

In the eyes of the other Micronesians, including the minority Saipanese Carolinians, the Chamorros always had it better. Even the 1,400 Chamorros of Rota profited from Rota's being a separate District Center during Saipan's Navy days in the 1950s. And on the Chamorro side, they had never felt comfortable with those Carolinians, which is the Chamorro term for all other Micronesians. If a feeling of kinship exists among any Micronesian groups, it certainly does not involve the Chamorros, who have always identified with, and been envious of, their disdainful brothers in Guam, who still remember their Saipanese brothers as the Japanese collaborators during the bitter years of the Japanese occupation.

Perhaps as part of the United States' scheme to pick off the more Westernized Chamorros early on, the Washington administration arranged for a Marianas-wide referendum in 1960 on the possible reintegration of all the islands. The hopeful Saipanese responded overwhelmingly in favor, while the Guamanians turned them down flat, guarding their ten-year-old American citizenship against their country cousins in the northern islands, who had always been *gupalao*—the Guamanian generic term for any other Micronesian, including Saipanese Chamorros and some of the darker Guamanians from the southern part of Guam.

The referendum defeat was no great loss for the United States or the Saipanese, who began working immediately toward separation, the rest of the

TTPI be damned. In April 1972, the two Marianas members of the Joint Commission on the Future Political Status of Micronesia made a formal request to Ambassador Hadyn Williams for negotiations which would bring the Marianas in a "close political relationship with the U.S." The bold move was explained in no uncertain terms:

...we desire membership in the United States political family because of the demonstrated advantages of such a relationship. More than any other nation with which we have had contact, the United States has brought to our people the values which we cherish and the economic goals which we desire. Continued affiliation with the United States offers the promise of the preservation of these values and the implementation of these goals. (U.S. Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations. 1972:61)

The justification for separate negotiations in defiance of the Trusteeship Agreement was further amplified. One month later, Marianas' Senator Olympio Borja argued before the Trusteeship Council in New York that the action they were requesting was not toward political fragmentation, but rather toward fulfilling the obligation of self-determination.¹ Besides, he had announced earlier, "the ideological schism which separates our people from the Marianas from people of the other districts became all too apparent and too pronounced to ignore any longer." (*Marianas Variety*, May 26, 1972, p. 6)

Most of the Micronesian political figures saw the issue as the first really major test of COM's strength. If it failed, concluded Senator Andon Amaraich from Truk, "The only logical conclusion is that the United States is attempting to foster disunity in the Trust Territory and to fragmentize Micronesia." (*Highlights*, Special Edition, June 9, 1972, p. 12)

Despite opposition from all the other districts, and the stern disapproval of the UN Visiting

1. The other Micronesian delegates on the Joint Political Status Committee reacted politely by recognizing the desires of the Marianas people. However, they later went on record as opposing it on the grounds that only the Congress of Micronesia had the authority to permit one district to negotiate separately.

Mission, the United States, in December 1972, began separate negotiations with the Marianas delegation, headed by a self-appointed, young Saipanese lawyer who, in the late 1974 election was voted out of his COM senatorship. Two years later, during which time there was continued criticism from the COM (and mock participation in the COM by the Marianas delegation), a final agreement was reached on the basic terms of the Commonwealth Covenant. Six months later, after a fast and much-criticized political education program, 90 percent of the registered voters cast 78 percent of their ballots in favor of the permanent Commonwealth status. The long courtship was over, and the wedding was on. Only the nuptials needed to be performed.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the Covenant Bill was passed easily. The Senate, however, raised some questions. As a safeguard against probable flack from the UN on the permanency of the proposed Covenant, Senator Jacob Javits introduced an amendment to allow for a review of the status after ten years, possibly in order to attach the northern islands to Guam at that time. After some minor debate, the Covenant Bill passed the Senate, and was signed by President Ford on March 24, 1976.²

The Marianas Constitutional Convention, held in the fall of 1976, produced, after some argument over adequate representation for Rota, a 30-page Constitution for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, complete with the following preamble (original in Old English typescript):

We the People
of the
Northern Mariana Islands,
grateful to Almighty God
for our freedom,
ordain and establish
this Constitution
as the embodiment
of our traditions and hopes
for our Commonwealth
in political union with the
United States of America

2. One unexpected outcome of the Constitution of the Northern Marianas has been the recent move by Guam to hold its own Con-Con in 1977. The terms of the new Constitution made Guam's 1950 Organic Act, written by Washington, less acceptable than it had been.

The next steps will be ratification by the voters (expected in March 1977) and election of their first governor, 9 senators, and 14 representatives, for their bicameral government. Mr. Erwin Canham, the Resident Commissioner who is presiding over the Transition Commission, will be replaced by the elected Governor of the Commonwealth in early 1978. Barring the improbable rejection of the Constitution by the President of the United States, who could veto it, the marriage will then be consummated and finally legalized by the termination of the UN Trusteeship Agreement. Whether the UN will offer one more gesture of disapproval remains to be seen, but it appears that the die has been cast.

Some of the more interesting features of the new Constitution relate to cultural preservation, minority rights, land ownership and alienation, and business privileges. Otherwise it reads very much like a handbook on American political constitutions.

Perhaps as a tribute to one of the last vestiges of precontact Chamorro culture, Dr. Francisco Palacios, a Western-trained physician and member of the Con-Con, wrote in as Section 1 under Article I: Personal Rights, the proviso that there shall be no laws "prohibiting the traditional art of healing" which is widely practiced by unlicensed "witch doctors," better known by the Hispanized Chamorro term *suruhana* (or *suruhanu* in case the healer is male).

In hope of placating the somewhat uneasy Carolinian community of Saipan, the predominantly Chamorro delegates to the Con-Con (4 Carolinians out of 39 total) included, under Article III, the proviso for an Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs, who will be appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Carolinian community. (This guarantee reflects Erwin Canham's insistence on his right to select two Carolinian members to the Con-Con in the event that none was elected).

The Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs may well see his first action in connection with Article XII, which covers the volatile subject of land. Although the islands of the Northern Marianas are relatively large and sparsely populated, there is not a great deal of cultivable land available to individual tillers. The government—going back to Spanish times—owns 80 percent of

Saipan and more than half of Rota and Tinian. The new government will thus have vast tracts of land to manage and, presumably, to dispense, by sale or otherwise, to its growing population, or to others.

Carolinians, if they are born in the Marianas or have lived there since 1950, have rights to own land in the Marianas (if they have the money to buy it). Unfortunately, there are 500-600 Carolinians who migrated to Saipan after 1950 and, after more than 20 years of residence, consider it their home. Some problems from this group are already known to be rising, and will no doubt command the attention of the Special Assistant for Carolinian Affairs.

The Constitution also prohibits alienation of land to any foreigners for the next 25 years, and leases (to anyone) are limited to 40 years. Foreigners are any people with less than "one-quarter Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian blood, or a combination thereof..." Although land sales have always been part of the Hispanized Chamorro tradition, they took place rarely. However, in recent years business has been brisk, especially in the areas near the proposed military base on Tinian, where local politicians have been known to acquire a parcel of land in exchange for a Datsun pickup. Micronesians from other districts are also known to be purchasing Marianas land, presumably for speculation.

The restriction against foreign (i.e., non-Northern Marianan) ownership of land has already elicited protests from Guam, and from within the ranks of the Con-Con itself. Questioning the constitutionality of such discriminatory laws, residents of Guam (where land is a wide open commodity) point out that residents of the Northern Marianas can buy Guam land, but not vice versa. Con-Con lawmakers feel that precedents exist which justify the restrictions under the Indian Commerce Clause, but this will probably be challenged in the U.S. courts. Land speculation has already begun in the Northern Marianas, and some of the Con-Con delegates themselves have made post-Convention statements supporting the democratic right to control and dispose of one's own property (meaning land). As the stakes go higher, it is not unlikely that among the earliest proposed constitutional amendments will be an attempt to liberalize the land alienation restrictions.

Foreign investment (including that from the United States) in the Northern Marianas is also restricted to some degree by the constitutional proviso that any corporate director must be of 51 percent Northern Marianas descent.

While the new Constitution for the Northern Marianas spells out the internal political structure of the new Commonwealth in considerable detail, it does not address the question of the real relationship between the Commonwealth and the United States. Most people presume that it will remain within the jurisdiction of the Department of Interior, along with Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands. For the moment, the people of the new Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas do not appear to be concerned.

The benefits of their new political affiliation with the United States have already begun to pour into the Northern Marianas. The United States will provide \$14 million per annum (more than \$1,000 per capita) for the next seven years as a direct grant for transition costs, of which \$8.75 million, however, will go for governmental operating costs. USDA food (more than 5,000 recipients) is stacked in kitchens throughout the islands. Typhoon relief funds and war claims have helped generate the highest level of prosperity the islands have ever known, and people have begun to talk excitedly about the forthcoming food stamps, welfare, and social security programs to supplement the many federal programs which already exist.

The signs of a welfare-oriented community are everywhere. Yet, a leading Chamorro politician now working in the transition office proudly talks about economic development while maintaining that his people don't want to become wards of the United States.

What type of economic development is possible for the Northern Marianas? Fisheries are not viable. Agriculture gets progressively weaker as more of the residents receive new government jobs and USDA food. In addition, most of the land is still held by the U.S. government. Tourism, once the great hope, is looking very dismal of late. The Intercontinental Hotel, the newest of four major hotels on the island of Saipan, had 17 percent occupancy in December 1976, and the others were not faring much better. There is hope that when (and

if) Japan and Continental Air Lines begin operating their direct flight service from Tokyo to Saipan's new international airport the tourist business will pick up.

Hoping to stimulate the tourism, some Saipanese, with strong support from DOTA, attempted to reintroduce Las Vegas-style slot machines in Saipan, which had been rejected after a one-year trial because of social problems, but were turned down by the Resident Commissioner, Erwin Canham.

In general, the federal support laid on top of an otherwise stagnant economy has not produced much ingenuity. The Chamorros are not at all discontent with the status quo, nor are the Carolinians, who learned generations ago to settle for less than their Chamorro neighbors. From the U.S. point of view, such choice real estate on the front line of America's defense forces is cheap at twice the price. And with all that unused land in government hands, there may be room for some Yankee ingenuity somewhere down the line.

Marshall Islands

While the Northern Marianas were moving steadily toward their Commonwealth status, and Palau was wrestling with its superport dilemma, the Marshall Islands, as early as 1973, began its own strategy for separation from the TTPI and for separate negotiations with the United States.

The first step was the formation of a separate Marshall Islands Political Status Commission, whose task was to review alternatives to trusteeship, and to communicate the various particulars to the Marshallese people, who would then be asked to make a decision through the voting process. The second step was to ask for separate negotiations with Ambassador Williams and the United States, a request which has not been granted on the ludicrous grounds of "preserving Micronesian unity."

The 25,000 Marshallese have reasons to be chafing. Being the easternmost district of the TTPI, nearly 2,000 miles from headquarters on Saipan, the Marshalls were always on the short end of the stick, or so it seemed to the Marshallese. Consequently, the Marshalls were the poorest in

terms of services such as transportation and communications, and often seemed to be cut off from supplies which the other districts took for granted. Support for economic development under the TTPI was virtually nonexistent.

The Marshallese have also felt cut off from their closest neighbors to the south, the Gilbert Islands, with whom they had traditional as well as family linkages, and Nauru. The obvious cause for this barrier was the Marshalls' membership in the TTPI, which discouraged, if not prohibited, any kind of exchange between American and non-American territories.

Unlike some of the Micronesians of the Carolines, the Marshallese became increasingly impatient with the stagnant economic policies of the TTPI administration. Although their land is in short supply, the industrious Marshallese have always maintained a comparatively high standard of living. Their copra is acknowledged as the best in Micronesia, and their vast fishing grounds are teeming with fish, most of which are now taken by Japanese fleets. (If the 200-mile economic zone becomes an accepted reality, the area covered by the Marshall Islands would be as large as any national marine economic zone in the Pacific, except for French Polynesia.) But full exploitation of these limited natural resources has not only been lacking but may even have been inhibited by membership in the TTPI. At least, this is one of the reasons given for wanting out of the TTPI.

But the principal reason for wanting out of the TTPI, by most accounts, is related to the Pacific Missile Range located on Kwajalein Atoll. Under the present arrangement, the sizable revenues generated through leases, salaries, and taxes on Kwajalein must be divided among all districts through the Congress of Micronesia. The Marshallese want to keep a larger share of the revenues which ultimately come from the use of their land. They also want less humiliating conditions for the Marshallese workers who service the thousands of Americans living on Kwajalein.

That Kwajalein is the focal point of negotiations between the United States and the Marshallese is not surprising. Resentment against the U.S. appropriation of the entire atoll, which embraces the largest lagoon in the world, has been brewing since

1947, when the 148 islanders were relocated to neighboring Ebeye Island to make way for the missile test facility on Kwajalein. Today it is a billion-dollar complex with a resident American population (complete with PXs, schools, movies, and a golf course) of 3,000 to 5,000 people, depending upon the nature of the experiments at any given period. (Since the activities of the Missile Range are highly classified, it is not possible to state the full range of missile-related activities beyond the primary one of interception of missiles fired from Vandenburg Air Force Base in California, 5,000 miles away.)

In 1964, the military began "leasing" the atoll for 99 years at \$10 a year per acre, a rate that remained constant until 1971, when further negotiations under the Mid-Corridor Agreement resulted in annual payments of \$420,000. Although the comparatively generous increase in the lease rate answered some of the critics, it did not mollify the Marshallese who still rankled over the years of nonpayment, plus the fact that all taxes on American and Marshallese salaries paid on Kwajalein went to the COM for redistribution rather than directly to the Marshalls District. Further, the Marshallese are well aware of the going rate for the lease of military bases in other parts of the world, specifically Spain, where the United States recently negotiated a five-year lease for \$1.1 billion, 44 times the amount paid for Kwajalein!³

Kwajalein's insult is exacerbated by the U.S.-created slum of Ebeye, the island just 2.5 miles from Kwajalein where the 400 to 500 Marshallese who were originally relocated there from the "labor camp" on Kwajalein have been joined by nearly 8,000 others who have come from all over the Marshalls in search of jobs (at American wages) at the Missile Range. The few hundred lucky ones who are employed on Kwajalein must commute daily by ferry from the miniature middle-class America of "Kwaj" to the 70-acre, rat-infested "suburb" of Ebeye because, in true apartheid style, the islanders must be off Kwajalein between sundown and sunrise, and are not permitted to use any Missile Range facilities, including the hospital and the schools.

3. In March 1976, the United States agreed to increase the annual rent of Kwajalein to \$710,000, and is now pushing for a 50-year lease. The Marshallese negotiators are holding out for an annual review of any lease agreement.

The crowded, unsightly, and unsanitary conditions of Ebeye have been documented and publicized repeatedly in one grim report after another, but the conditions remain unchanged. The Marshallese interpret this as yet another example of American unresponsiveness, and add this to their list of grievances which, from their point of view, can only be settled through direct, public, and separate negotiations.

In addition to the Kwajalein-Ebeye issue, there is the unresolved problem of the displaced residents of Enewetak (Eniwetok) and Bikini, who were relocated "temporarily" in 1946-47 to make way for atomic bomb testing. After years of promises and recent spurts of activity, the displaced islanders have still not been permitted to return to what is left of their home islands because they are still too "hot" from radiation.

The Marshallese, impatient for an equitable settlement of these basic issues, are demanding the right to handle their own affairs when it is a question of their own economy and well-being. They want, for example, to negotiate their own deals over fishing rights in the 200-mile economic zone. They want to become a transportation hub for the north-south Pacific air routes that Air Nauru (which recently acquired a hotel in the Marshalls) is pioneering. And they want to hook into the developing pan-Pacific satellite communications network, which the Department of the Interior vetoed because the TTPI is a "strategic trust." (To call from Majuro to Nauru, 600 miles away, the route is: Majuro, Saipan, Guam—where the Navy monitors—Melbourne, Nauru.)

In the face of continued U.S. rejection, the Marshall Islands Political Status Commission sent two delegates to the UN Trusteeship Council in June 1976 to present their case for independence, much to the consternation of Ambassador Williams and the entire Washington administration, which was anxious to prevent further fragmentation and to keep Micronesia's problems out of the international eye. As a further embarrassment to the United States, a representative from the Political Status Commission attended (uninvited) the Sixteenth South Pacific Conference in Nouméa, in October 1976, in an effort to enlist sympathy and support from the representatives of the 17 other Pacific Island governments who were in attendance.

What the Marshallese really want may be something less than full independence, for in their rejection of the proposed Federated States of Micronesia (as per the draft constitution) the Political Status Commission specified that, "Strong and friendly ties to the United States should be maintained under a future status of free association leading to independence." In the international arena, however, using the word independence is more likely to bring a meaningful response from the United States than continued requests for separate negotiations. Moreover, COM elections in the Marshalls in November 1976 indicate that there is less than unanimity in the Marshallese separatist movement. Two incumbents, both clearly identified with the separatist political bloc, lost their seats in the House and Senate, and both were replaced by candidates who ran on a platform which included the preservation of Micronesian unity.

If the Marshallese can get a better deal on Kwajalein—meaning a larger share of the revenues—and some freedom to develop in their own style—including the right to negotiate economic matters with foreign countries—they may wish to remain within the American political family, which is basically what the United States wants to guarantee. If the United States is not willing to grant these points, we may see a much more forceful show of dissatisfaction in the Marshall Islands.

Palau

In the fall of 1975, while the Marianas was taking final steps toward separating from the TTPI, the Palauan delegates to the Micronesian Constitutional Convention stubbornly defended the unity of Micronesia through the proposed Federated States of Micronesia, including all of the original six districts of the TTPI. Palau's sincerity was questionable all along, in view of past intransigence over the question of the location of the new TTPI capital and a subsequent demand for separate negotiations between Palau and the United States.

Some have interpreted Palau's insistence on unity as a final warning to the United States either to stop dealing separately with the Marianas, or be ready for separate negotiations with everyone. Another motive might have been to test the real strength of the Congress of Micronesia which theo-



Palauan youth with bicentennial colors painted on Japanese Toyota.

retically had the sole authority to sanction separate negotiations. Or, it could have been simply that the Palauans, along with the other Micronesians, were miffed by ambassadorial double-talk. Whatever the reason, it is unlikely that Palau really cared whether the Marianas remained in the Federated States of Micronesia, for there has never been any affinity between the Chamorros and the Palauans.

Since the precedent had been set by the Marianas, the Palauans soon began to make similar demands. What started as a written request for separate talks from the Palauan community living in Saipan resulted in a referendum, in September 1976, in which 88 percent of those who voted in Palau (in a very poor turnout) requested separation from the TTPI, and separate negotiations with the United States.

Exactly what Palau's 13,000 citizens want is not at all clear, for the Palauan community is very much divided on some major issues. Most Palauans agree that they should start doing things their own way. They also feel, as do the Marshallese and Marianans, that the unity of Micronesia has always been imposed and artificial, preserved only by U.S. insistence and support, and is a hindrance to any kind of creative development in Palau.

Of all the districts of Micronesia, Palau was the most fully developed during the Japanese period. Farming, fishing, and phosphate mining (on

Angaur) were primary industries under the Japanese, and were supplemented by some timber, boatbuilding, and a little tourism. During the peak of the prewar Japanese period—the Japanese always treated Palau as an integral part of Japan—nearly 25,000 Japanese were actually living in the islands, which include the largest single island (Babelthuap) in Micronesia. (Palauans prefer the spelling Babeldaob, which reflects the meaning: “above the sea.”)

Because of their heavy concentration of Japanese inhabitants, fortification, and strategic location, the Palau Islands were heavily battered during World War II. When the smoke cleared, many parts of the outer islands—especially Peleliu—were in ruins. What was not damaged or destroyed by the fighting was put to the torch, including the Japanese town of Koror, which was “wasted” on orders from a Japanese-hating U.S. Marine Corps Colonel.

Travelers to Palau in the mid-1960s were shocked to find Palau still in a state of postwar shambles. The relics of war were everywhere. All signs pointed to a stagnation that was even more egregious than in the rest of the TTPI. With its economy having lain dormant for so long, and its infrastructure totally destroyed, Palau would have to start all over again with help from the United States, help which the Palauans waited for in vain for another ten years.

This is not to say that the United States did not offer assistance. During the 1960s schools were built (including the Micronesian Occupational Center, a TTPI-wide vocational school), a fish storage facility was installed (in cooperation with the Van Camp Corporation, now a subsidiary of Ralston Purina), and an attempt was made to develop a tuna fishing fleet. An airstrip was opened and a few miles of road were built, mainly in connection with the new airport.

As in the rest of Micronesia, U.S. activities intensified during the early 1970s, with military construction units (known as Civic Action Teams) displaying their skills and equipment by building more roadways, small bridges, and athletic fields. The mid-1970s have brought still more stepped-up activity, including a copra processing plant (first shipment of coconut oil was made in December 1976) and a major bridge linking Koror with Babelthuap, which is likely to have a drastic effect on movement in the islands. Still, not much was being done for any effective development of Palau *by Palauans*, which is what many people in the community wanted.

In the early 1970s when the Pentagon began to hint that it wanted to build military bases in the Marianas and Palau, reaction in the Palauan community was mixed. While some viewed the proposed Marine Corps training base on the island of Babelthuap as a direct path to social disaster,



Commuters' boat from Koror to coastal villages on Babelthuap Island.

others saw it as the first viable step toward economic selfsufficiency. The rental fees for the land and the support services for the base would provide the needed foundation for Palau's economic development, provided the terms for the lease were satisfactory.

Before the discussions about the proposed military base reached a formal or official stage, however, another plan began to emerge which was of such magnitude as to make a military training base pale in comparison. This plan, already well conceived by the governments of Iran, Japan, and the United States before any Palauans were informed, is known as Port Pacific of Palau, and calls for the construction of a supertanker port exchange facility and petrochemical complex on the island of Babelthuap. It is this plan that has given birth to new political turmoil in Palau, including a political split between the traditional and elected leaders, and has no doubt contributed to the growing demands for separate negotiations with the United States. The Palauans at last began to sense that they had something to negotiate; the use of their islands by multinational corporations and governments.

The story of Port Pacific is hardly a compliment to America's manner of dealing with Micronesia. On the contrary, it is a complement to the secrecy and "tricks" of other negotiations, particularly the CIA-bugged Political Status Talks between 1969 and 1976.

Shrouded in secrecy from the very beginning, the first rumblings about the "superport" (to use the more common term of reference) began in Palau in the spring of 1976, just after a copy of three secret in-depth studies of the plan were slipped to a young Palauan journalist by a Palauan priest (who never divulged his sources). All three studies—the Mitre Report, the April Report, and the May Report—bear the name of Robert Panero, formerly of the Hudson Institute, who runs a consulting firm in New York City, and who is also a consultant to the Industrial Bank of Japan and the Nissho-Iwai Trading Company. The dates on the reports go back as far as October 1974, which indicates that somebody had been thinking about the superport for a long time.

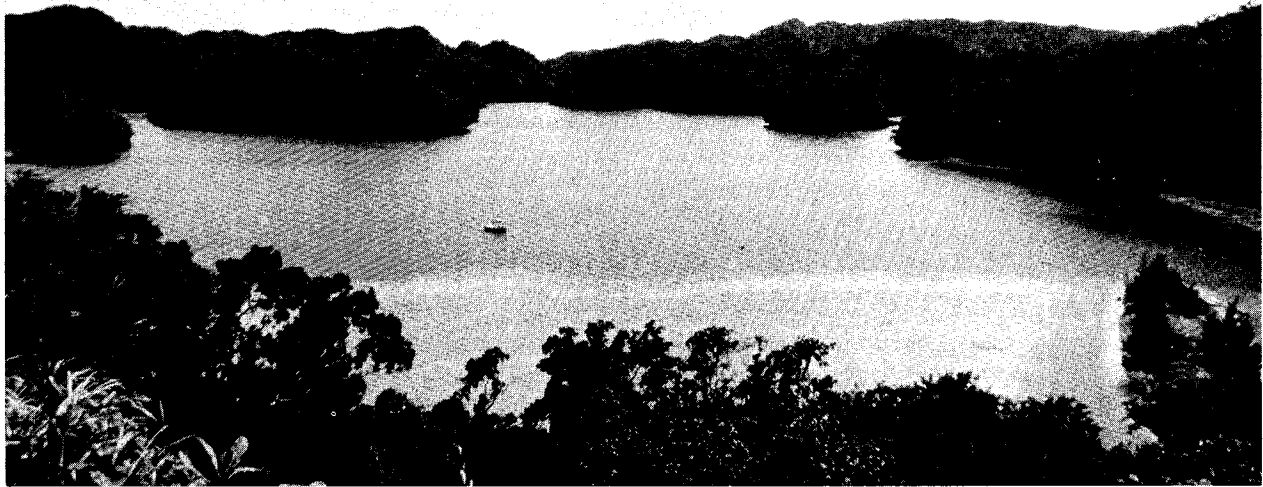
When the content of the three reports began to filter into the Palauan community—at first through publication in the local, occasional newspaper, *Tia Belau*—the reaction was explosive, producing a series of aftershocks which are still being felt. Factions immediately developed between the *pros* (local businessmen, Palauan bureaucrats in the TTPI Headquarters on Saipan, and most elected representatives) and the *cons* (young intellectuals and one of the two paramount chiefs) over the proposed development, and each faction has outside sympathizers. Moreover, on the *pro* side, there is financial support.

Lining up in favor of the development are the governments of Iran (which would provide the oil), Japan (which would make the supertankers and buy the oil), and the United States (which would have ultimate control over who gets how much oil), plus major corporations in Japan and the United States, chief among which are the Industrial Bank of Japan and the Nissho-Iwai Trading Company, Panero's clients. (Iran's government conducts its own business directly.)

The Director of the Office of Territorial Affairs, Fred M. Zeder, left no doubt as to the U.S. position when he accompanied Robert Panero to Palau to make a public endorsement, for this was the very type of development which the man from Texas understood best: it was big, and it was oil.

Heading the opposition forces is the Save Palau Organization, a group of 20 or so young Palauans, mostly university-trained and underemployed or jobless, with their counterpart groups at the University of Hawaii and environmentalist centers on the U.S. mainland. These young intellectuals have won, for the first time, the support of some of the 16 traditional chiefs, who have recently been rebuffed again by the Palau District Legislature. Friends of the Earth, the Audubon Society, and other international conservation groups rushed in to support the opposition, as did the highly respected Pacific Science Congress (which was reprimanded by the High Commissioner for meddling in others' affairs).

"We are not opposed to development," says High Chief Ibedul, the 32-year-old ex-Army sergeant who heads the Save Palau Organization, "but not the type that is going to destroy our society and our islands." Fearful of his influence, the



The incomparable Rock Islands of Palau—just an oil spill away from disaster.

elected legislators of Palau recently attempted to relieve him of his hereditary title.

What the Save Palau Organization is opposing is rather awesome in its magnitude and political implications. Although the details of funding are not clear, the proposed facility could cost well in excess of one billion dollars (references are made to \$20 billion in the Panero reports), and the benefits from it would be split four ways: Iran 40 percent; United States, Japan, and Palau 20 percent each.

In addition to providing exchange facilities for supertankers of one million deadweight tons (DWT), the contents of which would be siphoned off by smaller tankers from Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and other allies, the facility would also include a complete petrochemical complex, which could process raw minerals from New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, and Western Australia. Nuclear and thermal power plants would provide at least part of the energy, according to the plans.

Since a facility of such complexity would require an alien technical work force for the "foreseeable future," a new community of 10- to 12,000 people is also included in the Panero plan. According to the

Panero map, the foreign community would live in Palau City in the southeast portion of Babelthup Island, which now has a resident population of under 7,000. The technicians would devote their skills to achieving a throughput of 150 million tons per year, plus a 3-month supply storage area for all of Japan's needs in the event of another oil embargo.

One of the first questions raised by the opposition forces is "Why Palau?" After nearly 30 years of always being at "the end of the line," completely cut off from transportation and communication with the rest of the world except that which passes through Guam, why should Palau suddenly become the point of convergence of three international powers with a proposed facility which could prove to be overwhelming to this small society, whose islands embrace a marine ecosystem said to be unrivaled in beauty, variety, and natural balance. As details of the plan emerged, the answer became clearer.

Iran wants to sell more oil. Japan wants to buy it. Iran wants to ship the oil in supertankers. Japan wants to build them. Japan's environmentalist groups are presumably strong enough to prevent

such an accident-prone facility from being built in Japan, and will probably fight successfully to keep the planned million-ton supertankers completely away from Japan's coastlines and waters. Thus, a nearby exchange facility is needed to keep the oil moving and the pollution factor down, at least as far as Japan is concerned.

Since the large supertankers must avoid the shallow, wreck-strewn Malacca Straits and come through the more easterly Makassar Straits, Japan first considered a potential superport site in southern Indonesia, but decided against it because of the political instability there. The more easterly route through the Makassar Straits would bring the supertankers very close to the Western Caroline Islands as they turned northward to Japan. The large land mass of Babelthuap Island with its huge, reef-protected lagoon was practically made to order as the perfect site. What is more, there was not much doubt about the political stability, under U.S. administration, in this corner of the TTPI. Palau, therefore, seemed the perfect choice as the place to which Japan could "export its pollution."

On the United States side there has always been that nagging question of what to do with Palau, whose inhabitants were becoming more restless and resentful with the passing years. The superport idea fired the DOTA's imagination, and also caught the fancy of the military which saw the superport as fulfilling their need for a "strategic oil storage facility." As the Panero report pointed out, "Since WW II Palauans living under U.S. administration have developed slowly, their economic life is underdeveloped with scant hope of rapid change without outside impetus." To the DOTA, the superport was just the outside impetus that was needed to get Palau on its own economic feet. All that was left to be done was to persuade the Palauans.

The persuading began with trips for Palauan politicians to Teheran, Washington, Singapore, and Tokyo. Public hearings in Palau conducted by Panero himself have been attended and supported by DOTA, HiCom, and high-ranking military officers. Palauan bureaucrats employed by Headquarters in Saipan have come out strongly in support of the plan.

Whether the Palau superport plans will materialize hinges on Palau's future political status; and,



Palauan women and children of Babelthuap. Will the "superport" affect their lives?

in a sense, Palau's future status depends on the superport. While the United States is acting as though it is pretty certain of Palau's political stability, both Iran and Japan would like some sort of guarantee, at least a resolution of the Trusteeship status. The United States may be willing to demonstrate its confidence by negotiating for the military base on Babelthuap Island, as was proposed earlier in 1973.

In a recent publication (*The Progressive*, February 1977), a former aerospace engineer who has worked for 16 years on submarine-launched missiles, claims: "The chronology of events and the nature of Micronesian negotiations lend strong credibility to that south-sea rumor that Palau will be Trident's [a ballistic missile submarine] forward base." If using Palau as a forward base for advanced naval submarine weapons is indeed part of the U.S. plan, the secrecy surrounding the plans for Port Pacific seems well motivated.

Knowing that action on the superport cannot be put off indefinitely, it is most likely that the United States will find some justification for holding separate negotiations with Palau soon. The United States will in all probability ask for a fairly tight political association, the name of which is anybody's guess; and it will include an option on the 30,000-acre military training facility, whose presence will assure Japan and Iran of Palau's political stability. In return, the Palauans will receive that much needed economic impetus, which may turn out to be a destructive blow to the 13,000

Palauans and the few hundred Sonsorolese of the Western Caroline Islands.

Should the superport plan fall through, Palau can still hope to negotiate for the military training base and some autonomy to develop her own agriculture, fishing, and tourism in a more modest way. Once free from the yoke of the TTPI, Palau, because of the location and the incomparable beauty of her lagoons and islands, could become a major traffic center for tourists and other business as the north-south transportation lines open up in the Pacific.

The Remainder of the TTPI

As for the rest of Micronesia, the United States is really pouring on the coal, hoping for a settlement of the political status question by 1981. The sudden infusion of federal money from war claims payments and new federal programs is matched only by the stepped-up political and economic activity, which has been directed toward carrying out the "favorable plebiscite" recommendation in the Solomon Report.

The Education for Self-Government program, conducted out of Headquarters, is in full swing. A new Administrative District appeared January 1, 1977, when lonely Kusaie Island, whose 4,000 people had always suffered from the indignity of living in a subdistrict of Ponape, 350 miles distant, was proclaimed a District Center. And capital improvement programs are popping up nearly everywhere, especially on Ponape, which was selected by the COM (after considerable opposition from Palau) as the future site of the new capital of Micronesia.

It would appear that the Micronesian stage is being set for the final act.

While the United States is having its problems with the rebellious Palauans and Marshallese, she seems to have hit upon the right formula for dealing with the Ponapeans, Trukese, Yapese, Kusaieans, and the other minority groups (Ulithians, Woleaians, Mortlockese, Kapingamarangis, Nukuoros, Mokilese, Pingalapese, and others, all of whom speak different languages). Basic to the formula are rather generous federal funds.

The Ponape community is pleased at the prospect of being the new capital of the TTPI. While they do not expect the physical plant for the Headquarters to be as elaborate as Saipan's Capitol Hill (at least, not initially), they are counting on an influx of 361 new foreign families which are already firmly affixed to the bureaucracy. Since facilities for these 361 families do not now exist, Ponape is getting set for a massive building program, already under way with new roads, sewers, street lights, and a multimillion dollar hospital, long completed but unused due to lack of a sewage system. Even though few Ponapeans are involved in the construction activities—nearly all of which are carried out by Korean labor—there will be the inevitable short-term economic spillover.

According to Mr. Resio Moses, the new Ponapean District Administrator, his people are not at all unhappy with the status quo, except that they would like a little more money. They see the capital relocation as a satisfactory means to that end.

What effect this change in status is likely to have on their society is apparently of small concern to the Ponapeans. According to Moses, the social systems, once rigidly stratified, are deteriorating, and the education system is the primary cause. Chiefs, known as *nahnmwarkis*, once highly venerated, now ask for cash contributions at title-repayment feasts instead of the traditional giant yams and pigs, and are getting less and less of it. Like their fellow chiefs throughout Micronesia, their land distribution roles have eroded with the encroaching cash economy in which land is now bought, often by politicians, for fees ranging from cartons of cigarettes to Datsun pickups, which have a maximum life span of two years on Micronesia's rain-washed roads.

While most Ponapeans, Yapese, and Trukese would like to see the original six districts of the TTPI remain unified in their future political relationship with the United States, they are prepared to accept the fragmentation as inevitable. What may hold these districts together is not, as they see it, any affinity they have for each other, but rather their lack of choice.

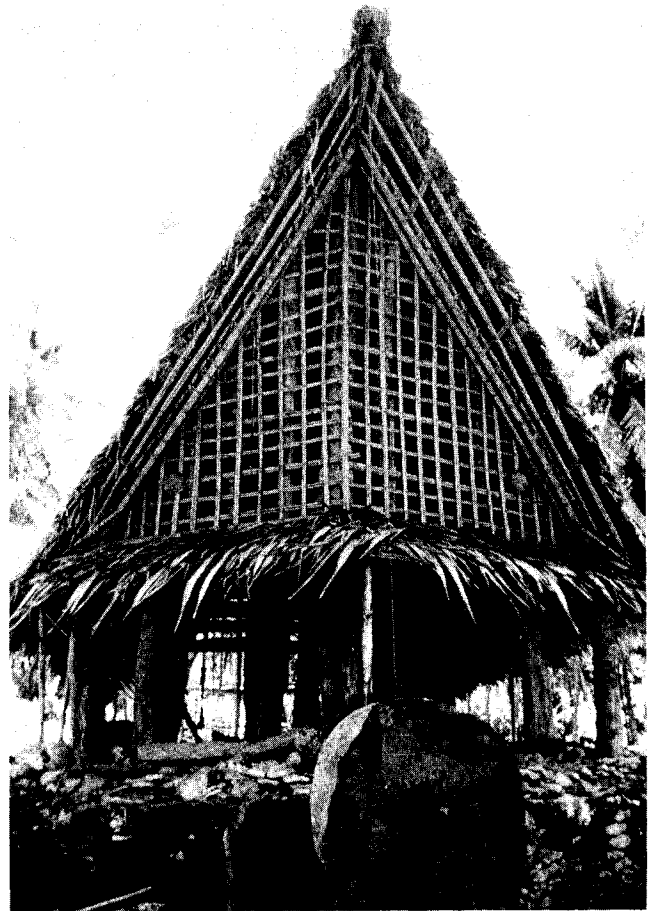
The Yapese, generally regarded as the most conservative and tradition bound of all the Micro-

nesians, would not reject an increase in their \$7 million annual appropriations, but there are limits to what they are willing to compromise for any additional revenues. Basically, the Yapese do not want to change their way of life, considered by most outsiders (including other Micronesians) to be primitive and colorful, and so far they have proved fairly resistant to any abrupt cultural changes. The Yap District Legislature and community groups persistently refused permission for the construction of a Continental Hotel (as found in Palau, Guam, Saipan, and Truk), which was the only major proposal ever offered to Yap, the military having no interest beyond the maintenance of the present Coast Guard LORAN station.

Although the idea of progress has come to Yap—Datsuns, marijuana, incredible quantities of beer, and severe malnutrition in the district center—it has not hit the Yapese with as much force as the rest of Micronesia. Traditional leaders, customs, and taboos still exert some influence, but not enough to counter some of the social problems that have already surfaced (e.g., drunkenness is the principal reason for absence from junior high school classes). While the Yapese would welcome additional sources of income, they are unlikely to ask for it very loudly, and they are absolutely unwilling to consider such offers as a superport or military base, not that any are likely to be forthcoming.

Truk's 32,000 people—the most heavily and densely populated district in Micronesia—would be much more likely to strike up a deal. When the 44-year-old District Director of Education proclaimed, "What this place needs is a military base," he was probably speaking for a large number of his fellow Trukese, many of whom remember the bustling days before World War II, when Truk was the major Pacific base for the Japanese Navy, much of which still lies at the bottom of the extraordinarily large (50 miles in diameter) Truk Lagoon.

Although there has been no talk about building a U.S. Navy base in Truk, it strikes some Trukese, and other observers, as a logical possibility. There is still strong talk among the military about fall-back positions, as military presence in Southeast and East Asia declines. The Truk Lagoon is a natural harbor, and at an optimal distance from Guam in terms of serving as a back-up base. There



Traditional Yapese meeting house with piece of stone money in foreground. Photo courtesy Floyd Takeuchi.

would be little resistance from the Trukese who, for the past 32 years, have seen no prospects of economic development, and are rated the poorest of the Micronesians in per capita income. Should the Russians or Chinese show any signs of developing their new foothold in Polynesia into something even quasi-military, the possibility of the United States remilitarizing Truk becomes even more logical.

Still, because of the Trusteeship Agreement, the United States may be reluctant to establish a visible military presence in Truk, at least not until after the termination of the Trusteeship, possibly as early as 1981 if the United States has its way.

The Micronesians from Ponape, Truk, Kusaie, and Yap are still thinking in terms of Free Association with the United States, the details of which have not yet been refined. What the Micronesians will try to hold out for includes:

1. More district autonomy with direct district funding (already proffered by Ambassador Williams to the Marshalls in an effort to forestall their independence move).
2. A strong COM, with a governor selected by the legislators from among their own ranks.
3. Protection from alienation of their land and surrounding waters.
4. Prohibition of testing, use, or disposal of radioactive or toxic materials.
5. Protection against future declarations of eminent domain by the United States.

The Micronesians believe that they still have something worthwhile to negotiate. As one of the senior Senators from the COM, a Mokilese, put it:

Micronesia must remain a unity in making its deal with the U.S. because the new front line position [vis-à-vis Asia] is now Guam, the Marianas, and soon Palau. They will have the Marshalls to protect their rear. Do you think the U.S. wants a soft underbelly? They need us as a fall-back position, and they will pay for it.

Others have come to similar conclusions, but with a more pointed rationale: the United States will be willing to pay in order to keep others out, a tactic which is known in officialese as "strategic denial."

As for the real meaning of the future political status of TTPI, the same Mokilese Senator sounded a note of what may be characteristic Micronesian fatalism when he said:

What difference does it really make? Which ever way we decide, somebody in the Security Council will veto it. If we settle for Free Association, the Russians will say no. If we ask for independence, the Americans will say no. And that takes us right back to where we are now—in limbo.

Guam

Although Guam is geographically located in Micronesia, it has never been a part of the TTPI, even though the Trust Territory headquarters was

located there from 1954 to 1962, and it is still the transportation, communications, and commercial center for the entire area. Apart from its official exclusion from the TTPI, Guamanians themselves do not consider themselves Micronesians, and look with great disdain on their less sophisticated neighbors. Most Guamanians, in fact, do not even know where the islands of the TTPI are located, very few have been there, and hardly any of them care.

While Guam is not included in political Micronesia, it is securely lodged within the American political framework, and its presence looms large in the Micronesia-U.S. picture. That it is the southernmost of the Mariana Islands is a strong argument in favor of their reintegration, which the U.S. Congress and a large number of Guamanians would like to see, but which the Saipanese strongly oppose. As the biggest, most populated, and most technologically advanced island in Micronesia, Guam has always played a prominent logistic role in the TTPI, and is likely to continue to do so, regardless of the new political shape taken by the TTPI.⁴

What the United States would obviously like to see is a Micronesia that could be put into one administrative package, not an assortment of a territory, a commonwealth, and several freely associated states. Therefore, it would appear that eventually Guam will be affected in one way or another by the decisions on the future political status of Micronesia, despite Guamanian aloofness.

Guam, U.S.A.—as its boosters and license plates proclaim—remained an obscure Navy outpost in the western Pacific until December 1941 when its small contingent of Navy and American civilian employees was captured by Japanese forces shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After two and one-half years of hated Japanese occupation, American forces returned to wage one of the costliest and most destructive battles of the Pacific

4. For example, at present, the Socio Construction Company, based in Guam, holds major construction contracts in the TTPI and Guam, where it is authorized to employ alien Korean labor. The company's officers include prominent Guamanian politicians, an American, and two Koreans.

War. Although most of the 225-square mile island was razed during the fighting, the Guamanians embraced the U.S. troops with a fervor that has not abated to this day. Liberation Day is Guam's biggest annual celebration, and Vietnam veterans are still heroic.

During the years of the Japanese occupation, Chamorros from Saipan were used as translators and overseers of their Chamorro cousins of Guam. The Guamanians could view this only as collaboration with the enemy, and still harbor considerable resentment against the Saipanese. Very likely, it was this resentment more than anything else that moved the Guamanians to vote overwhelmingly against the reintegration of all the Mariana Islands in the referendum of 1960, and is responsible for the nearly universal prejudice, except for some younger Guamanians born after the war years, against the Saipanese that still exists.

Six years after the liberation of Guam, the U.S. Congress in 1950 passed the Organic Act of Guam, which made Guam an unincorporated Territory of the United States, while making 30,000 Chamorros new citizens of the Republic. The Organic Act, which became Guam's Constitution, also called for a unicameral legislature (to be elected by popular vote) and a governor (to be appointed by the President of the United States) who would answer to the Secretary of Interior, in whose Department the new Territory had been placed. Before that, Guam had essentially belonged to the Navy, and was considered for all practical purposes a Navy base.

The Navy did not take this loss easily. In fact, most feel that the contest for control is still going on. As late as 1962, Navy security clearances were required for visitors and contract employees of the government of Guam. In 1975, the Navy was locked in serious combat with the government of Guam and the Department of Interior over the construction of an ammunition wharf in Sella Bay, one of Guam's most picturesque areas of unspoiled nature, and a favorite scenic spot for Japanese tourists. (The battle was only recently resolved in favor of the government of Guam.)

Navy control of the island, however, was diluted considerably when the Air Force began to develop the mammoth Andersen Air Force Base, from which approximately one-third of the B-52

bombing missions over Indochina were launched. During the 1960s, as air power emerged as the primary defense force, the Andersen complex grew to occupy the entire northern section of the island (including the best farming and copra land). Since the Air Force is a relative newcomer, Navy still has stronger community influence, along with the Catholic bishop. And between the two of them—Air Force and Navy—they own and occupy (often with empty space) one-third of the island—the choicest third. (The government of Guam also holds one-third of the island, which leaves one-third in private, often alien, hands.)

Under Navy administration there was no pretense of self-government, except for the token Guam Congress whose elected members served as advisers to the Naval Governor, who never sought any advice. The Organic Act changed things by providing for an appointed civilian governor and a 21-member legislature, which has developed into a considerable internal force in island politics.

After three Guamanian governors had been appointed, the islanders elected their first one in 1971 (a Republican), and turned him out of office in 1975 in favor of Governor Ricardo Bordallo, a Guamanian Democrat with Charles Reichean ideals, who now has his hands full trying to gain control over an incredibly inflated economy which has sprung some serious leaks.

Guam's course has often been rocky, and almost totally without plan. Both natural and man-made disasters have had major effects. During the 1950s, Guam plodded along at about the same sluggish pace as Micronesia, only many levels higher. Agriculture and fishing became virtually extinct as the maturing Guamanian population drifted into the plentiful government jobs, which were being provided by the government of Guam (as a result of localization and expansion) and the huge military bases. Since Guamanians abhorred blue-collar work, and, as new Americans, felt they were above it, Filipino laborers and technicians were imported by the thousands to build new physical plants (military and civilian) and keep them operating.

Its limited nonmilitary transportation/communication links—a once-weekly Pan Am flight from Honolulu—and the laws prohibiting alien ownership of land and businesses also served to restrict

any dramatic development during the 1950s. In November 1962, however, the complacent, relatively quiet, and steady little island of Guam was hit by a force that was to change its Pacific Island ways forever. Typhoon Karen—the fiercest storm in the recorded history of the Pacific, according to Fleet Weather Central—literally tore the island apart, demolishing more than 90 percent of civilian structures. With generous typhoon relief and rehabilitation funds from the Kennedy administration, plus the easing of restrictions on alien—that is U.S.—ownership of land and businesses, Guam began to quicken its developmental pace in the post-typhoon era, and kept it going for quite some time.

As the momentum created by Typhoon Karen began to slow down in the mid-1960s, it received a boost from another type of storm that was picking up speed in Indochina. Each new B-52 brought to Andersen Air Force Base created a new community of its own, and as their numbers increased, so did the tempo of Guam.

New blood was injected into the island by the “Kennedy” immigration act of October 3, 1965, when the U.S. Congress made the first major amendment to the 1952 McCarran-Walters Act. The amendment dramatically increased the number of Asian immigrants to the United States. Because Guam was the front door to the United States, some of them, especially those who could not afford to go further, stayed in Guam, “Where America’s Day Begins” (to quote the banner line of the *Pacific Daily News*, Guam’s only newspaper).

With thousands of new immigrants coming to the island—the majority from the Philippines—the land alienation codes began to crumble, until by 1970 land sales were open to the world, and anybody with the cash could open a business. Such an open door policy proved particularly attractive to businessmen from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and brought in others from the United States, the Philippines, New Zealand, and Nauru, which is now putting up Guam’s tallest building.

As the war in Indochina moved inexorably toward a frenetic crescendo, so did Guam’s economy and social system. The amount of air traffic that came through Guam alone was enough to set the island spinning. Tourists from Japan

began to flock to the new hotels (mostly Japanese-owned) along Tumon Bay, where one of the major attractions was to sit at the Guam Hilton poolside at early cocktail hour to watch the B-52s returning to Andersen Air Force Base, sometimes at the rate of one per minute. Military brass from all over flew in and out of Guam like starlings, and hundreds of thousands of GIs passed through Guam’s tiny terminal, usually in the middle of the night.

And there were the bombs, which had to be trucked from Apra Harbor in the south to Andersen in the north. During the carpet bombing period, the huge trucks inched their way, bumper to bumper, up Marine Drive, Guam’s major artery, which passes right through the capital, Agana.

The transition from a sleepy, Pacific Island community of the 1950s to the cosmopolitan, war-fed frenzy of the late 1960s and early ’70s, proved more than the society could bear. Crime against people and property is claimed by everyone to be a serious problem, much of it related to drug trafficking (which is said to have abated since the Vietnam disengagement.) Many residents of Guam carry guns, especially when they go out at night. The once-strong Chamorro family system is breaking down, with increased family feuds (usually over land) and divorces. The language, too, seems well on its way to extinction.

The rather abrupt ending of the war in Indochina brought Guam’s prosperity to a sudden halt, and its military-based economy immediately began to feel the pinch. Then, as though by the grace of God, the spring of 1976 ushered in Typhoon Pamela—reportedly as bad as Karen—which again blew much of the island’s vegetation and construction away. While the actual damage may not have been as severe, it was enough to get millions of badly needed federal dollars in the form of typhoon relief, enough to keep Guam afloat for a while longer.

The 100,000 people now living on the island, mostly in concrete homes and apartments, are seemingly not concerned about their economic future after the post-typhoon funds are gone. Under the prevailing U.S. wage scales, consumerism is at an all-time high, as are tastes, especially for color TVs (many of them purchased through PX mail order catalogs), air conditioners, and huge

American cars which clog the islands' highways from daybreak till after midnight.

It may be that they have no need for concern. According to the *Pacific Daily News* (December 13, 1976), "It appears that the federal government is spending pretty close to half a billion dollars [per annum] on Guam. This is an incredible figure, which figures out to more than \$5,000 for each man, woman, and child on the island." This incredible sum of money (a "conservative estimate," according to the Director of Planning) is not just a flash in the pan, like typhoon relief money. A good portion of it is steady income, primarily from taxes, all of which—including military income taxes—go directly to the government of Guam. Other steady sources of federal income include social security, Housing and Urban Development grants, Interstate Highway funds, and just about every Health, Education, and Welfare program in the books.

In spite of enormous amounts of money going into Guam, its economic problems are not solved. The island's 8.1 percent unemployment rate continues to climb as more Ilocanos leave their poverty-ridden province in the Philippines for Guam, U.S.A. The once-bustling tourist hotels have fallen on hard times, as Japanese tourist travel has decreased and shifted to other Pacific island destinations. And since tourism is the only source of income aside from the federal trough, Guam will need some help, logically in the form of military spending, to keep pace with population growth.

Despite Guam's glittering prosperity, most Micronesians cite it as the epitome of what they don't want their islands to become. Many of them come to Guam on TTPI or other federal business, and enjoy the shops, hotels, restaurants, bars, hookers, and skin flicks, but they insist that such things would not be good for Micronesia. Like Japan, with its plans for a superport in Palau, the Micronesians want to export their social pollution to Guam and Honolulu.

However, the Micronesians seem to like the idea of having more federal money, and in that respect Guam serves as the ideal model, as in, for example, bilingual education, school lunch programs, and coastal zone management funds. Indeed, Guam may serve as the overall model for future island

development in the American Pacific, especially in those islands just to the north—the new Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

The present Guamanian leadership (elected Governor in 1975) is not complacent about these matters, and is setting out to try to change the status quo. A Constitutional Convention endorsed by 90 percent of the voters in November 1976, will be held this year for 120 days, involving 40 elected delegates. Whatever they come up with will be transmitted by the Governor to the U.S. Congress, which can amend it "in part or whole." The Guam Con-Con may prove to be the first real attempt to test how far self-government, as defined in the Organic Act, can go.

Several factors prompted the Con-Con on Guam. Many people were miffed because the Saipanese were allowed to write their own Constitution, while Guam was saddled with its 26-year-old, Washington-authored Organic Act. The general feeling was that Saipan got a better deal. Additionally, there has been a growing demand for a clarification of the role and authority of the military on Guam motivated in part by the Sella Bay controversy, and other land matters. Guam also wants the power to set its own immigration laws (Guamanians are already outnumbered), and to have complete access to foreign shipping, now prohibited under the Jones Act.

Supporting these is a flicker of an ethnic awareness movement which is beginning to take on some political overtones.

It is highly unlikely that the Guamanians will persist in their demands for change in the face of Washington resistance. Certainly they would not do anything to jeopardize the federal largess, on which they are irrevocably dependent. What they would probably settle for, and what the United States would certainly welcome, is a rewritten constitution, a change in name of status, and a promise of a more central position in the affairs of other Micronesian islands that were once in the TTPI.

And on the other side, it is likely that the United States will show some consideration for Guamanian desires as the withdrawal of military forces from Southeast Asia continues, and as President Marcos

talks of raising the rent on military bases in the Philippines. Although there is little danger of the United States losing its hold on Guam, it would make everybody in Guam happier if the money

keeps flowing. Just how long the United States can or is willing to keep Guam's economy green will no doubt depend on developments in other parts of the Pacific and Asia.



[Part III concludes the series, *The Pacific Islands*, by Donald M. Topping.]

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