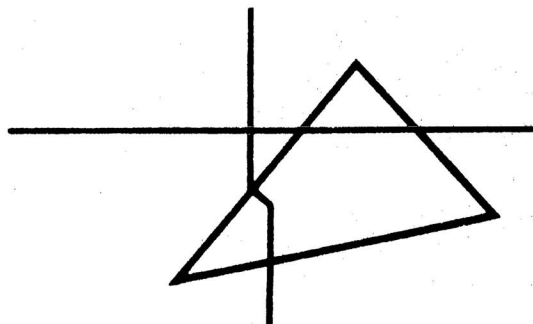


**REFLECTIONS  
ON  
MICRONESIA**



**Collected Papers of**

**Father Francis X. Hezel, S.J.**

**Working Papers Series  
Pacific Islands Studies  
Center for Asian and Pacific Studies  
in collaboration with the  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawaii at Manoa  
Honolulu, Hawaii**

Beginning in the early 1960s, Father Francis X. Hezel, S.M., has been a keen observer of events in the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Since 1968, Father Hezel has authored a series of papers which report upon his observations, and more importantly, provide his always thoughtful reflections about them. Some of the papers appeared in mimeograph form and were circulated among friends and other interested parties. The majority of the papers, however, were published in various journals, magazines, and newspapers. As the American administration of the islands appears to be approaching an end, it is an appropriate time to bring together the 18 papers which comprise this volume. In the case of previously published papers, we wish to thank the original publishers, all of whom have granted their permission to reprint the papers included here. A debt of gratitude is also due to Father Hezel who made available copies of the previously unpublished works.

The Pacific Islands Studies Program will soon publish another item authored by Father Hezel. During the current year, the program has founded the Pacific Islands Monograph Series to be published by the University of Hawaii Press (formerly and until recently, the University Press of Hawaii). It is our pleasure to announce that Father Hezel's The First Taint of Civilization: A History of the Caroline and Marshall Islands in Pre-Colonial Days, 1521-1885 has been selected to appear as the first monograph in the series.

Robert C. Kiste, Director  
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REFLECTIONS ON MICRONESIA  
THE COLLECTED PAPERS OF  
FATHER FRANCIS X. HEZEL, S.J.

Francis X. Hezel, S.J.  
Micronesian Seminar  
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## SOURCES

Six of the above papers, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 8, 14, and 18, have not been published elsewhere, and copies have been provided by Father Hezel. The remaining twelve papers have been previously published. In some cases the same paper, or variants of it, have appeared more than once. The following lists the previous publications and indicates their sources.

No. 4. "Micronesia's School Industry" (1973) previously appeared as "The School Industry" in Friends of Micronesia Newsletter, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1973, and in Pacific Daily News, March 25, 1973.

No. 5. "Reflections on Micronesia's Economy" (1973) appeared under the same title in Micronitor, April 29, 1973, and in Friends of Micronesia Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1974 under the title "Unholy Mackerel and the Almighty Buck."

No. 6. "A Sad Tale of Long Ago: How Magic Signs were Brought to a Far-Off Island" (1973) appeared as "No One Remembered" in Pacific Daily News, December 9, 1973. It later appeared as "A Sad Tale of Long Ago" in Impact, Vol. 11, No. 6, 1976.

No. 7. "In Search of a Home: Colonial Education in Micronesia" (1974) was published twice under the same title. It first appeared in Topics in Culture Learning, 3, 1975. It was later included in Culture Learning: Concepts, Applications and Research edited by Richard W. Brislin, Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1977.

No. 9. "Who Shall Own the Schools?" (1974) appeared under the same title in Friends of Micronesia Newsletter (1974).

No. 10. "Micronesia's Education for Self-Government: Frolicking in the Backyard?" (1975) appeared twice under the same title: Pacific Asian Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1976 and Catalyst: Social Pastoral Magazine for Melanesia, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1975.

No. 11. "The Micronesian Dilemma: How to Support Expensive Habits and Still Run the Household" (1976) appeared under the same title in Journal de Societe des Oceanistes 1976 and South Pacific Dossier edited by G. Woods, Canberra: Australian Council for Overseas Aid.

No. 12. "Micronesia's Hanging Spree" (1976) appeared once under the same title in Micronesian Independent, December 31, 1976. It appeared three other times under different titles: "Tragic End for Troubled Youth" in Micronesian Reporter, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1976. "Suicide Beckons Micronesia" in Pacific Daily News, February 13, 1977. "Suicide Epidemic Among Micronesian Youth" in South Pacific Bulletin, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1977.

No. 13. "Taking the Long View" (1977) appeared three times under the same title: Micronesian Independent, March 11, 1977. Carolines Observer, March 25, 1977. Review for Religious, Vol. 36, No. 5, September, 1977.

No. 15. "Looking Ahead to the End of the Trusteeship, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands" (1978) appeared once under the same title in Journal of Pacific History, Vol. XIII, Part 4, 1978.

No. 16. "The Education Explosion in Truk" (1978) appeared three times under the same title: Micronesian Reporter, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1978. Island, Vol. 1, No. 7, December, 1978. Pacific Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring, 1979.

No. 17. "The New Formula for Self-Reliance" (1979) appeared twice under the same title: Marianas Variety, July 5, 1979. Glimpses, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1979.

## THE CREATION OF A COLONY: THE PARADOX OF ECONOMIC AID TO MICRONESIA

### Two Varieties of Underdevelopment

The basic problem of underdeveloped countries is often stated as that of capital formation. Those underdeveloped nations that have especially caught the public eye and have demanded the attention of economists—particularly the countries of Asia and Latin America—must struggle with the difficulty of accumulating enough capital to provide the investments that are so necessary if they ever intend to industrialize. Overpopulation in these countries is generally looked upon as simply an amplification of the problem of capital formation, since it means that the barriers have been raised even higher, making additional savings necessary in order that any substantial economic progress be achieved.<sup>1</sup> The question that continually plagues these large, rather populous countries is where they are to acquire the savings needed for their ascent towards economic prosperity.

This does not seem to be as pressing a problem for the island dependencies that are scattered throughout the Pacific. Although capital formation is something of a primary concern in the development of any people, these island groups are favored by their close economic ties with a metropolitan whose population and industrial capabilities are thousands of times greater than those of the island colonies. The Trust Territory of the Pacific is administered by the United States, a country that could very easily sweep it along to a point of prosperity that might make Micronesia the envy of the Third World. The same could be said of other island groups in the area.

The difficulty, therefore, is not in finding a source of capital, but in making sure that it is applied judiciously and in the best interests of the developing people. It might even be said that the very affluence of the metropolitan in respect to the colony constitutes the most serious danger. Lavish expenditures can stunt the growth of a developing country and prevent it from reaching the stature that it might otherwise have attained.

This paper is to be a case study of one of those island groups, Micronesia. After a brief review of the philosophy of economic assistance that has guided the

administration of these islands by the U.S., we will bring to light some of the problems that have emerged within the past few years as increased funds have been poured into a new development program. Finally, we will attempt to show the dilemma that confronts Micronesia on the eve of its political and economic thrust forward into the contemporary world.

### The Case For Natural Growth

From the standpoint of economic growth, Micronesia shares several severe handicaps in common with other Pacific territories. Its present population of 90,000 is sprinkled over no less than 96 inhabited islands covering an area of 3 million square miles. Even after the large outlay required to provide minimal transportation throughout the Trust Territory, the manpower pool is anything but concentrated. Only on a few central islands is there a population reaching the range of four or five thousand. The nearest markets are well removed from Micronesia, and shipping is costly. In addition, natural resources are extremely limited. With the exception of copra, which brought in 2½ million dollars during the 1966 fiscal year, there was no product exported in any appreciable quantity.

Despite such serious limitations, there was widespread optimism through the early years of the U.S. administration that self-sufficiency was a realistic goal for the Trust Territory. This belief was sustained in part by the impressive record of Japanese accomplishments in these islands prior to World War II. With the help of imported labor from Okinawa, the Japanese had succeeded in making Micronesia an entirely self-supporting colony with a favorable balance of trade.<sup>2</sup> This was again to be the goal of the U.S. trusteeship, but with certain qualifications. The pace of development was to be geared to the desires and the capacity of the people, respect was to be paid their fondness for the traditional patterns of life, and wages were to be kept consistent with the productivity of the economy. Government appropriations for health and educational services were carefully controlled in the hopes of fashioning a self-contained economy. Capital investment on the part of the U.S. government was called for; however, private investment was discouraged, as also in other Pacific colonies, for fear of exploitation and eventual alienation of the land. In all, this philosophy of economic development was a cautious one that was on guard against the "creation of a mendicant economy and the growth of a



subservient spirit among the indigenes."<sup>3</sup> It rested in the assumption that limited quantities of foreign imports could become "incentive goods" to spur the native population on towards ever greater productivity. Meanwhile, their commercial economy, which would develop side by side with the subsistence economy, was based on cash income from copra, fishing, and several small-scale agricultural ventures.<sup>4</sup>

This policy had much to recommend it, even if it was never fully implemented by the administration. Blame for this cannot be assigned entirely to the administration, however. The annual appropriations allocated to the Trust Territory by the U.S. Congress were in the neighborhood of five or six million dollars, barely enough to maintain the existing operations. Furthermore, expenses were necessarily multiplied by the unavoidable inefficiency that resulted from the duplication of facilities throughout the disparate archipelago. Nevertheless, a modest attempt at economic development was made, and until 1956 the income from Micronesia's exports actually exceeded the cost of its imports.

By 1960, however, certain hard facts had become evident. Export values had reached a plateau at about two million dollars. There appeared to be little hope that economic growth could be accelerated from within the present internal structure; a large capital outlay was needed from without for this purpose. All over the Pacific, colonial powers were awakening to the fact that the solution to the problem of their dependencies' self-support did not lie in diversification of crops, as all had once believed.<sup>5</sup> A large increase in subsidy was needed; but this also meant that the powers must prolong their ties with their island holdings, where once they had dreamed of a rapid economic maturity and an early severance of bonds.

#### The New Development Program

In 1961, a team of economists was sent at the bidding of President Kennedy to study the situation in Micronesia. Their recommendations, which were written up in the Solomon Report but never released to the public, sparked a program of intensive development in the islands. The annual appropriations of the U.S. were raised from seven million dollars in 1961 to a projected 35 million dollars in the

coming fiscal year. Thus far, the greater part of the capital investment has been spent to expand the infrastructure, with about two-thirds of the budget going into health and educational improvements.<sup>6</sup>

The years between 1961 and the present, then, have witnessed a volte-face of administration policy. They deserve closer attention, for they have had important consequences upon the economic, social and political direction of the Micronesian people. It is significant that during this time the primary concern of the U.S. administration has been with the development of human resources, an emphasis that has been supported by two recently completed studies of the Trust Territory.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, however, the magnitude of the U.S. investment has put the cost of maintaining their government well beyond the reach of Micronesia's own economic capacity, just as it has occasioned a number of other problems that threaten to complicate the territory's maturation process. It should be noted in passing that these difficulties are in no way peculiar to Micronesia; they have surfaced in most of the other Pacific islands since the end of the War.

#### Problems in the Agricultural Sector

From the very beginning, the possibility of developing plantations with industrialized means of cultivation had to be ruled out in Micronesia because of the limited land available. Any agriculture there has to be done on plots of modest size. Several cash crops, such as pepper, cacao, ramie, and vegetables, were tried on an experimental basis; but the results proved somewhat less than spectacular. The income brought in by the sale of this produce never amounted to more than a tiny fraction of the exports.<sup>8</sup> Only a high value cash crop that can be grown efficiently on small tracts of land, even in leached soil, could add significantly to the island's commercial economy. With the fluctuation of the world market and the expense of shipping the small quantities produced, it seems more reasonable to stimulate the agricultural sector to supply a larger portion of the consumption needs of the islanders.

Although roughly 70 percent of the total productive acreage is now being farmed, a subsistence level economy is still the rule. The main obstacle to increased productivity is the general prevalence of the traditional land tenure patterns, for the land is corporately owned by the clan but parcelled out to

individual family groups to be worked under the old system of multiple kin obligations. The curtailment of incentive that is built into such a system has led the South Pacific Commission to urge that "land tenure reform, preferably on the basis of individual tenure, be recognized as a stimulant to economic development."<sup>9</sup> Introduction of new and more efficient farming methods is also hampered by the failure of the young, educated Micronesians to return to the land.

It was recently estimated that a capital expenditure of nine million dollars would be needed to develop the agricultural potential of the Trust Territory. Even then, it would be subject to most of the same limitations mentioned above. On the whole, it appears that the agricultural sector, which once promised to make a significant contribution to Micronesia's economic growth, appears to have been a disappointment in this respect.

#### Expansion of Social Services

The capital expenditures in the new development program undertaken by the U.S. in the 1960's were concentrated largely on the expansion of health, education, and governmental facilities. The decision to begin in this area was dictated by several factors: concern over the high rate of population growth (3½ percent), criticism of the inadequacy of the existing services by the United Nations' visiting teams, and a conviction that the human resources of Micronesia should be developed prior to the natural resources. Consequently, funds were poured into the construction of new hospitals, schools, and teachers' housing. Money was set aside for the hiring of many additional American contract teachers and medical supervisors. For the first time, the ideal of universal education for Micronesians became a working norm. The quality of education was also stepped up. Not only did the percentage of population enrolled in school rise sharply during those five years, but the per capita expense on elementary school-children increased fourfold. (See Table I).

The administrative structure of the government grew in size as its new program began. Its expansion was, of course, chiefly due to the creation of new jobs in order to administer the new social program, but also partly attributable to the formation of an indigenous legislative body. The number of those employed by

the government nearly doubled in these five years. Meanwhile, a corresponding rise occurred in the number of salaried workers in private enterprise. A considerable number of islanders were drawn into the money economy during this period, with the principal employer being the Trust Territory government. Most of those who earned their salaries in the private sphere were employed in service occupations, especially shops, restaurants, and taverns. (See Table II).

### The Effects on Trade and Wages

Whatever effect all this may have had on the economy of Micronesia, it did not bring about any striking increase in the production of marketable goods. Income from exports did show some gain, thanks to the more intensive production of copra; but while all other products remained relatively static, the sale of scrap metal became the second largest export of the islands. Within five years, the value of imported goods, on the other hand, doubled from 4.5 million dollars in 1961 to 9 million dollars in 1966. The flow of dollars out of the economy was three times as great as the inflow from the sale of exports. The trade deficit leaped from two million to six million dollars in five years. (See Table III).

What happened, as it appears, is that the imported goods which were to act as an incentive to greater economic productivity have been consumed far beyond the economy's ability to pay for them with its own produce. The rabbit is now chasing the dog. The "want development" that is described by economists as a natural part of the maturing process of a developing country has outrun the industrialization that it was meant to pursue.<sup>10</sup> In order to finance its needs, Micronesia must rely ever more heavily on government employment.

There has been recent concern expressed over the rise in wages throughout the Trust Territory. Over the five-year period that we are discussing, the average salary of the Micronesian worker has increased by 28 percent while the cost of living has risen barely two percent. As more attention is focused upon the disparity between the American and Micronesian wage scales in the islands, the government is being pressured into slowly breaching the gap between the two. The administration already envisages a single scale in the not-too-distant future. Those Micronesians on Ebeye who work on the American missile base on nearby Kwajalein are even now covered by the U.S. minimum wage law. As sympathetic as one may

be to the protests of the Micronesian in this regards, it must not be forgotten that the wage scale of a country has its roots in the national economy. The "national" economy of the U.S. differs quite a bit from that of the Trust Territory—just as much, perhaps, as the real economy of Micronesia differs from its present government-subsidized one.

### Unproductive Human Resources

The Nathan Report points out that of Micronesia's 12 million dollar "national income" nine million dollars come from the U.S. government, most of it in the form of salaries. It is the respending of this money that supports the trade and service industries in the islands.<sup>11</sup> The entire economy is, therefore, dependent on the presence and continued backing of the United States. Granted even the cash value of the administration's previous investment in human resources—i.e., the skills and education of those who have been or are being schooled at the government's expense—the fact remains that they can only be converted into cash by an employer with sufficient funds to pay their salaries. In other words, educated human beings in a country are simply frozen assets unless their own government, private business, or some other agency offers the conditions under which they might feed the economy. Many of the educated in Micronesia can make a contribution proportionate with their training only because the U.S. has the wherewithal to keep them on the payroll.

As the education process in Micronesia continues to turn out thousands more potentially valuable employees, the government is forced to expand to absorb as many as possible into the administrative structure. Many others it can simply not employ. The payroll grows longer, while the cost of providing for the growing social services threatens to devour an ever greater percentage of public funds. It has been observed already that the cost of social services is rapidly outstripping the capacity of the economy to afford them. (See Table IV). Such a pattern is not terribly unsettling, provided there is a rich uncle around to collect the bills. But if a self-supporting economy is still the goal of both the administering authority and the territory, then the trend must be reversed and proper emphasis given to economic development needs. "Economic development," warns the South Pacific Commission, "is itself, the only sound basis for social development."<sup>12</sup>

### The Problems of Urbanization

A problem concomitant with economic growth and widespread throughout the Pacific is that of urbanization. The roots of this phenomenon lie far deeper than this study will take us, but we can describe how the problem in Micronesia has intensified during the five years under review.

The population shift into the "port towns" of Micronesia, while it may not be very startling in terms of bald figures, is rather high when seen in terms of percentage of growth relative to the total population increase. (See Table V). Education has undoubtedly played a large role in causing this movement towards the towns insofar as it produces among students dissatisfaction with the rigid controls of the traditional village life and a sense of frustration at the outmoded agricultural economy. In some cases, education has the added effect of creating aspirations among the young that cannot easily be satisfied in an economy which is ill-equipped to offer either a sufficient range or number of occupational opportunities. When there are relatively few in a society who have completed twelve years of schooling, the high school graduate is inclined to look upon himself as a member of the "white-collar" elite and to disdain the manual work of the tradesman or mechanic.

In Micronesia, education has prepared a fairly sizable labor force of young literate people and freed them from a subsistence life on the land. Urbanization has concentrated them around the district centers; but, aside from a limited number of government jobs, no productive employment exists at present. Many finally do obtain some kind of work—often in the stores or town bars—which is only a species of "underemployment".<sup>13</sup> Such a solution produces, at best, temporary relief. Occasionally their frustration at the inconsistency of a society that educates them and then offers them no suitable employment is vented in violence and rioting, as in the Fiji riots of 1959. Often enough it takes on other forms, less dramatic if equally symptomatic.<sup>14</sup>

### Industrialization As the Answer?

The solution to almost every one of the difficulties described above comes easily—an economic development program must be begun as soon as possible. In

point of fact, preliminary studies have been made and the program already inaugurated by the U.S. government. The proposed plan demands a total investment of about 150 million dollars; half of which is to be put into the infrastructure, the rest to be used for the development of industry in the islands. In a sense, the implementation of this plan will signal a full turn-about from the earlier administrative policy that insisted upon a natural, self-induced pattern of economic growth. The new cataclystic approach, for all the upset it causes among the conservative members of a tradition-bound society, is supported by strong arguments:

If the economic development of Micronesia is limited to the rate of growth which can be generated by resources of local ownership, the few local owners will prosper, but the total investment will be so limited that it will leave the great majority of people with few employment opportunities, high prices, and shortages of goods and services.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, it seems that a planned program is required if the haphazard and lopsided distribution of wealth so common in developing countries is to be avoided.

#### The Paradox of Over-Support

According to the terms of its Trusteeship Agreement, the United States has a legally defined obligation to "promote the economic advancement and self-sufficiency of the inhabitants of Micronesia."<sup>16</sup> The responsibility of the United States towards the Trust Territory should be a guarantee of its resolve, while the magnitude of U.S. resources insures the availability of the means to help Micronesia through capital investment. From this point of view, the Micronesian people are more fortunate than most. As is often the case, though, factors like these can be double-edged; they can be as hazardous as they are helpful. The U.S. must strike a delicate balance in its relationship with its dependency. While insuring the conditions for economic development, it must resist the temptation to perpetually carry the territory along, thereby denying it any opportunity to learn how to walk on its own.

As the plans for the industrialization of Micronesia leave the drafting-board, it is ironic that many of the obstacles to their realization are the consequences of the administration's program of social development during the 1960's.

Private investment must play a large role in the islands' economic development within the next few years. The creation of a commercial fishing industry, manufacturing, construction, and tourism require capital investment estimated at about 75 million dollars.<sup>17</sup> Even though Micronesia has more than its share of limitations when it comes to industrialization, we might expect them to be somewhat counter-balanced by its cheap and relatively abundant supply of manpower. The truth is that inflationary wages have raised the cost of labor in Micronesia well above that of Asian countries such as Taiwan and the Philippines. Unskilled and semi-skilled labor in the Trust Territory is too dispersed and too expensive to offer much of an attraction for foreign investors. It is true that the young and educated, who constitute a rapidly expanding segment of the population, must be counted as one of the most valuable potential resources of Micronesia. Industrialization may well offer them the new job opportunities they seek within the managerial or entrepreneurial class, but only if a large supply of semi-skilled labor can first be found.

When the first commercial fishery began its operations in Palau a few years ago, Okinawans had to be brought in to conduct the actual fishing operations. Palauans took the supporting jobs which were, for the most part, land-based and better paid. The five thousand dollars a month in salaries that flows into the Palauan economy is totally dependent upon the presence of foreign labor. This has led to the suggestion that cheap Asian labor be imported to answer the demands of a labor requirement that might rise to between 20 and 30 thousand persons in a few years.<sup>18</sup> To attempt this classic solution, one that has been applied in many parts of the Pacific before, would be to invite the same social problems that have arisen in Hawaii, Fiji, and Tahiti.

Another alternative, of course, is to utilize to its fullest the indigenous labor force that already exists in the islands. The figures in Table VI show that the present number of persons between the ages of 15 and 65 (exclusive of housewives and students) is about 21 thousand. Population figures indicate that this number is growing by at least another thousand each year.<sup>19</sup> Apart from the problem of



adjusting wages to a realistic level of productivity, a more serious social difficulty is encountered. For efficient employment of this manpower pool, most people would have to be relocated near the "industrial" centers. Such a policy would require that they subordinate traditional values associated with their family lands and their clan ties to the economic growth of the territory. It is unlikely that this change of attitude could be carried out in a short period of time.

Perhaps the labor difficulties in Micronesia are only illustrative of what must inevitably happen when development of human resources precedes, rather than parallels, economic development.

#### Creating Permanent Dependence

Our final observation rests upon a point that was made earlier. We have seen that the cost of maintaining its infrastructure has long since outdistanced Micronesia's economic means. Through the largess of the United States, Micronesia has been elevated to the status of a parasite economy.

This is inconsequential as long as U.S. funds hold out and the territory does not mind being a permanent economic ward of the United States. It only presents a critical problem when national aspirations begin to mount, when the territory regards political independence as a worthy goal, and when the new nation sees economic servitude as a more subtle variety of political domination. It is difficult to predict whether Micronesia will ever arrive at this point or whether it will be peacefully assimilated into the United States in some form or other. Regardless of the turn of future events, if the people of Micronesia are to be given a true option, self-sufficiency must remain the aim of all development that takes place. Otherwise, the political question will have been long since decided by the economic dependence that Micronesians will have come to accept as a matter of course.

TABLE I

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Total Population	78,000	90,000	15 %
No. of students	17,000	28,000	65
Percent of total population in school	22%	31%	9
<u>Per capita educ. expense for elementary school</u>	\$34	\$120	253

TABLE II

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>% increase</u>
No. of persons employed for wages	4,200	7,600	55 %
Total salaries	\$3.3 million	\$7.7 million	133
No. of persons employed by government	2,700	5,100	89
Total salaries of government employees	\$2.5 million	\$5.8 million	133
<u>Average annual per capita income of employees</u>	\$790	\$1010	28

TABLE III

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Total value of Exports	\$2.1 million	\$3.0 million	43 %
Total value of Imports	\$4.5 million	\$9.0 million	100

TABLE IV

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Cost of administ. services (health, educ., polit., & social)	\$1.2 million	\$6.8 million	467%
<u>Per capita cost of admin. services</u>	\$15	\$75	400

TABLE V

<u>Towns and Population:</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Koror	3,933	4,975	24 %
Kolonia (Ponape)	1,195	1,674	40
Moon	3,080	4,380	42
Ebeye	1,443	1,879	100
Majuro	3,900	5,187	33

TABLE VI

Labor Force Occupation Structure\*(Excludes under 15 and 65 and over,  
Foreign Born, Students, and Housewives)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Professional, technical	1,829	8.7 %
Managerial, administrative	629	3.0
Clerical	807	3.9
Carpenter, handicrafter, other crafts and trades	2,416	11.5
Operators, service workers	2,483	11.8
Copra, subsistence, agriculture, fishing, and other	12,821	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,985</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>

\*Figures are for 1967. Taken from Stanford Report, p. 24

## FOOTNOTES

1. See Gerald Moiur, "The Problem of Limited Economic Development," in The Economics of Underdevelopment, ed. Agarwala and Singh (New York: 1963), pp. 57ff. The author quotes Ricardo: "To say that there is a great abundance of labour is to say that there is not an adequate capital to employ it."
2. Tadao Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate (New York: 1940), pp. 11ff.
3. Donald J. O'Connor, An Economic Perspective of the Trust Territory of the Pacific (Saipan: 1952), p. 4.
4. The proponents of this economic policy were chiefly O'Connor, op. cit., and Douglas Oliver, Planning Micronesia's Future (Cambridge: 1951). Both works had a strong influence on government planning in the early years of the Civil Administration in Micronesia.
5. See Jacques Barrau, "The Limitation of Agricultural Expansion in the Tropical Pacific," A Paper given to the South Pacific Commission at the Regional Technical Meeting on Economic Development, Noumea, New Caledonia, March 12-22, 1962 (Noumea: 1962).
6. Above information can be found in the statistical appendices to 19th Annual Report to the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific: 1966.
7. These two studies are: Nathan Associates, Inc. An Economic Development for Micronesia, A Report prepared for the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, April, 1967; and Stanford Research Institute, Planning for Education and Manpower in Micronesia (Menlo Park, Cal.: 1967).
8. Exports and their value for fiscal year 1966 were as follows: copra, \$2,500,000; scrap metal, \$237,000; handicraft, \$88,000; trochus, \$71,000; vegetables, \$20,000; fish, \$78,000. Earnings from ramie, cacao, and pepper were apparently so insignificant as not to be listed.
9. South Pacific Commission, "Summary of Recommendations," in A Report of the Regional Technical Meeting on Economic Development, Noumea, New Caledonia, March 12-22, 1962 (Noumea: 1962), p. 2.
10. Meier, op. cit., pp. 69-70.
11. Nathan Associates, Inc., Summary and Index, p. 4.
12. South Pacific Commission, op. cit., p. 8.
13. Alfredo Navarrete, "Underemployment in Underdeveloped Economies," in Economics of Underdevelopment, pp. 341ff.

14. No figure giving the number of unemployed graduates are available; I am guided only by personal observations.
15. Nathan Associates, Inc., op. cit., p. 31.
16. United Nations, Trusteeship Agreement for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Art. 6 (New York: 1947), p.3.
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## EDUCATION IN MICRONESIA: TODAY AND TOMORROW

### I. Public and Private Institutions

Approximately one-fifth of the Trust Territory budget is spent in educating the 34 percent of the population that presently attends school. In per-student expenditures and in percentage of the total population engaged in formal education, Micronesia ranks just about at the top of the list among Pacific countries and probably quite high among developing nations everywhere. Since the early 1960s the Trust Territory administration has made the development of human resources one of its top priorities. Recently it has declared as its official policy a universal formal education up to the twelfth grade. To realize this goal, the government has inaugurated a building program in secondary education that is aimed at providing classrooms for 14,000 high school students by 1976. It is prepared to undertake additional construction and student support costs as may be required by population increase and the closing of private schools.

Private schools, which not long ago provided an education for one-fifth of the pupils in Micronesia, will enroll at best only one out of nine Micronesian students in 1975. Because of the pressure of mounting costs, private education may represent even a smaller fraction of the total educational picture by that year. According to government projections, two years from now the number of students attending private elementary schools will be only half of what it was in 1967. Although the number of private secondary students has doubled between 1967 and 1971, there are indications that this figure will dip sharply in the future.

#### T.T. School Enrollment Figures

<u>Elementary</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1975</u>
Public	21,046	23,675	25,386	25,556	25,141
Private	5,854	4,402	3,620	2,860	2,820
<u>Secondary</u>					
Public	2,446	3,288	6,357	8,304	11,566
Private	784	1,342	1,564	1,500	1,500

As private schools become statistically more the exceptional road to an education, those that survive will have to become exceptional in other ways, too. It is no longer true that students must do without education just because a private school chooses to close down. Private schools must take on new roles and seek to serve special needs to legitimate their existence in a day when the theory of universal public education is fast becoming a reality. These roles will probably vary from school to school, depending on the particular needs of the community. Nonetheless, there are two long-recognized problem areas in education that will remain long after every school-age child is furnished with a desk in a classroom. It is quite possible that at least some private schools might render valuable assistance to public education in these two areas.

The first is that the school curriculum is very often irrelevant to the lives of students. There is unfortunately little relationship between a student's environment and what he studies in class. Since the curriculum ultimately depends on the teacher rather than the curriculum author or the administrator, blame is usually laid there. Teachers have been poorly trained in the past, and those Micronesians who have shown any unusual ability in the classroom have been moved into an administrative position or pirated by other government departments. Among expatriate teachers there is generally too high a turnover rate to allow for the type of continuity that would ideally blossom into curricula that are grounded in the life-experiences of Micronesian students. Private schools, with their more stable faculties of longer teaching experience, might well be able to make a contribution towards building a more meaningful curriculum.

The second is the tendency of public schools to make formal education serve strictly utilitarian aims. The goal of secondary education is frequently preparation for a job or, in fewer cases, for college, while the goal of elementary schools is to prepare a student for high school. Private education stems from a historically liberal tradition insofar as its outlook on the purpose of schooling is concerned. Because of its concern with deeper religious and human questions, it should be especially responsive to the humanistic view of education that Charles Silberman proposes: "Education must prepare people not just to earn a living but to live a life—a creative, human and sensitive life." Private schools might well proclaim this truth as they furnish a model for an education that is truly humanistic and child-centered.

## 2. The Education Explosion And Its Consequences

There can be no doubt that U.S. administrative policies are bringing about a dramatic "education explosion" in the Trust Territory which will surely lead to accelerated social and economic changes in Micronesian communities. In 1967 only one out of eight Micronesians over twenty years of age had completed four years of high school. By 1975 about one-half of the over-twenty population will have finished high school. It is estimated that within four years 80 percent of the high school-age population will be attending secondary school. More than 3,000 Micronesians will receive their high school certificate each year. Some 1,000 of these will probably continue their education at MOC, CCM, or any of a number of institutions outside Micronesia. Of the remaining 2,000, an estimated 1,500 will look for immediate employment either within or without the Trust Territory. If manpower needs fail to keep pace with the outflow of graduates into the labor force and if employment can not be found for them, we can only assume that a large-scale "brain drain" will be the inevitable result as it has been in other Pacific islands.

The upsurge of college graduates, although on a smaller scale, has been no less dramatic than that on the secondary level. Four years ago, there were about 100 Micronesians with the equivalent of a Bachelor of Arts degree. That number has doubled since then, and the figure for 1971 will double again in four years. By 1975 there should be over 500 four-year college graduates in Micronesia, many of whom undoubtedly will assume government positions now held by the 450 expatriate employees of the Trust Territory. From the mid-70s on, however, the Micronesian economy will have to assimilate between 200 and 300 college graduates yearly in addition to the 1,500 high school graduates who will be seeking employment.

	<u>Education Explosion Figures</u>			
	<u>1963</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1975</u>
<u>Total College</u>				
<u>Graduates</u>	21	99	216	500
<u>High School</u>				
<u>Graduates</u>	100	480	948	3,079
<u>Per Year</u>				

There are presently 12,500 Micronesians working for wages in government and private jobs. It is estimated by the Manpower Advisory Council that by 1976 the number of salaried jobs will jump to 18,000—a net increase of 5,500 positions. This does not take into account vacancies in already existing positions created by retirement and replacement. Nevertheless, 7,500 high school graduates and another 500 college graduates will be fed into the labor force between now and 1976 to compete for these jobs. Even allowing for replacement of American personnel, there could be 2,000 or more Micronesians who would not find satisfactory employment in the Trust Territory.

There are, of course, other consequences of the education explosion beside the strain on society to find employment opportunities for the newly educated. Literacy in both the vernacular and English will rise greatly. There will be additional pressure to develop greater variety in everything from types of food to entertainment as the level of sophistication among the population increases. To satisfy these needs, still larger numbers of people will move from their home villages to settle in the towns where there is hope of enjoying a life-style consonant with their education. Others, finding even the towns too confining, will leave the Trust Territory for other parts of the world. An adult population in which 50 percent have completed high school will be significantly different from today's adult population in more ways than can be enumerated here.

**SELF-SUPPORT BY MICRONESIANS OF PROGRAMS AND INSTITUTIONS  
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MICRONESIA: THE IDEAL AND THE  
PRESENT REALITY**

Mission schools, while they are not the only Church institutions in the vicariate, are certainly the most prominent. Practically all the Sisters on the mission and over one-fourth of the Jesuits are engaged full-time in the staffing of the mission's 12 elementary schools and three high schools. Approximately half of the funds disbursed by the Bishop last year went into maintaining these schools. Because mission schools represent our largest investment in manpower and money, and because I am more familiar with education than any other of our apostolates, the remarks in this paper will be concerned mostly with educational institutions. They will not be without applicability to other Church institutions, however.

The primary aim of a good Christian school, it seems to me, is not to teach students "subjects"—not even religion, but to help them acquire a deep sense of personal worth or self-esteem. The psychological progression that is followed by any learner, whether he attends a religious school or not, follows this order: I am good; my neighbor is good; therefore, God is good. If the first step is missed along the way, no amount of sermonizing can possibly supply an interiorization of the second and third steps, as anyone who has worked with real juvenile delinquents well knows. Students may pay lip service to the love of God and neighbor, but it cannot go much deeper than that as long as their self-image is predominantly negative. The extreme example of this is the sociopath, who because he has learned early in life that he amounts to nothing responds in kind through a lifelong display of contempt for his fellowman.

All the religious instruction in the world, then, will amount to nothing unless a person possesses a real sense of his own personal worth. The fact that statements of our educational or apostolic goals often obscure this fundamental step in our preaching and teaching does not change things at all. Unless this aim is realized, nothing else will be accomplished.

There is reason to believe that Micronesian students have special need of learning self-respect and confidence in their abilities, particularly at this time in history. Our students cannot help but compare themselves to the "typical average

American" whom they regard as more knowledgeable, wealthier, more handsome, more resourceful, and better equipped to face the problems of modern life than themselves. "We are junk," they often remark, hoping that we will be able to convince them otherwise. When we rhapsodize on the glories of their past culture and the beauty of their islands, they think we must be kidding. Artfully designed sailing canoes and old handlooms count for nothing in this age of the jet plane and the department store. They want to know whether they can make it in this new world whose rules are set down by The Educational Testing Service and NASA. All too often they receive the answer they expected to hear, "Not quite, kid. You're a good fellow, but you're 35th percentile on the SAT Test."

Micronesian students submit to an eight or twelve-year ordeal during which they study from American textbooks subjects that their teachers feel are important. This in itself would not be so bad if they emerged from the ordeal with the awareness that they had succeeded. At least success would give them some cause for self-esteem. What happens instead, though, is that they gradually come to realize that they have never quite measured up to the standards that have been set for them. Having undergone the painful initiation rites, they soon discover that they are admitted into the western world as second-rate citizens at best. The blame cannot be laid to anything as simple as prejudice or covert hostility on the part of Americans, although this is a frequent rationalization for their failure. The fact is that they are regarded as underachievers and are treated as such, first by their teachers and later by their American supervisors, advisors, and sometimes pastors. As students and employees, they are subjected to the same well-intentioned, yet humiliating forms of condescension. In a thousand different ways we say to our Micronesian pupils, "Nice try, but I suppose this is all we can really expect of you."

Incidentally, it may be that our lack of vocations can be linked to the absence of self-esteem among the students we teach. "We're not good enough to be priests," is the frequent comment of students when the subject of vocations comes up. There may be more honesty and perception in this reply than we think. The stumbling-blocks to the priesthood, I suspect, are far more subtle than simply celibacy, lack of religious motivation, or the instability of family life. Students may be saying to us, "We can't hope to succeed in your ministry any more than we have succeeded in your schools. After all, we're only Micronesians!"

What has been said above is by no means only true of our schools. At his job the average Micronesian stands in the shadow of an American supervisor whose responsibility it is to show his charges a better way of getting work done. New Zealanders build his hospital; Filipinos put up his district legislature building; Okinawans do his fishing for him; and the parish priest plans and constructs his school and church. He is continually being told that he has not matured sufficiently to handle the most important jobs by himself, and when he does try something venturesome he is counseled that he has forgotten several important factors and thus impaired the quality of his work. His language is inadequate to the task of conveying precise information on technical matters; his customs are too hopelessly antiquated to be of much use in the modern life of the town; and his folklore is cute but irrelevant. What can he do? What is he good for?

We should not be shocked if our former students drop their books and pick up rocks, either literal or literary. It should come as no surprise if the boy whom we remember as a docile, well-behaved pupil becomes exasperated trying to prove himself by our elusive standards and begins to attack the whole "system". A fairly reflective graduate soon realizes that he must live in a twilight zone halfway between success and failure. He asks himself why he forever has to meet someone else's norms: why the measure of his success must be his CAT verbal scores, his mastery of English idiom, his ability to cope with four years of math and science.

The rabid rallying of disenchanted students behind slogans supporting Micronesian independence is only a symptom of a dissatisfaction whose source lies much deeper than merely concern for the political status of their islands. Political crusading among Micronesian students may be a futile gesture of protest against an order in which they can never come out on top. Sloganeering is as much an outcry against education and all the other institutions that deny him real achievement as it is against political subordination. Like the Cargo Cults in Melanesia some years ago, it is a desperate attempt to subvert the new order and replace it with another which promises a greater measure of dignity to the members of his society. Unfortunately, today's version of the Cargo Cult, the independence movement, provides no satisfactory answer to the deeper but unarticulated question that plagues Micronesians today—how can they regain their personal pride?

Even if much of this can be written of the people of any developing country, this experience is none the less painful for Micronesians here and now. What we missionaries must ask ourselves is what we can do to help assuage the self-doubt that seems to torment the people with whom we work? Can we provide avenues for achievement so that our people will realize their self-worth, a truth that we proclaim from the pulpit and in the classroom?

I would suggest that we begin by examining Church-sponsored institutions that are already in existence to see whether they may not be adapted to help meet this major need that has been outlined above. To dream up new mission projects, I'm afraid, would be to miss the point. The problem at present is not the kinds of institutions that the Church is sponsoring in Micronesia, but the way they are being run. Redeployment of our mission resources, human and material, in credit unions instead of in schools is no solution to anything if the credit unions will no more belong to the people than our schools.

Whatever institutions the Church supports, we must take all necessary steps for allowing Micronesians to taste the pride of ownership. We can't ask them to work for the "company store" forever, while telling them that their effort is really contributing to their own good. Our primary consideration must be to permit them the sense of achievement that stems from their knowledge that their churches and schools are really theirs. My impression is that most Micronesians feel that their church is for them, but that it is by no means theirs. Unfortunately, there is abundant evidence to bear out their suspicion.

Pride of ownership and the achievement that it brings only come when people have paid for their church or school and when they bear the responsibility for its operation. This axiom is generally found on the first page of any community development leaflets I have seen, and yet we have tended to ignore it time and again in our vicariate work. The pressure to get the job done, to have "quality" schools and the finest weather-proofed chapels proves too great for us most of the time. Consequently, our institutions are usually intrusions upon the community rather than outgrowths of it. However much they may be appreciated by the people who use them, they cannot possibly instill pride of ownership in Micronesians so long as we do the hiring and firing, pick up the bills for repairs and improvement, and make the major decisions that touch upon our schools and churches. While such



institutions have undoubtedly provided important outside assistance to the people, the question may be asked as to whether they actually bolster the self-esteem of the community-at-large.

We have made some progress in this area, to be sure. Most parishes in the vicariate now have some form of parish council functioning; in some the parishioners exercise a great deal of responsibility in important decisions. PATS has a board of trustees that is almost entirely composed of Micronesians. Mindszenty High School has gone further than any other private school, to my knowledge, in the degree to which it is locally controlled and supported. It is only fair to acknowledge that many honest attempts are being made to involve Micronesians in planning and decision-making.

It is the other prerequisite of genuine ownership, I fear, that is being overlooked—people must begin to build for themselves and at their own expense. We still insist on doing things for Micronesians instead of with them. The extent to which this is true can be seen from a cursory look at the mission financial statements for this past year. I have listed below all of the parish schools in the vicariate for which statistics were available. The first figure is the revenue collected from the local community, usually in the form of tuition; the second is the cost of library materials, school supplies and lay teachers' salaries. The second figure is by no means the total operating expense of the school for a year, for it excludes such items as Sisters' salaries, upkeep of school facilities, and major improvements. A comparison of the two figures should reveal the degree to which we depend on outside support for the running of our parish schools in all but one or two cases.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Local Support</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
Koror	\$26,500	\$23,000
Yap	1,600	5,200
Tol	-----	4,900
Toloas	240	5,100
Kolonia	1,900	3,700
Kitti	365	5,000
Jaluit	-----	1,300
Majuro	3,300	4,800

There may have been a time when a good deal of outside financial support was necessary to get our missionary institutions off the ground. It is my belief, however, that that day is rapidly drawing to a close. What Micronesians need now is not so much money as the opportunity to spend their money on things that will bring them satisfaction. They crave authentic proprietorship over their land, their polity, their church, and especially themselves. The insidious danger in the perpetuation of a give-away program, regardless of whether it is the Church or the Government that is the benefactor, is that Micronesians may continue to believe that they can do nothing for themselves, and therefore that they are nothing.

People commonly look to the Government as a refuge in time of need and as the solution to all their problems, fiscal and otherwise. While it is easy for us to see in this simply a manifestation of their lack of responsibility, it could also be a sign that most Micronesians mistrust their own ability to provide for themselves. It would be a terrible misfortune if by our own example we encouraged them to always run elsewhere for help. Nonetheless, when our schools are short of funds our eyes instinctively turn towards Saipan for assistance rather than to the communities our schools serve. So often we are at the head of the breadline, our people lined up behind us, with our hands out. In so acting, are we denying our people the chance to discover that they can make it on their own if they wish?

We have a wonderful opportunity in some of our private schools to lead the way in the indigenization of education so that the mission school will become the property of the people, not of the pastor nor of the U.S. taxpayer. It is true that this ownership will not be acquired without some sacrifice on the part of the community, but then our people will know that at least one institution is truly and completely theirs. If we, in consultation with the people of the community, should decide that it is impossible or undesirable to bear the expense of the school, then let us either close it or turn it over to the government instead of maintaining it as the mission's school. If the people wish to maintain a mission school, they must be so convinced of its value that they are willing to pay for it. Otherwise, we should begin discussing with them other kinds of service that may mean more to them.

Private education in most of the western world has always been something of a luxury, one whose importance people have felt so strongly about that they have

decided to forgo other attractive bargains in order to educate their children in private schools. The splendid parochial school system in the United States has often been cited as a monument to the determination and the strength of beliefs of American Catholics. The danger here in Micronesia is that parochial schools will be a testimony to nothing but the fundraising ability of the pastor or the Bishop. Whether our private schools are supported by the Bishop or by the government, they will still remain a gift to the Micronesian community from above. As a gift, they can only reinforce the self-derogatory attitude of our people who are already too inclined to say, "I can't do it; you'd better take over."

But can Micronesians assume the burden of financing their mission schools? Circumstances, of course, vary from place to place; it may happen that in a few communities they cannot and will not be able to do so for some time to come. And yet, we should be wary of underestimating the capabilities of even those communities that are still strongly dependent upon a subsistence economy. On the whole, a new Micronesia has taken shape within the last decade. Five years ago the national income was six or seven million dollars; today it is 18 million and rising quickly. Over ten percent of the population now works for wages. Last year two-thirds of a million dollars was spent in the Trust Territory on beer and liquor alone, while over a half million dollars more went for tobacco. The fact that there are now 4000 privately owned cars and jeeps in the Trust Territory as compared with 1000 ten years ago may help us gauge the soaring rate at which material prosperity is growing in the islands. Is it unreasonable, then, to think that most of the five to seven hundred thousand dollars needed to support our private schools could come from other than U.S. sources?

The time may come when the vicariate is unable to furnish the resources that it has generously lavished on our church institutions in the past. Even if the mission could provide this same support, it would not be wise to do so. Self-support by Micronesians of their Church is imperative not in the far-distant future, but now. I have neglected many of the arguments commonly heard in favor of self-support because they seemed to me to be a little too pragmatic in tone. In this paper I have strongly advocated self-support primarily because it is an indispensable means for inculcating pride of ownership in the people of Micronesia. Authentic pride in themselves is probably the most crying need that Micronesians have right now. Mission money cannot give them this pride; only a genuine sense of

accomplishment can do that. By providing opportunities for the Micronesian people to discover how much they can do for themselves, we are helping them to build up the self-esteem that is the necessary condition for a love of God and love of fellowman.

## MICRONESIA'S SCHOOL INDUSTRY

The school is Micronesia's largest industry today. It is responsible for the manufacture of trained young people—the most valuable of all commodities. At present it is processing fully one-third of the human resources in Micronesia, although it is unclear whether these products are being turned out for domestic consumption or for export. The educational industry employs almost one out of every three of the 5,000 Micronesians on the government payroll. The school is the largest single source of revenue for the Micronesian people; the combined salaries of education's 2,500 employees exceeds the income from all of the Trust Territory's exports together.

It is surprising that the school is ignored in the heated discussion of the pros and cons of foreign industry that are carried on endlessly today. Yet the controversy seems to always rage around Van Camp and Bumble Bee and Del Monte, while the significance of that louvered cement-block classroom building that dominates every village is forgotten.

But the Micronesian in the village has not forgotten. How could he? After all, the school house is the economic focal point of his community. Take, for example, the elementary school building in Onei, Truk—once featured in the Micronesian Reporter for its imaginative design and low-cost construction from local materials. If it were suddenly closed, Onei would find itself deprived of 60 percent of its total annual income. The school in nearby Patta brings in half of the yearly total revenue there. And much the same could be said for just about any other school in an off-district-center community. Last year Onei earned \$6,000 through the sale of fish and copra, as compared with \$24,000 in teachers' salaries. In village after village the school represents the largest single source of income for the community. The amount of money entering the village through teachers' salaries, which is far greater than income from productive activities, puts the school at the very center of the village's cash economy.

It is naive, then, to think of the village school as just a cultural force—either a civilizing influence or an outpost of cultural imperialism, depending on one's ideology. As long as the argument remains at this level—and it usually does—we will fail to come to grips with the real meaning of the school to most

Micronesians today. For those of us who fancy ourselves liberals to discuss educational alternatives to the white school-house—to talk of 'deschooling Micronesian society'—is hardly realistic. Unlike most countries of which Illich and others write, the school is not a drain on the national economy; in Micronesia it is the chief source of income. And no sane people anywhere in the world is likely to quietly part with its principal source of revenue without a fight.

The fact that the school is a foreign industry hardly matters at all. Its social effects on the community are barely noticed by most people. Micronesian parents beam as they watch their children parade out of the village elementary school into still another school, and perhaps another after that. The smile fades a bit when the parent realizes that his son or daughter won't be coming home to stay at the end of it all. But after sitting in a classroom for 12 or 16 years learning to appreciate all the things that he could never possibly do in his village community, who can blame the young man for not returning home? There are no Friday evening dances in Onei or Patta. Nor are there automobiles, bars or libraries. But there is a nine p.m. curfew! And also a strong feeling that the young should comply with traditional methods of decision-making, no matter how much political science they learned at Mauna Olu College.

Notwithstanding the inevitable tension between the young high school graduate and the rest of the community, some young people have in the past returned to their community—providing there is a job available. But, the evidence is overwhelming that if the proper kinds of wage employment cannot be found there, a graduate will move to another spot where he can find a job. If he fails to find one even in the district center, there he can at least console himself more easily with a movie in the evening or a cold beer.

Up to the present, several graduates have in fact returned to their communities to work for the same industry that so recently processed them—the school. This is no cause of wonder for the typical Micronesian school is admirably designed to cycle its products into this or some similar kind of work, despite half-hearted attempts to inject vocational or trade courses into the curriculum.

But schools can absorb only so many teachers. One wonders how many of those 3,000 high school graduates that are projected for 1976 will be returning to their village. And if they are unable to find work in the district center, will they

simply become hangers-on there or will they leave for greater valleys—Guam, Hawaii, San Francisco (as young American Samoans have already done in great numbers). If such a brain-drain should occur in Micronesia, after the high school enrollment has tripled, then the Trust Territory would have as much to show for its foreign school industry as it has for its foreign fishing industry—plenty of dollars in wages but very few fish for its own consumption.

At present very few people take seriously the possibility of a massive flight of the young into the district center, and from there out of district. This is probably because there have in fact been jobs in the villages for the first few high school graduates who have returned. The myth persists that the government bureaucracy is infinitely expansible and that somehow the hordes of young graduates who will be inundating these islands within two years will be able to find employment just as easily as the first waves of graduates. Hence, the average Micronesian parent continues to eagerly pack his child off to school in the expectation that he will be initiated into the mysteries of the cash economy and become a breadwinner after a certain number of years. In the popular mind—in Micronesia as in other parts of the world—the school is a factory that converts plain human beings into potential wage-earners. (This conception of the school is only being strengthened by the bandying about of such terms as "career education.") Again, therefore, the school has a primarily economic function—enabling people to eventually secure wage employment.

There is no point in reminding people that the school also breeds frustrations when the rather high aspirations of the young go unrealized. That it teaches young people to demand more of their society—from rock bands for their entertainment to padded chairs to go around in the future, and there may be many disappointed young men and women. And that, as Micronesia's fishing industry develops, the early drop-out rather than the high school graduate will be the fortunate one, for he at least will be employable.

There is no point in warning people of these things, because they are far less vivid than the economic considerations which have led people to embrace wholeheartedly the schooling industry. The policy of universal high school education that has been adopted within the last four years simply means that now everyone—not just the bright few—will be able to enjoy the benefits of the wage economy. And everyone shall leave the assembly one day in May with a piece of

paper in his hand, and they shall all find desks waiting for them in some office and plenty of canned food on the shelves, and they will live happily ever after. So ends the myth.

There are, of course, signs of stress even today. Not only the worsening unemployment situation, but the growing cultural distance between the youth and their parents. "Why don't they respect authority anymore and follow our customs?" is a lament one hears again and again. The question comes from the very same parents and legislators who so strongly endorsed the school industry and even voted for its expansion. As a teacher in one of these schools, I can only shrug my shoulders and think, "Surely you must have known!" But this is unfair, for the adults in the village who send their children to school really don't know. The more obvious material benefits of the school industry are well understood, but its culturally disruptive effects on the community—the unrealistic aspirations to which it gives rise, its widening of the culture gap between young and old, and the likelihood of large displacement of the community population—are just beginning to be glimpsed. As with most foreign industries, the immediate visible gains brought by the school obscure the less apparent—and sometimes more far-reaching—difficulties.

It is understandable that most Micronesians should want to retain their chief industry even at the risk of enormous social problems in years to come. After all the social problems might have been upon us anyway! What is more difficult to understand, though, is the naive belief that we can have the schools and eliminate the problems if only we make a few substitutions in the curriculum or replace expatriate teachers with Micronesian teachers in all haste. To entertain the hope, for instance, that insertion of a course on local arts and crafts, traditional navigation, or folklore will change the nature of the school is sheer folly. It will remain basically a school designed to prepare students to enter another school. The basket-weaving and folklore may be of some interest and amusement to students, but it will always be an irrelevant side-dish in a school whose goal is to educate the child to leave his community. After all, the success of the village elementary school is commonly defined in terms of the percentage of its pupils who have been accepted in a secondary school (usually situated out of the community). Likewise, the success of secondary school is measured by the number of its graduates who leave for still more remote parts to attend college.



No courses in Micronesian history or local culture will change this. Nothing short of a radical alteration in the nature and purpose of the school can do so. Perhaps it is not in the interests of Micronesia to do this, and we will not have to deal with the problems as best we can. But at least we will have made a great stride forward when we have dispelled the illusion that the problems created by the foreign school industry can be solved by band-aid measures. The loss of respect for traditional authorities is certainly not mended by simply teaching students the forms of polite behavior that their ancestors observed. One of the reasons for the loss of respect in the first place is that any sixth grader has learned to do things that the elder members of the community cannot do; it is precisely such arcane knowledge that makes the youngsters more valuable in the job market than his parents. The young student knows this all too well. Unless schools are prepared to drop algebra, English, and other "essentials" from the curriculum, the generation gap will continue to grow. And so will the problem of maintaining respect for traditional authority figures in the society.

But far more serious than any generation gap is the personal frustration that is sure to occur when the student is prepared for a job that doesn't exist in a kind of society that doesn't exist. We educators might flippantly tell our students that they must create their own jobs and make their own dreams of society into reality. But out of what? Yankee dollars? The foreign schooling industry in Micronesia is rounded on the American proposition that all men are free; they must all be given their say and take on responsibility for the making of decisions that shape their lives. It would be a tragic irony if the school system here were to teach its lessons well and shape young men and women who are indeed conscious of their right to control their own lives, but who find that it is simply impossible for them to do so—politically, socially, or economically.

What is to be done then? Surely it is not my place, nor that of anyone who is sincerely a "friend of Micronesia" to decide one way or the other. My purpose is only to point out the futility of pretending that if schools are changed just a little bit that the problems will go away. They will not. To heal these problems a major educational overhaul would be required. Many schools might have to be closed; and the purpose of those that remain open thoroughly redefined. The local communities, such as Patta and Onei, might lose much of the income they now

enjoy through the school industry. And after all of this, no one could be quite sure that the educational alternatives that might be tried—such as short term community-training programs mounted and supported by the village itself—would work.

In the meantime, the existing school industry continues to be a highly profitable one when measured in dollars, but a very costly one in terms of its social consequences on the community. The decision that Micronesians must ultimately make with respect to schools will be far more difficult than any decision regarding Del Monte or Continental, for the school is far more important than any of these other industries. Micronesian leaders must no longer expect the present school system to do things which it is powerless to do. I doubt whether an American-sponsored school system, even with the best of intentions, can ever really 'Micronesianize' students, and it should not be expected to do so. Neither can the school in its present form train people to live contentedly in the village on a semi-subsistence economy. Nor can the school—with its free lunch programs and scholarships and the dreams of material prosperity it fosters in the heads of the young—promote self-reliance among the young. If those are the primary goals of Micronesian leaders, then the school will have to be radically changed. This will be a painful decision to make, for the nationalization of the foreign school industry will bring not more economic benefits to Micronesia, but fewer. And yet the decision will have a profound effect on the political future of the Trust Territory.

## REFLECTIONS ON MICRONESIA'S ECONOMY

### Introduction

There are two ways of looking at the main goal of economic development. It can mean:

- 1) a "better life"—i.e., more abundant and efficient goods and services made available to as many people as possible—and this at any price!
- 2) increased capability of the people to provide for themselves what they see as desirable in their development, along with the freedom to make decisions affecting the course of their own development and the power to control this development.

At the present time, I see the first view as that which is implicitly adopted by most agencies—including many of our own mission-sponsored institutions. If we honestly embrace the second view of development in preference to the first, we will have to redirect many of our projects in the Trust Territory and assist the government in doing the same through the force of our words and example.

In this presentation, I will touch on what I believe to be four critical areas of economic development: migration into towns, exports and imports, salaries in the government and private sectors, and employment. Everything that follows presupposes the second view of economic development and should be read in this light. It presumes that economic self-reliance is both realistic and desirable.

### Migration Into Towns

Population trends show a considerable rise in the annual rate of growth in "towns" since 1966—in most cases, well above that between 1963 and 1966, the years in which Micronesia felt the first effects of increased government spending in the T.T. (See Table A).

As population is drawn into the towns, economists and planners often welcome the expanded potential labor force as a source of future productivity. Actually, however, the vast majority of those who obtain wage employment in the towns either are employed by the government—thus further bloating the

government payroll and expanding the costly bureaucracy--for they find jobs in the service industries, as storekeepers, waiters, construction workers, that feed off the consumerism rampant in such localities. Some of those who migrate into towns never find employment and become hangers-on, living off the paychecks of relatives who have steady employment. Often unskilled, they are able to make only a minimal contribution to basic economic development. In the first place, they usually relinquish the role of food-producers that they assumed when they were living in rural areas.

The population of Kolonia Town, for example, grew by 1000 between 1971 and 1972, while the population of Ponape island as a whole increased by only 1,400. This leaves a net gain of 400 persons for all of Ponape island outside of Kolonia (two of the municipalities actually lost population during the past year). But there were slightly over 400 infants born in these areas during the same period—and infants do not produce food! Hence, we might expect that the local food production relative to the rural population actually decreased on Ponape last year.

Furthermore, those who move into towns are an easy prey for the consumption-gone-wild where retail stores, bars, and car dealers proliferate. Not only are they consumers in the private sphere, saving little of what they earn and setting patterns of consumption for their rural cousins that Micronesia can ill-afford at this time, but they make demands for more expensive, "better" community services—roads, hospitals, schools—that absorb an ever greater share of the national resources which might have been used more productively in stimulating basic economic development projects.

It is because of its deleterious effect on baseline economic development in rural areas that some countries, such as China, have found it necessary to take steps to restrict migration into the towns and cities. The Trust Territory Administration, even if it has rejected the Nathan Plan proposal to expressly work towards migration of outer-islanders into concentrated population centers, has in effect espoused policies that encourage the same result. Educational and economic policies have worked hand-in-glove to lead people to where the jobs are—and this can only be the "towns"! As long as the stated goal of economic development remains "to allow as many families in Micronesia as possible to share in

development by providing them with dependable dollar incomes," we may expect the urban drift to continue.

Establishment of sub-district centers with their own post-elementary schools, limited job opportunities, and some of the other trappings of the district-center towns, may have been conceived partially in the hopes that this would forestall the exodus from rural areas. But there is little hope that this will happen. The sub-district centers may in time become towns themselves, in which case we can expect them to become the destination of emigrants from still further outlying areas. If this happens, we can anticipate a greater decline in utilization of land and sea resources. The result would then be yet another step away from self-reliance.

The over-all effect of migration into towns, therefore, is to diminish the productivity from land and sea, while expanding the consumption of money-bought goods and services. In the present order of things, large-scale migration can only create a wider gap between productivity and consumption.

#### Imports vs. Exports

Over-all, the Trust Territory consumption of foreign-bought goods has tripled in the last six years. This shows up in the increase in imported goods from \$8.9 million in 1966 to \$26.3 in 1972. (See Table B). The same rate of increase is reflected in imports of particular commodities: for instance,

- a) Tobacco products: \$0.5 million in 1966 to \$1.4 million in 1972.
- b) Alcohol: \$0.45 million to \$1.7 million.
- c) Canned fish: \$0.4 million to \$1.3 million.

In the same period, the total production of goods and services in the T.T. has undoubtedly increased, even if it is difficult to estimate the increase in dollar terms. What is significant, though, is that this increase in production has occurred in educational, health, and administrative services. One might ask whether this represents a real economic gain at all. Meanwhile, the value of exports has remained about what it was in 1966 and, for that matter, 1961. This is discouraging, because exports are the "barter" that a nation uses in exchange for foreign-made goods that it must import to satisfy the needs of its people. The

government payroll and expanding the costly bureaucracy--or they find jobs in the service industries, as storekeepers, waiters, construction workers, that feed off the consumerism rampant in such localities. Some of those who migrate into towns never find employment and become hangers-on, living off the paychecks of relatives who have steady employment. Often unskilled, they are able to make only a minimal contribution to basic economic development. In the first place, they usually relinquish the role of food-producers that they assumed when they were living in rural areas.

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government salaries which have doubled in the last five years. From an average of \$1,300 in 1967, they have risen to \$2,600 last year. Higher government salaries can, in turn, be expected to exert pressure on the private sector for similar increases. Although the average wage in the private sector has been increasing yearly, Table C shows that it is not able to keep pace with the government average; and it is projected that the gap between them will widen even more in the next few years. (The difference between government and private salaries noted in Table C would be even greater except for the fact that the Marshallese who work on Kwajalein—private employees—are paid according to the minimum U.S. wage standards.)

The issue here is not simply inequality between the salaries of the clerk at Supply Department and the clerk in a retail store. What is at stake is the capacity of a nation to produce enough to provide for the needs of its people. Salaries in the private sector, after all, can't be fixed at the will of a legislative body; they are subject to market conditions and the laws of supply-and-demand. It is unreasonable to expect that a copra-cutter, who averaged 12¢ an hour before the drop in copra prices, or even the commercial farmer who is taught the most efficient methods of agriculture, will ever be able to match the lucrative remuneration of the government employee. Their salaries, after all, depend on how much they can produce and what people will pay for it. As the wage gap widens, employment in productive industries—such as farming and fishing—will become even more undesirable by contrast with government employment.

There exists in Micronesia a strong need, especially among educated Micronesians, to destroy the inequalities that have typified the colonial situation here and to affirm Micronesians' own equality with Americans of similar background before both God and the Finance Officer. A single salary schedule is a token of recognition in this regard. "Equal qualifications, equal work, equal pay!" is a legitimate psychological plea from a people that is struggling for acceptance, even if it does not make very much economic sense in Micronesia today. But the effect of the new pay plan, like other recent pay increases, will only more sharply accentuate class differences within Micronesia, even as it diminishes on those Micronesians who are not employed how "poor" they are by contrast to the salaried consumers of canned, bottled, and packaged goods of all sorts.

Other countries that have had large segments of their population unemployed for wages, like Micronesia, have chosen to maintain low wage rates to encourage extensive use of more labor rather than intensive use of few workers. This has the effect of allowing more people to participate, although on a smaller scale, in the cash economy. The effect is to distribute income more widely.

At the present time, however, Micronesian wage employment is an all-or-none situation. From earning next to nothing (in dollar terms) on the land, a Micronesian government employee goes to a minimum salary of \$1,250 a year. The social problems inherent in this kind of a transition are enormous for the individual. And this is quite apart from the broader social problem created by the widening of the chasm between the "haves" and "have-nots" in Micronesia.

#### Manpower and Employment

Table D shows the percentage of the total potential work force that was actually employed for a salary during 1972. (Total potential work force is composed of all those persons over 15 years of age).

As is evident from the figures, those who have jobs represent only a small percentage of all those who are theoretically employable. This is the case in all districts except in the Marianas. When some people speak of economic development, they suppose that the major goal is to secure salaried jobs for as many of the unemployed as possible. Economic development would mean increasing, in whatever way this could be done, the percentages in the last column of Table D. The goal would, in this case, simply be to get jobs for as many people as possible.

But if self-reliance is accepted as a fundamental national goal, it matters greatly what kind of jobs these are. Some types of employment contribute a good deal to economic development; others hinder it. To raise the percentage of employed persons in, say, Ponape by starting a large retail store could well impede rather than help genuine economic development, even if Ponape were to show a higher rate of employment the following year.

The number of jobs available—and the percentage of population employed—is not an index of authentic economic development in a dependency such as Micronesia. It says nothing of the self-reliance achieved—the ability of the



people to produce what they need. Increase in full-time employment may suggest that there are more dollars in the society—this and little more—although it may not even be a sure measure of this! Surely the presence of more dollars is not an infallible indicator of even economic development, to say nothing of over-all human development.

Jobs are all too often used as the barometer of economic growth in Micronesia. A rapid increase in number of people employed is taken as a sign of progress. This is a strange view indeed when one considers that in the past decade a large jump in employment has almost always been the result of a large U.S. budget increase and the secondary effects of government spending on the private sector. Employment figures jumped by 3000 or 33 percent in 1970, for instance, as the U.S. budget was raised from \$40 million to \$50 million.

Is a society any the better off economically if it spends \$6,000 per child to send him through 12 grades so that he can attain a job, only to have him discover at the end of this struggle that it will cost the society another \$12,000 to finance 4 years of college if he hopes to be able to compete successfully for the job? It is all the worse if, after his college education, the young man finds that he cannot return to Micronesia because of new and greater aspirations that he has picked up along the line. Education can prove to be a very unsound economic investment at times.

Table E shows the prospective plight of an educational investment that is designed to turn out potential employees. Until within the last year or two, the increase in number of salaried jobs always exceeded the number of high school graduates from the T.T. It is clear of late, however, that the private sector will not be able to absorb the growing number of high school graduates seeking employment. Within 3 years, 1500-2000 persons yearly will enter the labor market. Will our tremendous outlay for education be wasted?

It is clear that we must not deny full-time salaried employment a role in economic development. But neither should we be too quick to equate it with development. In the past too much effort may have been spent in trying to provide more jobs for those who lived off the land. Greater attention must now be given the question of how economic development can be fostered without necessarily putting people on the payroll—either government or private. How can productivity among those leading a semi-subsistence life be stimulated while these people continue to live off the land and the sea?

TABLE A  
POPULATION TRENDS

	<u>1963</u>	<u>1966</u>	Avg. annual growth rate <u>1963-1966</u>	<u>1972</u>	Avg. annual growth rate <u>1966-1972</u>
Trust Terr.	84,777	92,373	3.5%	114,645	3.5%
Kolonia	1,273	1,674	10	3,989	23
Koror	4,296	4,975	5	6,032	4
Ebeye	2,388	2,879	7	5,604	15
Majuro	3,940	5,187	9	9,059	12
Moen	3,829	4,380	5	6,580	8

- NOTES:
- 1) All five "towns" showed larger yearly increase in percentage of population than the TT as a whole.
  - 2) The rate of growth of the town population has increased considerably in the last 6 years with the exception of Koror. There is no indication of a tapering off of migration into towns, but evidence of the contrary.
  - 3) Meanwhile, population in rural parts of the TT has held steady or increased slightly - e.g.!

	<u>1966</u>	<u>1972</u>
Kiti (Ponape)	2801	2840
Melekeok (Palau)	358	378
Jaluit (Marshalls)	1127	878
Fefan (Truk)	2194	2463

TABLE B  
IMPORTS - EXPORTS

	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Ratio of Exports to Imports</u>
1961	4,500,000	2,130,000	1 : 2
1962	4,100,000	2,120,000	1 : 2
1963	5,000,000	2,160,000	1 : 2.3
1964	5,700,000	2,600,000	1 : 2.2
1965	7,100,000	3,150,000	1 : 2.3
1966	8,900,000	3,000,000	1 : 3
1967	9,800,000	2,320,000	1 : 4
1968	13,600,000	3,030,000	1 : 4.5
1969	16,000,000	2,800,000	1 : 5.3
1970	20,900,000	4,180,000	1 : 5
1971	26,200,000	3,000,000	1 : 8.7
1972	26,300,000	2,600,000	1 : 10

NOTES:

- 1) In Fiscal Year 1972, Micronesia exported fish valued at \$900,000 while importing \$1,300,000 worth of fish.
- 2) Imports of selected items:

	<u>tobacco</u>	<u>alcohol and beer</u>	<u>canned fish</u>
1966	500,000	450,000	390,000
1968	680,000	600,000	560,000
1970	940,000	1,000,000	950,000
1972	1,400,000	1,700,000	1,300,000

- 3) Export figures do not include revenue from tourism, which is becoming a growing source of income in Micronesia.

TABLE C  
SALARIES AND EMPLOYMENT

	Total	Government	Private	Avg. Govt.	Avg. Priv.
1961	\$ 3,346,000 4,207	\$ 2,509,000 2,762	\$ 837,000 1,445	\$ 900	\$ 580
1964	5,584,000 6,620	4,444,000 4,437	1,140,000 2,183	1,000	520
1967	9,048,000 8,222	6,836,000 5,235	2,212,000 2,987	1,300	740
1970	20,550,000 12,436	14,889,000 7,254	5,551,000 5,182	2,050	1,100
1972	28,912,000 13,654	20,514,000 7,910	8,398,000 5,744	2,600	1,500

NOTES:

- 1) There is a close correlation between the increase in the U.S. budget and the number of government jobs. Can further growth in government employment be projected, unless the budget continues to rise as spectacularly as during the last decade?
- 2) From 1961-1967, the ratio of full private employment to government jobs was 1 : 2. Since 1969, with the development of tourism as a major industry, the ratios close to 3 : 4.
- 3) Despite the increase in salaries in both the government and private sectors, the wage gap between the two sectors continues to grow.

TABLE D  
PERCENTAGE OF WORK FORCE EMPLOYED IN 1972

	Potential work force	Micronesians employed	percent employed
Marianas	5,700	3,450	61%
Marshalls	11,500	2,730	24
Palau	6,400	2,030	32
Ponape	12,100	2,150	18
Truk	17,300	2,170	12
Yap	4,100	1,120	27

TABLE E  
COMPARISON OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES AND SALARIED JOBS

	(single year) High School graduates	(3-year period) High School graduates	Increase in No. of Jobs
1961	109		
1964	135	370	+2,400
1967	511	1000	+1,600
1970	931	2100	+4,200
1973	1200	3000	+1,200
1976	2000	5000	_____

NOTES:

At present there are 2000 expatriates employed in T.T., of whom some 600 work for the government. These are jobs which, of course, would become available for Micronesians with necessary skills.

## A SAD TALE OF LONG AGO:

### HOW MAGIC SIGNS WERE BROUGHT TO A FAR-OFF ISLAND

Many, many years ago a group of brown-skinned people lived on a small island in the middle of a great sea. Their life, it is said, was a happy one. When they weren't defending themselves from attacks by people from the islands nearby or recovering from a terrible storm, they had plenty of time for eating and fishing and talking with each other. The people of this island had everything that they needed. Or, at least, they thought they did!

Then one day a very big ship came to the island. The ship was larger than the biggest canoe ever made on the island, even larger than the men's house in the center of their village. It was the largest thing people had ever seen. "Perhaps we can buy the ship," one of the men suggested. But they soon found out that all the coconuts and taro on the island were not enough to buy the ship. Besides, the strange white-skinned men who came on the ship needed it to get back home. And so the people of the island met one night to decide how they could possibly get the ship. One of them said at the meeting: "If those men who live on the ship will not give it to us, we will take it. Let us surprise them and seize their ship." And all the men at the meeting approved his plan and they determined to attack the strangers that night.

That evening the young men paddled out to the ship in their canoes in the hopes of surprising the strangers for they thought that they would all be asleep. But when they drew close to the ship, one of the strangers saw them and shouted some words to his friends on the ship. Soon many of the strangers were standing along the side of the ship pointing long sticks at the men in the canoes. Suddenly there was a loud noise and a flash of fire from one of the sticks. Then more of the sticks spit out flames and smoke. The men in canoes were frightened by the loud noise, but they were even more terrified as they watched some of the men who sat close to them in the canoe fall screaming out of the canoe. They were greatly puzzled by the strangers' secret power, for the strangers knew how to make men bleed without throwing spears. And so they turned their canoes around and paddled to shore as fast as they could.

On the next morning they watched as the great ship slowly moved away from their island and sailed to the east. They watched it until they could see it no longer.

\* \* \* \* \*

Many years later three little boys were playing on the beach when they saw a huge white sail far off in the distance. They knew what it was as soon as they saw it and ran off to tell the others in the village. Every child in the island knew the story of how the white gods had come in the large boat many years before.

This time there were no plans to capture the strangers' ship, for everyone on the island was afraid of the power of these curious-looking visitors from afar. The people of the island just watched as the strangers came ashore on their island. Some of the women went to bring baskets of food to the strangers. The men brought coconuts for them to drink. Everyone was very frightened of the strangers.

The strangers passed six days on the island. Each day the people brought food to them and showed them where they could find fresh water. Everyone was surprised at how kind the strangers were. Whenever the people of the island brought them food, the strangers gave them pieces of bright red cloth or small pebbles of many beautiful colors. Soon people lost their fear of the strangers. Each morning they would hurry down to the beach with all the food they could gather, for they wanted the presents that the strangers gave out.

On the seventh day the chief of the strangers spoke some odd-sounding words to the chief of the island and gave him many beautiful presents. Then he returned to his ship and within two hours the ship was gone.

\* \* \* \* \*

More years passed and another great ship came to the island, and another and another. The people of the island usually treated their strange visitors with respect for they had not forgotten the stories their grandparents and great-grandparents told of the terrible power of the white men who lived far across the sea. Besides, they liked the wonderful presents that these men brought. There was the bright-colored cloth shaped to fit a person's body and the axes that didn't break when you used them to cut the ironwood tree. There were shiny fishhooks and strong pots for cooking. There was also the brown leaves that people set on fire so that they could suck the smoke into their mouths. Everyone on the island was

cager to get these brown leaves. Whenever a giant ship drew near, everyone on the island would rush down to the beach to get more of these valuable things.

From time to time the people, as they thought of the wonderful presents that filled the strangers' ships, forgot the story of the first large ship. They would try to capture the ship by a surprise attack. But the mighty sticks of the strangers that spit out fire and smoke would make them turn back.

Then one day, one of the strangers remained with the people after his ship left. He brought with him one of the white man's mighty sticks and he explained to everyone the secret of its power to kill. He told them amazing stories of how the people lived on his enormous island. He also explained how his people could talk to one another through the strange signs they marked down. He drew some of these signs in the sand and told everyone what they meant. The people of the island knew that the power of these strangers must be very great indeed.

In time, some of the older men of the island came to the stranger to ask him how they, too, might gain the power to do some of the wonderful things that the white men could do. The stranger told them that they must first learn the meaning of the signs he could draw. The men went home very happy that night, for they wished to learn the secrets of the light skinned people who lived far away. On the next day the stranger began to teach them how to draw the signs. And each day for many months afterwards the people studied the mysterious signs and their meaning.

\* \* \* \* \*

The stranger died some years later, but many others came to live for a while on the island. Some of them married girls from the island and bought large pieces of land in exchange for the goods they gave out. As time went on, the strangers built a very big house for their chief. Their chief, they said, was to have power over all the other chiefs of the people. He had been sent from far away to protect them and to teach them the secrets of the white man's ways. But the people didn't mind very much. They only wanted to learn the meaning of the strangers' magic signs. Then they would be able to do the same wonderful things the strangers could do.

Sometimes the strangers would tell people about the spirits and gods they honored. None of the people really understood these curious stories, but they believed what the strangers said anyway. For the strangers' gods must be very strong if they gave them the power to interpret these magic signs.



The people of the island were very happy when the white chief announced that he would build many new meeting houses. He said that he wanted all the young boys of the island could all gather together to learn the magic signs. And still more white men came to explain the meaning of these things to the island people.

Many things on the island were now different. The island looked more and more like the pictures of the great island far across the sea from which the strangers had come. People did not sit under the mango tree much anymore and tell stories about the old heroes and how to catch land crabs on full-moon nights. They were afraid that the strangers would think they were foolish, for they noticed that the strangers themselves never did these things. All the people wanted to be as much like the strangers as possible because they admired them very much. When the white men tied a cloth strip around their necks, the native men of the island did the same thing. When the white men sang funny-sounding songs, the people of the island sang the same songs. Soon it was very hard to tell who was a stranger and who was not.

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In time many young people from the island learned how to understand the mysterious signs. Now, everyone thought, we will be able to do the same wonderful things that the strangers can do. But they were disappointed to find out that they could still not do these things. They still did not know how to make huge ships or even the simple meeting houses where they learned how to interpret the signs. They could not yet speak with the authority of the white chief in front of the entire assembly. And they still were not able to get enough of the bright cloth or the complicated tools that the white men had brought. "We cannot do all the things that we expected to do," many of them complained. "What good are the strangers' signs?"

The older people who did not learn the meaning of the signs were disappointed, too. As they watched the young people each day, they wondered if they would forget the old ways. They wondered if they would forget the stories of the great battles long ago and of how their ancestors had first come to the island. For only a few very old people remembered what happened many years ago when the strangers first came to their island. But most of all they wondered if such things were very important at all. The young people were too busy learning the

magic signs to listen to them tell of these things. Yet, their hearts were divided, for they still wanted their sons to learn the power of the strangers' signs.

One day the white chief called a meeting of all the people. When the chief heard that they were troubled, he told them not to be worried. He told them that he would build more meeting houses—bigger than the old ones—and keep the young people there for a longer time. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea. "If our young people have more time to learn the meaning of your signs, they will surely be able to do all the things the white men can do," the people said.

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But this did not happen. And the people of the island became more bitter each day. Perhaps those strange signs that the white men use are not really magic, they thought. And they dreamed of the old days, almost forgotten now, before the foreigners came to their island. There was no white chief then, they knew. There were no white teachers speaking in their strange language. People did not have many beautiful things then, but they did not want as much. And so the young men became angry and began to throw rocks at the white men in the evenings.

One day their parents finally went to the white chief and told him their children would not learn the strange signs any longer. The signs, they complained, were not really magic after all. Let the strangers teach these signs to their own children. They themselves would teach better things. Then they walked to the largest meeting house to decide what they would teach their children instead. After some hours, they all agreed that they should teach what people of their island used to learn long before the coming of the white man with his magic signs. Then someone asked what they used to learn. There was a long silence.

No one remembered!

IN SEARCH OF A HOME:  
COLONIAL EDUCATION IN MICRONESIA

The young Micronesian today is often heard to complain that "The System" is trying to create Micro-Americans: that is, white minds wrapped in brown skins. It is especially the education he has received that is the target of his criticism. Reflecting on his experience, he sees his foreign education as the basic cause of most of the changes he himself has undergone. In his eyes, an alien and alienating educational system is the most insidious, and most successful, instrument for colonization yet devised by a foreign administration.

It would be dishonest of educators not to acknowledge the patent truth of his complaint. Education in Micronesia, like in any political dependency throughout the world, is in fact designed to do precisely what the young man charges. Not ordinarily, as this essay will try to show, through the deliberate political machinations of the foreign power, but because of the very nature of education in colonial countries. Macaulay's famous definition of the purpose of education in India—"to produce men who are Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect"—is a valid enough statement of its purpose in Micronesia or in any other dependency.

Education has always had a 'civilizing' function throughout history. Indeed, its principal purpose has been to make of the uninitiated—the "stranger" or "foreigner" to the society (and this includes the young native-born as well)—a "citizen" of the social group, well-schooled in and responsive to its traditions and values. It is the process whereby the barbarian is slowly fashioned into the civis Romanus and the second generation Pole is remade to the image and likeness of his townsmen in mid-western U.S.A., who themselves were so reshaped years before him.

The Visigoth who had just crossed the Roman frontier and proceeded down the Claudian way towards the Tiber would be assimilated into the mainstream of imperial Roman society, as he mastered the Latin tongue, cultivated a taste for Falerian wines, learned to converse on the most recent political events of the day, and possibly learned to read Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus. As he gained a sense of ease in his new milieu, he would, of course, implicitly accept the values that gave meaning to all of the above. The Visigoth, was, in short, being 'civilized' or

transformed into a citizen of the Roman civitas, just as surely as a citizenship class of immigrants preparing for their American naturalization. Education, whether formal or informal, has as its final goal the induction of the neophyte into the social group.

The same "civilizing" function is served in tribal societies by an informal educational process that often culminates in an initiation rite. Through a combination of dogma, symbol and ritual experiences, the initiate is instructed in some of the sacred lore that is most prized by the tribe as he undergoes a vital experience which confirms his full membership in the fraternity. It is significant that, as one of the very few formal educational experiences in a tribal society, the initiation rite is directly related to the acquisition of full citizenship.

The tribal initiation rites in the U.S., as sociologists have pointed out, is the public school system. Public schools arose in the last century out of the need to assimilate hordes of foreign immigrants into the mainstream of American life. The Americanization of the children of the foreign-born through their instruction in English language, the tenets of the democratic system, American history, and, of course, the rules of proper conduct was the express purpose of the early public grammar schools. At the entrance to many an old New England school built at the turn of the century is carved in large letters: "Dedicated to Citizenship." The fundamental civilizing mission of the school has remained unchanged to the present day, as many contemporary writers have pointed out. Lately, however, the schools have taken upon themselves the task of integrating into middle class American life "native strangers"—blacks, Indians, and members of other minority groups, who are the "dwellers of urban and rural appalachias". The socializing function of the school is the same, only its clientele has changed along with the rationale for performing its function. In our day education is regarded as the insurance of equal opportunity, the guarantee of a fair share in the American dream. Even if this rationale is now being decried as unrealistic by a growing segment of the population, public education is still necessary to initiate these outsiders into the folkways and traditions of middle-class America.

Schools, as institutions whose aims are expressly educational, are meant to serve the interests of the social group by which they are run. American Schools are intended to Americanize; Japanese schools must Japanize. It is clearly in the best

interests of the society not to allow large pockets of its people to remain unacculturated, and the school is regarded as one of the most powerful means of effecting the socialization of "aliens".

But there are rewards, to be sure, for the individual who submits to this socialization process. As the "foreigner"—whether actually foreign-born or not—is assimilated into the society, he develops a self-identity: a sense of who he is, why he is important, and how he relates to others in the society. Ideally he acquires a sense of security and well-being that identify himself as a bona fide member of his social group. Schools, then, offer not just information and skill-training, but they hold out the promise of instilling in the marginal member of society a sense of belonging. Contrary to the impression often given by proponents of "career-education," the school's chief aim is not to assist students in finding a job, but finding a home.

The school in modern societies and their colonial dependencies is becoming the increasingly pervasive path by which persons gain access to full-fledged adult membership in these societies, as many educational sociologists have shown. If this is so, then we would do well to focus principally on the school in the remainder of this essay. Education, of course, is always understood to be something more complex than merely formal educational institutions, for socialization admittedly can and does take place on the playground and in the home as well as in the classroom. But the importance of the school as an instrument of socialization would appear to be so great that we shall concentrate on it alone hereafter. When the term "education" is used, therefore, it must be understood to mean formal educational apparatus, principally schools.

Given the fact that the business of the school is to "civilize" those who are still marginal citizens, it is not surprising that many young Micronesians should charge schools in the Trust Territory with Americanizing the young. What is surprising, though, is the look of pained astonishment that so often accompanies their complaint. One can only infer from this that the awareness that a foreign-fashioned educational system might produce a foreign product comes as a rude shock to many Micronesians. But do hens' eggs, when hatched, ever bring forth anything other than chickens?

The people of Micronesia generally expect that education will accomplish for Micronesia what it had done for countries such as France, Belgium, Japan and the

United States. If it has "civilized" those other nations, why can't it do the same for their islands? If education can bestow other blessings—the imparting of skills and information, the sharpening of critical faculties, the deepening of one's self-awareness—why can't it also prepare the uninitiated for full participation in a distinctively Micronesian society? After all, it "civilized" young Americans for participation in their own society with some degree of success! Why can't it make full-fledged Micronesian citizens of our youth?

## RECENT THEORIES OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Granted that education has a certain value of its own, we must still ask ourselves what role we shall assign it in national development. Educational systems are expensive and must be weighed against other possible development projects in drawing up a list of priorities for developing countries. It is necessary, therefore, to establish clearly the relationship between education and development.

During the past two decades there have been at least four major shifts in the way this relationship has been perceived by development theorists and economists. An understanding of these shifts is crucial if anyone wishes to comprehend the changes in development policy throughout the Third World in the last twenty years and, more specifically, the educational decisions that were made in the Trust Territory. The theories that we will review here have had, and are still having, a profound effect on the course of educational planning here in Micronesia.

It should be noted that for most of the period with which we are concerned here, development was generally identified with economic development. This is borne out by the fact that the most common indices of "development" during the 1960s and before were: 1) growth of Gross National Product, 2) technological advance and rate of industrialization, 3) improved living standards. Present-day thinking, however, is less disposed to regard development as only an abbreviated form of economic development. The meaning of development has been broadened to embrace more than merely economic growth, as will be seen. While this may be an enrichment of a term, the task of defining a changing relationship is none the easier when the meaning of one of the terms of the relationship is itself shifting.

### 1. Disregard of Education

In the post-War years, education was generally neglected as a factor in the economic development of what later came to be called the Third World countries. While education was always regarded as humanizing and desirable for all people, it was seen as something of a luxury for those countries struggling to produce enough to feed their populations. The real imperative for these countries was an increase in productivity, and this meant modernization of productive methods—factories,

utilization of resources, and so forth. The principal means of achieving this was the formation of sufficient capital in the country to permit industrialization and development of the infra-structure. Accumulation of savings from within the country or adequate inflow of foreign aid from abroad were the prerequisites for economic development. Several studies (the most popular of which was Rostow's The Stages of Economic Growth) purported to show the close correlation between capital formation and economic growth in the industrialized nations of the West. This was assumed to hold equally true for non-industrialized, more traditional countries elsewhere.

## 2. "Investment in Man"

During the early 1960s a startling reversal of development theory took place. More intensive studies of economic growth revealed that only a part of it could be explained by the amount of capital investment. Other factors seemed to be at least as important in development. One correlation that loomed large in the studies by economists at this time was that between the level of education and economic growth. Some found a close relationship between elementary education and GNP; other maintained that higher education was the decisive factor; still others argued that general literacy was the important element. Assuming that the level of education bore a causal relationship to economic growth, economists tended to see "investment in human resources" as the essential condition for economic development. This meant, in practice, that foreign aid to developing countries was to be allocated primarily for hospitals and schools rather than for factories.

This was the age in which the AESCP school building program was begun in the Trust Territory. It was within this theoretical context that the Solomon Report announced a "revised policy [ that ] places the schools, more than any other public institution and agency, in the vanguard of a deliberate program of cultural change.

The justification for this reversal of development theory went thus: No economic development can take place in a society until the people embrace values favorable to modernization and progress and until they are trained in the basic skills needed in a transitional society. The "crust of custom" needed to be broken



before change could occur. Traditional attitudes which discouraged development had to be properly shaken, and there was no better way to do this than to whet the material appetites of the people. This would lead them in time to turn to Western patterns of production and use of resources.

For other theorists, the primary place of education in development was more a matter of recognizing the value of capital investment in human beings. Gunnar Myrdal, whose Asian Drama reflects in great part the thinking of this period, quotes a representative statement: "Countries are underdeveloped because most of their people are underdeveloped, having had no opportunity of expanding their potential capital in the service of society."

The thinking on economic development had undergone this shift: the cause of economic growth was seen as the "capacity to create wealth rather than the creation of wealth itself." Thus, every graduate of a school in a developing country was regarded as a valuable resource capable of making a significant contribution to economic development. In time, the investment in his education would be returned to the country many times over.

### 3. Rejection of the Panacea

By the late 1960s it had become clear that investment in education and health did not in itself guarantee development any more than capital formation did. Education, which had once been neglected in development, had thereafter been given the dominant place in aid programs to developing countries. Neither approach proved a spectacular success. Critics soon warned of taking education out of the context of the multiple and complex forces at work in a society and assigning it too great an importance in development. They cautioned that something more than insecticides, tractors and education were needed for increasing agricultural productivity. Other sorts of institutional reforms—for example, land reform programs—were recognized as a necessary ingredient of development. If education was a prerequisite for economic growth, it was by no means the only one and perhaps not even the most important.

Critics of the "Investment in Man" theory of development pointed out that education could hinder rather than promote economic growth. A case study of Kerala, one of the states of India, showed how educational expansion could lead to

political instability, social unrest, and retardation of economic growth in certain circumstances. The older idea governing educational acceleration in developing countries—"There can never be too much of a good thing."—was now under fire from many quarters. In its place came the idea of "controlled education" for developing countries. Educational expansion must take place within the limits imposed by capital formation in the country. It must not outpace the ability of the economy to absorb its products.

This led to another question being raised. If education could actually set back economic development, when allowed to run wild, might not it also retard social development in certain instances? A balance was required between the educational thrust and the development of other institutions in the Third World. Otherwise, education might well be counterproductive in terms of over-all development. Education, therefore, was no longer seen as an unqualified good.

#### 4. Education As Barrier to Development

By the beginning of this decade a small but growing number of social critics were heard to proclaim that formal education was not a mixed blessing at all for Third World countries; it was a real obstacle to development. For Ivan Illich, Paulo Freire and others who were at the vanguard of this movement, "development" had acquired a new definition. The measure of development was no longer an increased productivity and more dollars. National and individual wealth was now seen as secondary to a sense of power—the ability to make real choices and shape one's own future. A certain level of national affluence is the condition for achieving this power, provided it does not lead to domination by the wealthy world powers.

Just as development means freedom from national impotence, it also implies liberation from powerlessness for all social groups within the country. The elimination of social inequality takes on special prominence in this concept of development. And here is where formal education, as embodied in the Western school, comes under severe attack. By sorting people out into categories of its own making (PhDs, ABs, high school graduates, dropouts), it leads to class stratification and actually promotes social inequality. Formal education systems, the critics charge, produce a sense of dependence and helplessness among those whom they purport to help. People learn to mistrust their own power to engage in meaningful learning outside of a school.

The Western school, Illich maintains, is as much the product of an industrialized society—and therefore just as inappropriate to many developing countries—as the skyscraper and the fast express train. His quarrel is not with education as such, but with the costly types of formal education that devour a large chunk of the national budget for the benefit of an elite representing only a tiny fraction of the national population. Others contend that the supposed economic gains from education are largely illusory. The consumption of the educated eventually outstrips their productivity, education being not the least expensive of the commodities they learn to consume. The result is a society outdoing itself to keep up with educational demands.

In the last analysis, the system of formal education transplanted in developing countries from foreign shores is self-defeating as a means of achieving development.

### CONCLUSION

It would be hard to conceive of a greater fluctuation in theories than that which has taken place within the past twenty years. Education, which was at first ignored as a force in development, then became the magic key to attaining economic growth. Not long afterwards it was demystified, although still accorded an important place in national development. Now, as the disenchantment with the results of development during the 1960s grows, education (or at least the formal education with which we are most familiar) is, in the eyes of some, a real obstacle to a more broadly defined development.

One of the purposes of studying history is to assist us in relativizing the dogmas of a particular age so that we can discern what is of lasting value. This is particularly important for us as we attempt to focus on the meaning of education in overall development. Our schools in Micronesia were built on the limited theoretical foundations of the early 1960s, and they are being attacked from other limited premises that we work from today. It is impossible for educators to ignore the critical question of the relationship between education and overall development, and unwise for us to see only a little bit of the question. Perhaps this survey will help us gain a larger perspective.

## WHO SHALL OWN THE SCHOOLS?

"Get an education, but don't change; go out into the larger world, but don't become a part of it." One can well imagine that this must be the sentiment of many a Micronesian parent as he sends his son or daughter off to school. He looks forward to the day when his child will return, well-versed in the necessary survival skills for a life of gainful wage employment, to take up his rightful position in the community. Apart from some incidental changes, he expects back basically the same young man or woman that he sent.

But in office buildings somewhere sit the men who financed and designed the network of village and district-center schools in Micronesia. They know well how fatuous the parent's pious hope for his child really is. As educational planners, they know that change is not incidental to the educational system in a developing country; it is its raison d'etre. Education has always been one of the most effective means whereby the "crust of custom" can be broken so that new attitudes, more favorable to development, might be engendered in a society. Schools, for instance, are supposed to teach children to save money and time, to work hard, to want better sanitation and housing, and to eat a balanced diet, among other things. For those committed to development, education is a powerful vehicle of social change.

It would be a grave mistake to impute malicious motives to those who have designed and those of us who have administered the educational system. If the school is intended to subvert certain traditional aspects of the society, it is only because these are seen as retarding economic and social development. The school is the incubator of new attitudes and values, among them a taste for material progress and the blessings it confers. If it breeds dissatisfaction among the young with the present style of life, the hope is that the products of the schools will be spurred on by their loftier expectations to foment change in their own society. The newly educated are to become a fifth column working from within their culture to revolutionize it according to the norms they have internalized through their education. Why else do so many development-minded planners insist that education be made a top priority in emerging nations?

The average parent, of course, knows nothing of these revolutionary designs as he sends his child off to school. Otherwise, he might never do so! Although he

anticipates some peripheral effects of education in his son or daughter, the father assumes that his children's education will be fundamentally compatible with the life-goals of his people. While he is aware that the school is a foreign-born institution, he sees it as transmitting knowledge and skills that can be assimilated into the traditional patterns of life in his culture. After completion of his schooling, his child, enriched with the valuable information that the wealthy nations of the world have to offer, will probably take a job and carry on life as usual. Very rarely does he suspect the deep conflict between value systems that the years of schooling will precipitate for his child.

Here, then, lies the problem. The parent has bargained for a cow and been given a horse. While he expects the school to turn out for him a skilled but docile wage-earner, it actually produces something quite different. He looks to the school as somehow preservative of society's traditional values and goals, but it is in fact designed to supplant many of these with others more suitable for modernization.

To be sure, both the parent and the educational planner see education as a means of liberation. For the parent, school is a way of freeing his child from the material hardships of a life tied to the land. Through schooling and the job that is sure to follow, the parent knows that the young can make for themselves better lives than he himself has had. Material comforts, improved status, and security are as much what the parent desires for his child here in Micronesia as anywhere else. Hence the popular groundswell for more and better education.

The educational planner, however, looks beyond this to its more far-reaching effects. He understands that as the school loosens the bonds of the conventionalism that governs the life of a rural people, it magnifies the tension between the individual and society. This is calculated; for unless the school system can produce persons who are capable of challenging the present social order and its givens, real development will never take place. The student must resist the prevailing spirit of acceptance of the status quo—"This is just the way things are and they can't be changed!"—or else the school has failed in one of its major goals. Yet it is precisely here that one of the major points of misunderstanding between the parent and the educator occurs. The former seems to think that young people will return from school prepared to spearhead technological changes that will improve the material standard of living without shaking the social order. His children may build

better houses, but they will not alter the rules of the household. The educator knows better, though. He anticipates the question that the young educated man is sure to ask: "If we can build tilt-up cement houses to replace our thatched huts, why can't we also replace traditional patterns of behavior? Why should I kiss my grandfather's hand, or wait until the age of forty to speak my thoughts?" In fact, it is only when he hears the young ask questions such as these that the educator knows that the process has had its desired effect and true liberation has begun.

It is difficult to quarrel with the goals of an educational system that proposes to release the creative energies of the young so that they can better their society. Freedom from ignorance, fear, and blind submission to the natural order is unquestionably a worthy end. All of this, of course, implies individual and societal change that tends to catalyze still further changes. But the point is not whether education should change people; good education cannot help doing so. The question is rather who shall assume control over the direction and pace of change. Does this responsibility belong to the educational planner alone who foresees some of the consequences of schooling that are presently hidden from the adult in the village? Or, does it belong to the unsophisticated parent as well?

If the parent shares in this responsibility, then he must no longer be permitted to send his children off to school with the vain hope that they will somehow be shielded from the power of the school to transform individuals. He must be plainly made aware of what changes are likely to be worked in his children, and through them his society, via the school. The expectations that the average Micronesian adult has of school are simply unreasonable. If he is not disabused of them immediately, he shall remain a helpless witness to, rather than a participant in, the forces of change in his society. Education will then continue to operate as a fifth column, covertly eroding the social values and institutions that the villager naively regards as secure.

Within the last two or three years educators in the Trust Territory have shown praiseworthy concern to involve members of the community in future educational planning. The man in the village (if he can be reached for comment) has been asked to participate in drawing up goals for use in the community's schools. As often as not, he has begged that educational administrators themselves settle these questions, excusing himself with a plea of ignorance as to how this

mysterious and alien system operates. The educator will not be put off, however, and returns with the request: "At least tell us what subjects you think should be taught in your school." The villager then usually proceeds to set down a list of courses that better suits the educational needs of American society fifty years ago than of present-day Micronesia—world history, chemistry, spelling, etc. This, of course, is easy to understand. The man in the village wants to preserve to the last detail the kind of school that has made it possible for Americans to buy the watches and refrigerators they possess. In those rare cases where he does suggest a curriculum better adapted to the needs of Micronesian society today, and amends the list to include local cultural studies, handicraft-carving and the like, educators count this as a major victory: the ordinary citizen has had his say and has altered the school to fit the local community.

In fact, though, he has not. He has completely failed to understand how the school really brings about change. He still shares the erroneous, though almost universally held belief that the school's greatest impact upon the young is through what it purports to teach, that is, its curriculum. He still thinks of the school as simply a place where people are trained in certain skills. This means that if some defect is found in the product (the child) at the end of the schooling process, the problem can be solved by merely substituting new skills until one finds the right combination. If the graduate is not able to participate in the productive activities of his community at the end of his education, we have only to replace a few of the academic subjects with fishing and agriculture in order to eliminate this difficulty.

This simplistic notion does not take account of the fact that most of the important things a child learns at school are not the result of what he studies, but the overall effect of the schooling process on him. In other words, a student is affected not so much by what he learns at school as how he learns. It is this process, with its latent value assumptions and goals, that is commonly called the "hidden curriculum" of the school. Throughout his eight, twelve or sixteen years of schooling, these assumptions and goals are continually working on the student to produce a series of changes in his values and world-view that go far beyond the subject matter of his courses.

Let me illustrate! From practically his first day in school, the student learns that he is a member of a favored group entitled to privileges from which

non-students are excluded. He is fed through the free-lunch program, exempted from family duties that he would otherwise be expected to perform, and in some places provided with free transportation to and from school. In short, his attendance at school allows him to look to others for support. If a water tank springs a leak or a classroom shutter needs repair, he waits for Public Works to fix it. Later on, especially in high school, he will turn towards his parents (often unemployed) for the cash he needs to outfit himself in the flared jeans, boots, and tank-top shirt that is de rigueur on many campuses.

Decked out in this dress and his eyes opened now to the wonders of the Sears catalogue, our young student becomes a bona fide member of the Cult of C.O.D. His first lesson in school is how many of this world's goods he cannot do without; the second is how to fill out a mailhouse order blank. As he continues with his education, his tastes will become more sophisticated—and more expensive. Educated young people like himself cannot be expected to walk; he must have a scooter or a car. Young people today cannot make do with a twenty-dollar guitar; he must have an amplifier and the other electrical apparatus to really enjoy himself. He has learned to become a consumer, often beyond his and his family's means.

It does not take long for him to appreciate the fact that society is divided into two groups: those who have their diplomas and those who do not. The former can look forward to a good salary, (he believes), and the social status and life-style that are concomitant with this. As for the latter, few are employed at all; and if they do work for a salary, it is as manual laborers. This distinction is driven home to him several times a day as he listens to vacancy announcements over the radio that stipulate one seeking the position must possess a college degree (or more rarely, a high school diploma). High on the list of his own aspirations, of course, is a good-paying job after he finishes school so that he can maintain himself in the style that has grown so attractive to him throughout his high school and college years.

His parents may grieve at times over the lack of respect that he shows to older members of his family and community. But his air of superiority only stems from the new norms for status that he has gained during his years of education: "Blessed are the educated, for they shall inherit the earth." As adults have



relinquished their right to educate him and entrusted him instead to the care of the school, he has come to feel that the only type of education worthy of the name is that conducted in the school building. What he or others have learned from other sources is of dubious value at best.

Parents will also complain bitterly of the independent spirit that their children manifest after their education. They will wrongly blame this on the permissiveness of school authorities and teachers, as if stricter enforcement of school regulations would take care of everything. What they do not appreciate, however, is that the very purpose of the school is to create an independent thinker, a questioning individual, a critical spirit. Whenever a teacher encourages his students to express themselves in the classroom or in an assignment, he is working towards this end. Student governments, laboratory experiments, group discussions, whatever their shortcomings in practice, all have this as their ultimate goal. Even in classes that still adhere to the most authoritarian procedures, pressures are being brought to bear on teachers to adopt new methods that are more consonant with this goal. Student-oriented inquiry-type approaches are being introduced everywhere in the Trust Territory. There is simply a dynamism in education that moves in the direction of individual freedom. Such is the nature of the education beast.

Moreover, the majority of high school students are physically removed from their own community and transferred to other surroundings when they become boarding students. They are withdrawn from the supervision of those who would normally have exercised authority over them and deposited in a social 'no-man's-land.' There they are subject to the enormous peer influence of the hundreds of other boys and girls who board at the school, with a mere handful of adult overseers to maintain control. To expect socialization of the young to occur normally amid these circumstances, as it would have in the village, is to demand the impossible. For the school has become its own social system with its own rules.

With such forces operating on the aspirations, values, and self-concept of the young, it is not surprising that the parent's admonition to his child to "get an education, but don't change" goes unheeded. The educational institution at work on his children is far too powerful to permit the young to be untouched by the norms it inculcates.

Its revolutionary effects on society may very well be quite beneficial in the long run, but at present they are not at all understood by the Micronesian parent. No one has bothered to tell him that his counsel to his children is futile and why this is so. In the meantime, he can be heard blaming the lax standards of discipline in schools, poor social studies courses, provocative movies, Western dancing, long hair and miniskirts, and just about everything else for the transformation in the mores and value systems of the younger generation.

It is not my purpose here to turn around and make the school the scapegoat for all the less desirable symptoms of cultural change. We have too many scapegoats already. What we must do is communicate to the Micronesian parent a realistic picture of just what the school, as it presently exists in Micronesia, can and cannot be expected to do. If it functions as it should, for instance, it cannot produce young men and women who uncritically accept the traditional social institutions and authority systems. Neither will it turn out persons whose life goals are just what they would have been if they remained in the village to work on the land. Parents must somehow be made aware of what the educational planner already knows. It is only when they understand the schooling process and its effects, its social costs and gains, that the Micronesian community can decide whether and how the present educational system should be altered.

To do anything less is to deny Micronesian parents their rightful responsibility in helping to direct the course of change in their society. Schools would then remain monuments to modernization instead of becoming instruments of authentic development. While modernization connotes change, regardless of whether it is imposed from without or not, development always implies participation by the community in the processes of change. If the dream of the educational planners who laid the foundations for the school system in Micronesia—a dream of genuine development—is ever to be realized, the information gap between them and the people who send their children to these schools must be closed. Only then will the Micronesian adult cease to be a passive spectator to an educational process that he does not understand and therefore cannot control.

## MICRONESIA'S EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT: FROLICKING IN THE BACKYARD?

Recent political education efforts in Micronesia are floating on a sea of radio tapes, filmstrips, posters and classroom lessons. These are largely the creation of the Education for Self-Government Program mounted by the Trust Territory Administration a year and a half ago. For all its output of materials, the ESG Program labors under serious handicaps. The controversial circumstances surrounding the birth of ESG gave rise to the lurking suspicion that, despite its name, the real object of ESG just might be something less than self-government after all. Many people continued to wonder whether the contents of the program were being "sanitized" by mightier powers than those residing on Saipan.

The ESG task forces on the territory-wide and district levels have lived under this cloud from the very beginning. To make matters worse, it has become fashionable to hold them responsible for any and all failures in the area of political education. Whenever an outer-islander complains to his congressman that he does not know what the status alternatives are all about, ESG takes it on the chin. ESG has become everybody's scapegoat today because it is assumed that it is the major instrument of political education in the Trust Territory. Actually ESG has very little to do with political education and even less to do with authentic education for self-government, as I will try to show. It is, therefore, unfair to blame ESG members, who are performing as well as they can in trying circumstances, for the supposedly meager amount of political education that is taking place today.

The failure of ESG to live up to its name is not due to faulty execution, but the limitations built into the program from the outset. One does not tie a child to a clothesline in the backyard and then complain that he has never explored the other side of the street. Yet ESG is very much the child at the end of the clothesline, confined to the backyard by a solicitous mother who doesn't want her baby to stray into the dangerous road. Education for self-government (or anything else) can't be done without the freedom to explore, notwithstanding the risks. And this freedom ESG does not have!

Despite impressions to the contrary, there apparently is something on which Washington, Capitol Hill on Saipan and the districts do agree, after all: the need to keep political education "clean". That is to say, innocuous!

Definition of political terms and presentation of import-export charts have their place in political education, but they are only the beginning. Once the factual information is in circulation, then the real political education begins. Then the wrestling with issues, the swapping of opinions, and the sometimes heated discussions start to take place among Micronesians. Or it may be, on the other hand, that the facts fall on deaf ears and nothing happens at all. At any rate, what takes place or doesn't take place after the radio program ends with the words "You have heard a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of free association" is of vital importance. But it is at this critical point that ESG's involvement ends.

No one expects ESG or any other political education program to reach into the community and make things happen. It could, however, raise real questions, present divergent opinions, and provoke deep soul-searching among the Micronesian people on their goals for the future. But to do so, it would have to sacrifice its cool objectivity for a bit of passion.

One might wish that ESG would venture into the gutsy issues, the value conflicts, and the clash of aspirations that are at the very eye of Micronesia's political storm these days. But it is unreasonable to expect this, I suppose. The clothesline is far too short to allow ESG to get into such hazardous areas. The overriding concern of practically everyone is for "safe" political education. We do not want to unduly influence anyone, nor do we want to stir up controversy! We simply wish to present facts and encourage polite discussion, but in the most balanced way possible. In the meantime, the man in the village has flicked off his radio with a yawn. What does all this have to do with what is really bothering him today?

There appears to be conspiracy afoot to keep political education as vacuous as possible. The Administration, arguing that it cannot take sides on important political issues, is content to distribute booklets and news-sheets that couch proper platitudes in five-syllable words. The platitudes are promptly translated into the vernacular and transmitted, via the local broadcasting station, to anyone who will listen. In its concern to hold a middle course and keep all parties happy, the government may be succeeding in pleasing none. And, even more important, in educating none!

The Administration's concern to maintain a neutral stance on important political issues is laudable, but this concern can easily become obsessive. If it

prevents government-sponsored programs from laying bare the issues for fear of leaning slightly to one side or the other, then the concern is a real obstruction to political education. When competent and dedicated Micronesian civil servants prefer to do nothing at all in the area of political education rather than lay themselves open to the charge of steering people down one political alley, the concern for objectivity is overdone.

The fear of one-sided political education may have reached the proportions of a real phobia in Micronesia today. If a private group should intervene to rip open the platitudes and examine the issues, it is often held suspect of the worst of all crimes—partisanship. Who knows but that the group may be trying to influence the people! This phobia probably accounts for the widespread feeling that political education is somehow illegitimate if it is not duly authorized by the Administration. It would not be pushing the point much further if the government actually were to license political education just as it does businesses. That way we can all remain in the backyard together while the action is taking place on the other side of the street.

Whether anything can be done to improve the calibre of political education in the Trust Territory depends on the willingness of the Administration to untie the baby from the clothesline and let it wander out of the backyard. This bold move, of course, might take it into any number of "unsafe" areas. But the overall effect, in my opinion, would be to make the efforts of ESG and local programs much more meaningful and effective. There are at least four important dimensions of good political education for self-government that are currently being neglected. It is with the desire to help remedy this situation that I make the following recommendations.

First of all, education for self-government must embrace as its final goal full self-government. Only if it takes this long view will ESG live up to the ambitious name it has adopted for itself. Now it is no secret that full self-government must ultimately lead down one of two paths: either virtual independence or full incorporation into another sovereign state. The Micronesian people's choice is rather simple over the long run—independence (or something akin to it) or American statehood. Anything short of either one of these statuses appears to be a rather unstable formula, as the recent political ferment in Guam

clearly indicates. Free Association itself—that much discussed and little understood option—would almost certainly gravitate in time towards one or the other of these.

The best interests of the Micronesian people are not served if we bury this fact beneath a mountain of politico-legal distinctions. The basic issue that they must have always before their eyes is which of these two paths they wish to follow and what they hope to find at the end of the road. There can be no hedging in our presentation of this issue, if we wish to deal openly and honestly with Micronesia's ultimate goals.

This is not to say that the three current political status options should not be presented and discussed. But if ESG or any other program is not always mindful of the fact that there are two simple realities at the end of the road, it will not accomplish its avowed purpose of preparing people for self-government in its fullest sense. Instead, it will only strangle them with a mouthful of jargon, while perpetuating the fantasy that a choice between these forms of self-government may not be necessary after all.

ESG cannot direct people's attention to the fork at the end of the road as long as independence remains a dirty word in government circles. My impression is that Micronesian employees are afraid to discuss independence as a serious political goal out of fear that this would virtually be an act of treason towards the present Administration. It is hard to avoid the impression that the word "independence" has found a secure place next to the other obscenities usually written on toilet walls. It may be that most Micronesians would not wish to seriously entertain the thought of independence as a future goal for the Trust Territory, but they should at least feel free enough to discuss the issue plainly and openly without resort to furtive whispers and quick glances to see who's watching. It is one thing to openly dismiss independence as a utopian dream that cannot possibly be achieved by Micronesia, and quite another to avoid thrashing out the question for fear of real or imaginary repercussions.

Both independence and full absorption into the US, then, should receive the frank treatment in political education programs that they deserve. Delaying candid discussion of this long-range option until such time as the immediate status questions are resolved might well be to deny the Micronesian people any chance to

make their most important political choice of all, for by that time they may have slipped blindly onto an inevitable course towards one or the other.

My second suggestion regarding political education is that it be controversial. I do not mean by this that government-sponsored programs should advocate one particular status over the others (not that this is a very real danger, given the controls under which ESG operates). Nor do I mean that good political education should incite citizens to hurl rocks or mean epithets at one another. These are forms of violence, always deplorable and non-productive, not signs of constructive controversy.

If political education does what it is meant to do—that is, lay bare the vital issues that underlie political decisions—it is bound to lead to differences of opinion among the population. The formation of partisan groups with strongly held positions on the issues of the day is the most eloquent testimony to the success of political education efforts in any free nation. Conversely, the absence of such groups can be an indication that a political education crusade has not generated the awareness that it should have, perhaps because it has failed to delve into the critical issues that most deeply affect people.

Consensus that is purchased at the price of ignoring these issues is bound to be hollow indeed, as Micronesian leaders are learning these days. The temptation to sweep potentially divisive issues under the rug so as to avoid controversy only leads to more troublesome conflicts in the future. I am not arguing that controversy needs to be handled in the blunt American manner rather than through other subtler means; I am simply stating that it needs to be encouraged and resolved, whatever the means used.

If Micronesians intend to make their own the democratic forms that have been thrust upon them in the last thirty years, then they should be aware that the genius of American democratic institutions lies in their ability, not just to tolerate controversy, but to provoke it and to turn it into a powerful educational tool. Democratic institutions seems singularly designed to encourage the population to raise strong voices for and against any public issue. There is a confidence, based on 200 years of experience, that when the shouting has subsided and people are the wiser for what they have heard, real consensus is possible.

Political education in America has never really been the province of the government. Most instances of heightened political awareness, in America as in Micronesia today, have been achieved in the course of public debate following an act of government. The resignation of Richard Nixon was perhaps the most striking example of successful political education within recent U.S. history. Likewise, the controversy surrounding the return of public land or the flurry caused by the Marshallese delegation's demand for equal revenue-sharing may be the greatest forces for political education in Micronesia today. If so, this fact should be recognized by the Administration.

It should be obvious that partisan groups are not in competition with government-sponsored programs such as ESG. In fact, they have a vital role to play in fostering the open exchange of views necessary for the education of the public on controversial issues. In their zeal for impartiality, Americans serving in the Trust Territory are sometimes quick to forget the long-tradition of pamphleteering that extends back to pre-Revolutionary War days in their own country. America's own political self-education and subsequent choice of status was not accomplished by bland fact sheets and impartial public talks, but amidst fiery political harangues and inflammatory handbills that were issued from the cellars of the revolutionaries. There was nothing antiseptic about the literature to which the early colonists were treated. What would they have thought of the controversy-free radio talks and the soporific publications that form the bulk of political education material today?

If critical issues today are too often embalmed in cold and dispassionate prose, ESG should not be made to bear all the blame. Radio stations in some districts have refused to play tapes advocating a particular stand on these issues, even though the radio is our twentieth century equivalent of Tom Paine's printing press. Local officials have sometimes discouraged student political movements on the grounds that they are subversive. While such things were presumably done in the interest of keeping political education in the TT as "objective" as possible, these and similar examples reveal a thorough misunderstanding of the nature of political education. It would be rather ironic if Americans, who profess such a strong faith in the good sense of the "common folk", or those Micronesians who think the same way should feel obliged to protect the "common folk" of Micronesia from being misled by the rhetoric of advocacy groups. If the people are to rule, then one must give them credit for some good sense after all.



One of the most successful political education efforts I have heard was a series of radio programs prepared for the Trukese people by the "Anti-Independence Coalition" and the "Independence Advocates" here. A speech in favor of Free Association was answered the following week by one advocating Independence. This lively exchange of views produced strong interest among people who would not otherwise have bothered to listen to political education broadcasts. When someone argued on one of the programs that political independence would mean fewer 40-HP outboard engines, fewer Datsuns, and fewer gold teeth, people understood. They were also quick to grasp the significance of the counter-argument: That there are very few gifts without strings attached and that Micronesians may find themselves paying for the lavish subsidy they now receive with their culture and their land. Micronesians listened and learned because these were flesh-and-blood issues.

My third observation is that any worthwhile education for self-government must deliberately promote, in whatever way it can, a true spirit of nationalism among people.

The mere mention of the word "nationalism" often seems to cause a good bit of embarrassment in polite government circles. One reason for this is undoubtedly the political overtones that the word carries with it: "We are determined to do our own thing even if it means severing all political ties with the U.S." Another is the fear of excesses that have often been associated with extreme nationalism elsewhere in the world: attacks on embassy buildings, political riots, and violent manifestations of bitter hatred for all foreigners. But nationalism need not mean either radical isolationism or a hate campaign against outsiders, and I clearly do not intend to use the word in this sense.

Nationalism might be better understood to mean a compelling spirit of national identity among a people. It is what happens to individuals in a state as they are discovering that they are really a people. A healthy nationalism carries with it robust feelings of self-confidence and pride—"We can be ourselves in spite of everything!"

Although often rooted in a shared language and cultures, a sense of national identity can be forged for people from various cultural and linguistic groups, as the national experience of the Philippines, Indonesia or America testifies. A sense of common purpose based on national goals is indispensable in fashioning a common

identity for a multi-cultural society. Shared past experiences—such as three-quarters of a century of colonial rule—and common aspirations for the future are often the materials from which a new national identity is created.

Too often in Micronesia today, talk turns to unity when it should instead center on nationalism. If a national identity, with the common goals and single sense of purpose that it implies, is really the basis of unity among a people, then the proper question for Micronesians who desire the unification of these islands to ask is: "What can we do to create a national identity?" People do not unite unless there is some reason to do so. Do Micronesians today possess a sense of common purpose, a shared vision of the future? If they do not but desire one, then one of the principal objectives of a political education should be to help build up, in any way possible, a true spirit of national identity.

Even if the districts should reject pan-Micronesian unity and choose to follow separate paths, the problem of national identity would remain. The people of the Marshalls or of the Marianas would still need "national" goals and an assertion of their self-identity, although the task is much simpler within a single cultural group. A healthy spirit of nationalism, it seems to me, is indispensable for any people on the threshold of self-government.

Some would disagree with this. They argue that in a world which is growing more and more interdependent every day, it is internationalism—not nationalism—that needs to be encouraged. They are only partly right, I think. They fail to see that nationalism may be every bit as essential a stage in a people's growth towards internationalism as the teenager's struggle to express his independence is towards a balanced interpersonalism later on. Neither individuals nor nations grow up all at once. If they are ever to be able to achieve a balanced relationship with others, they must struggle through their own identity crises first. Those who propose to eliminate the troublesome stage of nationalism should ponder whether a people can ever be contributors to the world community before they have found out how to be themselves.

Any program that professes to prepare people for self-government, then, must promote genuine nationalism. Not apologetically, but boldly and purposefully! The message must come through loud and clear: "We are Micronesians! We're different and we're proud of it!" If this message is mistaken by Americans or

anybody else as empty bravado or spiteful posturing, that is regrettable. But fear of being misunderstood by others cannot be allowed to check the efforts of Micronesians to find and express their nascent sense of identity. Otherwise, the future may bring more hostile outbursts of nationalism than any that might occur today. They will be born of the frustration and anger that is felt by tomorrow's generation when they reflect on their recent past: "We were searching for ourselves, and all you gave us was bulldozers and buildings!" Such will be their legitimate complaint against the government that was supposed to help them achieve national maturity.

My final observation on authentic education for self-government is that it be experiential, not just conceptual. A spirited discussion of the issues and adequate information, while important, are not enough to prepare people to take into their hands their own government. They must learn how to actually govern themselves. This Micronesians will learn not through manuals or directives, but by doing it, first in smaller ways and then in larger.

Micronesian leaders have been quick to learn the administrative skills necessary for self-government. A glance at the roster of department heads and other top-level officials reveals that Micronesians now occupy most of the key positions in the Trust Territory government, as the Administration never tires of telling us. But self-administration is not at all the same thing as self-government!

People who are learning self-government need, first of all, to develop the confidence that they can truly handle their own affairs. For Micronesians this means the actual experience of analyzing problems and finding the means to solve these problems on both day-to-day and long-range basis. This is true whether we are talking about the Congress of Micronesia or the tiniest village council. Any political entity must be able to identify its problems and summon the resources at its disposal to solve the problem. Only then does it have real power. Only then can it be said to exercise any degree of self-government.

At the present time there are any number of communities in Micronesia that have shown themselves capable of identifying their needs. They must have a basketball court—or a power source, or a new high school, or a bilingual program, or a convention hall! If self-government means only the ability to pinpoint the need and draw up a petition for aid to be submitted to someone else, then Micronesia is

well on its way to self-government. But if it means developing a confidence in one's own resources to answer the need, then Micronesia is moving further away from self-government.

Self-government, in the view presented here, implies the ability to cope with one's own problems. It is rooted in the ability to make decisions and have them stick. It is founded on the "can do" type of spirit that seems so noticeably absent in many quarters of Micronesia today. What we encounter so often these days is a very different kind of attitude: "We can do—if HEW or Interior lets us!" This is hardly the kind of thinking that forms a strong foundation for self-government. But how could it be otherwise when there is such widespread concern for developing everything, from dispensaries to disposal systems, except self-reliant communities?

Millions of dollars may be spent for political education, but if Micronesians do not begin to experience the type of satisfaction that comes from caring for themselves, the most important lesson of all will be lost and the money wasted. A single classroom constructed by a village probably would do more to educate people for self-government than all of the eloquence from the floor of the congressional chambers for the past ten years.

Perhaps there is little that the ESG Program itself can do to remedy this situation, since the causes of the problem lie far beyond the perimeters within which ESG operates. The same may be true with respect to some of the other points made in this article. That is why I stated earlier that the Program has little to do with real education for self-government. If government-sponsored programs are to remain confined to the backyard, then others must assume the responsibility for venturing into these vital areas. On no account, though, can Micronesia sit back comfortably and assume that the real job of educating its people for self-government is being done. It has yet to begin.

**THE MICRONESIAN DILEMMA:  
HOW TO SUPPORT EXPENSIVE HABITS AND STILL RUN THE HOUSEHOLD**

The 120,000 citizens of the Trust Territory of the Pacific are sprinkled throughout several island chains that range for 3,000 miles from east to west. They speak nine distinct languages besides the smattering of Spanish, German, and Japanese that some picked up under earlier colonial administrations. The strong regionalism in the Trust Territory that is the product of geographical and cultural forces has not yet been neutralized by the daily jet service that links the major islands in the six administrative districts nor by the Territory-wide Congress of Micronesia that has met yearly since 1965.

Recent years, in fact, have seen this regionalism grow into strong political separatist movements in at least half of the six districts. In a referendum held in June 1975, 78 percent of the people of the Marianas—the district in which the present capital of the Trust Territory is located—voted to enter into a commonwealth relationship with the U.S. that will give them American citizenship and their own constitution, while severing their political ties with the rest of the Trust Territory. It is no secret that the over-riding motive for this decision was the promise of affluence that the U.S.'s attractive \$150 million economic package held out to the district's 12,000 residents.

One cannot avoid the impression that the remaining five districts are bound together by slender political threads, even though delegates from these districts did work out a new constitution in a convention that ended just last November. Palau and the Marshalls have both taken the stance that "our own local needs come first" and that any attempt to forge a political unity that does not recognize the primacy of these needs should count them out. Local leadership in the Marshalls executed a partially successful boycott of the election for convention delegates when their request for equal revenue-sharing between the districts and the central government went unheeded by the Congress of Micronesia. The Marshalls, with its 5,000 taxable Americans employed on the missile range of Kwajalein, has the most lucrative tax-base in the Trust Territory and the Marshallese were determined to keep a good slice of this revenue for local development. They will almost certainly want to maintain a permanent affiliation of some sort with the U.S. to guarantee

continued military operations on Kwajalein, their largest single source of income by far.

Palau, a district that is already counting the dollars that will flow into its coffers when the proposed U.S. Marine base is established there, delivered an ultimatum to the other districts at the constitutional convention. Either they were to accept the major features of a constitution that had been worked out in advance by the Palauan people or else it would go its own way, leaving the less well-off districts to their own political fate. The final draft of the constitution showed some compromises, but in the most important issues Palau seems to have gotten what it wanted. The future government of Micronesia will probably take the form of a loose federation in which the powers of the central government are severely limited. Districts will acquire eminent domain over their land, control most of the tax money, and the right to abandon the whole federation if they can get a better deal elsewhere.

These recent political developments in the Trust Territory have only served to highlight a long-standing problem that goes far deeper than regional loyalties. Micronesia has not, in all its years under colonial administration, built up a viable economic base to support itself as a self-governing nation. With a total land mass of only 600 square miles and little in the way of natural resources, perhaps it is far-fetched to think that it might have ever done so. Some people feel, however, that it might have succeeded if too much money had not been given too soon by an indulgent Uncle Sam. Whether or not Micronesia has been spoiled, it is clear that some of the districts are looking to close political ties with the U.S. as the means of supporting themselves in the future. Permanent dependence on the U.S. seems to be a common presumption in much of Micronesia even if people are reluctant to admit, even to themselves, that they will forever remain wards of a super-power.

If development is gauged by the number of automobiles on the road, the amount of canned goods sold, or the cash in people's pocket, then Micronesia has surely made enormous strides towards development in the past fifteen years. In 1960 one would see an occasional Honda scooter on an island; now the roads are crowded with Datsuns, and lately Fords. Ebeye, an island of barely one-tenth of a square mile, boasts about 150 automobiles today. Air-conditioned supermarkets have blossomed everywhere and the rest of the life-style is changing to match. The

average salary of the government employee was over \$3,000 last year, well above the average of any other island group in the Pacific except for Hawaii and Guam (both American possessions). But there is a good deal of truth in the remark made by a Jesuit priest not so long ago: "The real poverty in Micronesia is its wealth."

This new-found affluence can be traced back to the early 1960's when the U.S. Administration adopted a new policy towards Micronesia. The period of "benign neglect" that had characterized its relationship with these islands since the end of World War II was halted. The flow of dollars began as the U.S. stepped up its yearly subsidy from \$7 million in 1962 to \$70 million last year. The lion's share of the budget went into educational and health services, construction of public buildings and airfields, and recently into water, power and sewerage facilities for the major islands. One of the most notable effects of expansion of the infrastructure was the multiplication of government jobs within a burgeoning bureaucracy. From 2.5 million in 1961 the total wages paid to government-employed Micronesians has swelled to about \$25 million today. Meanwhile, little was done to stimulate local productivity. The result is that the Trust Territory's total export value last year was \$2.5 million—about the same as it had been in 1961—while the value of imports jumped from \$4.5 million to \$30 million in the same period of time. In less than fifteen years Micronesia has moved from a subsistence economy to a parasitic one that draws on a large U.S. subsidy to sustain its. The beer that flows freely on weekends and the frozen chicken sold in those supermarkets are the tell-tale signs of an artificial prosperity that is supported by an expensive government bureaucracy.

Wages in the government sector are hopelessly out of line with earnings in the private sector. While an elementary school principal draws a monthly paycheck for \$500, the copra-cutter may sell three or four bags of copra at \$5 per bag and the small fisherman might net \$60 a month from his catch. A few years ago the average government salary was a full eight times as much as the average earnings of a copra producer. Under these circumstances, it is extremely difficult to interest capable persons in commercial fishing, agriculture, and other productive activities that would most benefit the economic development of Micronesia. Government employment with its high wages is infinitely more attractive than

small-scale fishing or farming with its high risks and low returns. Foreign industries have balked more than once at the high cost of labor in the Trust Territory in comparison with most other Asian countries. Even the Trust Territory government has lately had to contract foreign labor from Korea, Okinawa and the Philippines to cut down on its own construction costs. In the meantime, the islands are preparing for the tourism boom that holds the last real hope for a viable economy.

Even if the monetary rewards in commercial fishing and agriculture were larger, there is another reason why most young men show contempt for these means of livelihood—their education. An occupational preference study of high school students in the Trust Territory three years ago reveals that any job associated with village subsistence life—such as farming, fishing, handicraft work, etc.—ranked close to the bottom of the list. White collar jobs are regarded as universally more desirable by high school graduates, even those who have had considerable vocational training; and most feel that "overalls occupations" are beneath their dignity. This hints at another serious concern in Micronesia now—the uprooting effect that schools have on young people in the village. It is likely that relatively few of the 1,500 boys and girls who will graduate from high school this year will return to their village to live and work. They will be where the jobs are; and if they can't find employment, the boys will drive taxis around the main towns. After all, it is the towns where young people find a "slice of the action," even if there are no jobs available. Jobs are in short supply now in most districts, and still the number of high school graduates increases each year. Where will the additional jobs come from, if not from U.S. federally funded programs for the unemployed?

Despite everything, one still hears loud rumblings about political independence for the Trust Territory, "if not immediately, then in the years ahead". The fact that the life-style of an ever greater number of Micronesians seems to be out of joint with the economic realities here is usually ignored by decision-makers. Yet one thoughtful Micronesian put the matter very succinctly when he said, "We are indulging a champagne taste on a beer-drinker's budget." The tragedy is that the political aspirations for full self-government are often genuine, however much districts are busily elbowing one another for a place at the mouth of the pipe that spews dollars from Washington. "If we can only have more money over the next several years," the argument goes, "we can develop an infra-structure to support a viable economy in the future."



In the meantime, however, the standard of living continues to escalate upward, putting self-reliance ever further beyond the reach of Micronesia's future government. Spiralling wages and the costly building program that is going on now strengthens the Territory's dependence on the flow of dollars from the U.S. Micronesians now face a difficult choice: money or independence. Frequently a villager, when asked for his opinion on the political status question, will express a strong preference for continued affiliation with the U.S. because he looks to America to support the schools, hospitals, and ship service between islands. Young Micronesians who have recently returned from college often are militantly pro-independence, but their protests tend to become muted as they settle down to enjoy the comforts that a good government salary can provide. The sympathetic outsider might wish that Micronesia could be spared this dilemma it faces—that it could retain its present standard of living and also enjoy the dignity and pride that come from full independence. But deep inside he knows that these are not the terms on which world powers bargain with lesser countries. And even if they were, would such apparently favorable conditions reduce Micronesia to the status of a "beggar nation" and nullify the sense of national pride that is to be gained from independence?

In view of the lopsided development that has taken place in the Trust Territory, one wonders whether the islands might better be called a colony in the making rather than a developing country.

## MICRONESIA'S HANGING SPREE

Thomas, a 19 year old high school dropout, bounded down the path away from his house, his face flushed with anger and shame. He had just scuffled with his older brother in a quarrel that arose over some silly little matter. In the heat of his anger at his brother, he had hurled a metal rod that accidentally struck a passing girl on the head. She had fallen to the ground crying and his parents, who had been watching the entire incident, had just severely scolded him for his stupidity. This was too much: first the beating by his brother and then the reproaches from his parents. His family watched him run off. When he did not return after an hour or two they sent someone to look for him, but he was nowhere to be found. It was shortly after sunrise the next morning when they discovered his lifeless body suspended from the branch of a breadfruit tree near an uncle's house. Thomas had hanged himself during the night.

Thomas was only one of the 23 Micronesians, most of them young like himself, who are known to have taken their own lives during the year between the summers of 1975 and 1976.\* Suicide, which has been a growing problem in the Trust Territory for some years, has reached epidemic proportions within the last year and a half. Today it is the number one cause of death among Micronesians between the ages of 15 and 30, surpassing auto accidents, gastro-intestinal diseases, and heart disease as a killer.

Suicide has also become an ordinary topic of conversation among the young who more than ever before seem to be able to discuss it openly and dispassionately as an option in trying circumstances. It may even be the basis for a cult. Now and then one sees on the back of a T-shirt a picture of a noose with an appropriate slogan scrawled below, where formerly one would have seen only the usual

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\*There may well have been more, perhaps as many as 30. In the absence of reliable official statistics on suicides, however, students and staff at Xavier compiled a list of all individuals known to them as having taken their own lives during the previous year. This list was then checked with other informants outside the school, particularly from Truk, and corrected where necessary. Nick Benjamin, a student researcher, then set out to gather further information on the victims and on the circumstances surrounding each death. The result is the basic data used in this paper.

protestation of adolescent love. Unfortunately, suicide appears to be an accepted fact of life in Micronesia.

Not that suicide is a newcomer to the islands! The traditional folklore has its tales of sweethearts, promised by obdurate parents to others in marriage, leaping hand in hand from spectacular heights; of old men, broken in health and spirit, paddling away in canoes never to be seen again; of shamed young men jumping from coconut trees before the eyes of their families. One might suppose, however, that such incidents were rather infrequent. There is also a touch of the heroic element, at least to our eyes today, in many of these tales. As the stories are passed down to us, they usually portray men and women who were driven to the extreme measure by a sense of real desperation that we can understand, even if not endorse.

We have only to look at a few typical suicides during the past year to sense the contrast. There is the 16-year old boy who, when refused the dollar that he had begged from his father, ominously replied that his father would soon be spending a hundred dollars or more—on his funeral—and then hanged himself. A boy of barely 13 was found dead after arguing with a sister who had taken his flashlight without his consent. Another teenager took his own life when his mother continued to ignore his complaints that there was no food prepared for him after he had returned from a drinking bout with his friends. Clearly this is not the stuff out of which grand tragedy is usually made, either in folklore or in real life. And yet each of these incidents ended in the self-destruction of a young man. Reasons seemingly every bit as trifling as these have accounted for the deaths of many others during recent years, as the information we have gathered shows.

A glance at this information reveals some striking patterns in suicides that have taken place in the past year. The vast majority of the victims, 18 out of 23, were young people between the ages of 16 and 26. Two others were in their early teens, and the remaining three in their 30s or 40s. Figures on previous years as well bear out the fact that suicide is manifestly a youth problem, affecting the same age group that shows the highest rate of arrests and the greatest incidence of serious drinking problems.

Suicide is largely a phenomenon that occurs among young males. Last year all but two of the victims were men or boys, and in previous years nearly all

victims have been males. Recent records, however, have begun to show a startling number of unsuccessful attempts on their own lives made by females. That relatively few of these attempts actually end in death might be explained by the fact that, while men ordinarily hang themselves, women usually imbibe Clorox, kerosene or some other toxic substance. They are often found and treated in time to save them. But even allowing for the surprising number of female attempts on their lives in recent years, suicide remains preponderantly a male phenomenon in the Trust Territory today.

With over half of the 23 suicides occurring in Truk, this district has acquired the unenviable title of the suicide capital of Micronesia, a distinction that was for years held by the Marshalls. On the island of Dublon alone, with a population of 2,400, there were five suicides last year, all occurring within a four-month period. Although only two of these suicides were known to be directly related to one another, the suspicion naturally arises that there was more than mere chance at work here. One wonders, for instance, whether the ten-year old boy who hanged himself towards the end of this four-month period would have done so if he had not had recent models to emulate. No such question need be asked in the case of the talented composer of local songs who travelled from his home across the lagoon to visit the burial place of his best friend. His friend, a youth in his mid-twenties, had taken his own life about a month earlier after he was scolded by his family for smashing windows while drunk. At the end of his three-day stay with the family of his dead friend, the young composer sneaked out by evening and hanged himself over the grave of his former companion.

The Marshalls may have been beaten out by Truk last year in the suicide race, but authorities there have for some years recognized suicide as a major concern in that district. A report from Health Services Department lists 22 suicide cases between the years 1967 and 1973, and in all probability there are others that have gone unreported. The pattern for these earlier suicides is a familiar one. With the exception of two persons, all the victims were living on either Ebeye or Majuro when they took their own lives. All were males, all but three fell in the 16-26 age bracket, and most were intoxicated at the time that they decided to take their own lives. Moreover, the vast majority had just had a falling out with a spouse, close relative or friend prior to their death. The only novelty in the data

for this period is the rather large number of women who are reported to have made unsuccessful attempts on their own lives during this period: six on Ebeye alone.

Over the past few years, the Marshalls seems to be averaging four or five suicides annually, an increase over the three per year that the district averaged during the years 1967-73. Ponape has had a comparable number during the years 1973-1976, with an average of four suicides annually. Unlike the case of the Marshalls, however, the incidence of suicide on Ponape has only recently reached critical proportions. Otherwise, the pattern of suicides in Ponape closely resembles that of the Marshalls and Truk in age and sex distribution of victims and the circumstances of death.

When compared with the eastern districts, the suicide figures for the western part of Micronesia seem to be modest. Palau, Yap and the Marianas each had only a single victim during the year under study. Our data shows only six suicides on Yap since 1973, and one of these was a Japanese tourist who was thought to have performed a ritual self-immolation near the bones of his fallen countrymen from the last war. Our information from Palau reveals four victims over the past two years. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from such scant data, and it is anyone's guess whether we shall see the same dramatic increase of suicide in these districts as elsewhere in Micronesia.

Overall, it is safe to say that suicide, especially "juvenile" suicide among the 16-26 age group, has grown into a problem of alarming proportions within recent years. The suicide rate in the Trust Territory for the past year, according to the index commonly used for comparative purposes, was 20 per 100,000 people. That of Guam during the turbulent 30-year period towards the end of the last century (1861-1891), according to information gleaned from the records of the Spanish Padre Ibanez del Carmen, was on the average 10 per 100,000. Over the past 20 years, the suicide rate in the United States has jumped from 5 to 10, but it is currently still only half that of the Trust Territory. If the suicide rate is any real measure of the health of a society, then Micronesia is clearly ailing.

In the United States, interestingly enough, the suicide rate has in past years increased with the age of the population group. Thus, Americans over 50 years old had a suicide rate that is about double that of young people under 25 years of age. Does this reflect the fact that until recently it has been the old, not the young, who have found themselves most alienated? It should be noted, however, that since

1960 the suicide rate among college-age Americans has increased to a high 10 per 100,000, and social scientists in the U.S. are sounding the alarm. Nevertheless, the rate among the same group (16-26) in Micronesia during the past year would have been a whopping 70 per 100,000—an astonishingly high figure by standards anywhere in the world. The evidence, then, seems to plainly show that it is the youth who are the most alienated segment of society in Micronesia today—at least if one accepts the supposition that suicide figures can be a valid indicator of social instability.

Why are so many young people in Micronesia killing themselves today? First we might answer this negatively by saying: not for the reasons that we might expect would compel persons to take this fatal step. None of the suicide victims in recent years was suffering extreme physical pain; and very few, as far as we know, either had a history of mental disorder or seemed to bear long and unupportable burdens of grief or anxiety. A rare exception was a young man, said to be mentally unstable, who announced to his relatives after the death of his father that before long he would be lying alongside him and made good his promise when after a drinking bout one evening shortly afterwards he put a rifle to his head. There are almost none of the classic cases of frustrated love in which a boy or girl who longs to marry a certain individual is prevented from doing so by his parents. There are no cases in which a person's academic or occupational failure was the immediate cause of suicide, as would be common in a country like Japan. Those signs of hopelessness and despair that one might expect to find in suicide victims are conspicuously absent. Even by the strange logic of self-destruction, it is difficult to explain most of the suicides in the Trust Territory today.

Virtually all the suicides—with a few clear exceptions—were precipitated by an argument or misunderstanding between the victim and someone very close to him: in some cases his wife or girlfriend, occasionally his friends or drinking companions, but more often members of his own family. Sometimes suspicions of his spouse's infidelity seem to have been the immediate cause of suicide, but more commonly it was something as apparently trivial as a quarrel over a flashlight, the refusal by a parent or relative to give money or food upon request, ridicule by friends over a misdeed, or a fight with a relative or a neighbor. The case of Thomas cited at the beginning of this paper is typical of most of the suicides that occur in the Trust Territory today. The usual sequence of events is easily

identified. There is first the quarrel or the scuffle with friends or family; the emotions of anger, shame and perhaps self-pity that are triggered by the incident; the drinking that sometimes, but not always, either precedes or follows the quarrel; and the actual suicide, ordinarily by strangulation from hanging.

It is understandable that Micronesians, for whom rewarding and permanent personal bonds with family and community are so important, might react so strongly to a serious threat of rupture in these bonds as to take their own lives. But does a parent's refusal to lend his son the car for the evening actually represent such a threat in the eyes of his son? Can a flare-up with an older brother and a chiding by parents really be interpreted by a teenage boy to mean that those closest to him no longer love him, and that he might just as well destroy himself as endure a meaningless existence? Or is the absence of a wife or lover for a short period of time the conclusive proof that she has been unfaithful to the young man or no longer cares for him? One certainly gets the impression that the desperate final act that the suicide victim takes is out of all proportion to the trifling incident that so often precipitates it.

Some would say that the decisive factor in the whole tragic situation is the effect of alcohol on the victim's emotions and judgment. They point to the fact that a large majority of those who take their own lives are intoxicated when they do so. Unquestionably alcohol helps to aggravate the unpleasant confrontation between the victim and his friends or family in cases where he is drunk before the trouble occurs. Just as alcohol releases pent-up feelings in the drinker, it also stifles inhibitions and fears that might normally prevent a person from taking the final step and so fortifies his resolve to carry out his decision. But it does not explain what has prompted him to commit suicide in the first place. Although the influence of alcohol may well magnify his emotional reaction, it does not account for the presence of the deep-seated feelings that are eventually vented in the suicide itself and often in the unpleasant incident that triggers it. Anyone who is at all familiar with the pattern of drinking in the Trust Territory knows that drinking is just as often the result of a violent inner emotional upheaval as it is the cause of the display of such an upheaval. In other words, it is just as frequently true that a person drinks because he is angry as it is that a person is angry because he is drunk. Moreover, the fact remains that not all suicide victims are drunk when they take their own lives. Alcohol, then, seems to be only a contributing factor rather than the cause of suicides.

Suicide cannot be adequately explained either by the drinking or by the family quarrel that occasions it. We can only assume that forces much deeper, and therefore **less easily recognized**, must be at play in the victim's life if he is driven to such a desperate deed. Human beings do not ordinarily choose to end their own lives out of whimsy even when drunk. I cannot say with convincing certainty what these forces are, for here our factual information ends, but I will advance a line of reasoning that seems to me to offer a partial explanation of the suicide epidemic in Micronesia.

Let us begin with the feelings of anger and shame, and perhaps self-pity as well, that normally surface during the conflict with family or friends prior to the suicide. It would be surprising if these feelings were not very deep-seated and operative in the victim long before the precipitating incident ever occurred. The act of self-destruction is a pathological response to a human situation, and it is logical to suppose that the pathological condition was not developed in the course of a few hours. It seems clear that as a rule only a person whose self-image has been considerably weakened over the course of time could respond to a quarrel or fight with family or friends by killing himself.

But weakened by what? In Micronesia, if anywhere in the world, a positive self-image seems to depend largely on the sense of personal well-being that comes from successfully maintaining satisfying personal relationships with those others who are most important in one's life. It also derives from the knowledge that one can make a meaningful contribution to those persons who matter most. In other words, a person must be loved for what he is and appreciated for what he can do if he is to be a healthy human being. He may fail out of school, his business may go under, his boat may sink and his house be destroyed by a typhoon, and he may lose his government job; but he will not be driven to despair provided that he is assured of the love and respect of those closest to him. When this is withdrawn, he senses that he is a failure: it no longer matters to anyone whether he lives or dies. At this point almost any incident, however insignificant, may serve to confirm this dreadful latent feeling and provide the necessary impetus to commit the final deed.

An integrated and healthy community furnishes the individual with the affection and sense of his own worth that he needs to live a meaningful life. In his monumental study on suicide some eighty years ago, the French sociologist Emile Durkheim showed that members of a cohesive community in which they felt



themselves real participants manifested a low rate of suicide. The rare incidence of suicide in the outer islands of Micronesia today seems to confirm his observation. Of the 12 suicides in Truk District during the past year, none took place in the outer islands. Indeed, the Western Islands of Truk, on which men still wear loincloths and exercise traditional skills, have witnessed only one suicide in the past 24 years, according to the Catholic pastor there, and that was a 60 year old man who was suffering greatly in the advanced stages of terminal cancer. In the outer islands of Yap District, there have been only two known cases in the last 25 years: one of them involving a man from Ifaluk who several years ago hanged himself while angry at his wife, and the other a girl from Fais who took her own life about four years ago when her parents prevented her from marrying the boy of her affections. Whatever may be said of other places, suicide is clearly a very infrequent occurrence in those traditional island communities that remain tight-knit.

Most communities in Micronesia today have suffered from an erosion that has left them less cohesive, less unified in their values, less dependent on the cooperation of individual members, and less capable of satisfying the affective needs of their members. It is impossible here to go into the forces that have been responsible for this erosion, but the result has been a diminished sense of participation by individuals in what was once a corporate enterprise. Naturally enough, those who are affected most by the breakdown of the integrated community are the young, who are just in the process of discovering what their community expects of them and testing the strength of their ties with others in the community. It is the young whose self-image is most fragile and whose sense of identity is weakest. Among the young are some whose sense of confidence in their own worth as persons is especially weak, who are more uncertain than most of the love and respect of their families and peers. It is these who are the most likely candidates for suicide.

Let us have a look at the plight of the family, the most basic and crucial of communities. Over the past years the Micronesian family has gradually relinquished to other agencies many of the roles that it once exercised on behalf of its members. The school has assumed the responsibility for educating and even feeding its children. The police station and the court have increasingly taken on the responsibility of restraining them and correcting them when they misbehave.

The hospital or dispensary cares for them when they are indisposed. Government recreation boards are assigned the task of occupying them during their leisure, and the government administration is expected to employ them during their working hours. No wonder parents feel their direct control over their young slipping away!

But there is still one essential role that the family plays in the life of the young: that of furnishing love and affective support. As of today at least there has been created no government agency that is able to provide this. And yet it is just this that many families, fully aware of their impotence in these other areas and themselves lacking the necessary cohesiveness, are no longer in a position to supply. In place of the effective controls that they once exercised over the young, many parents and older relatives now have resort to the only weapon that appears to be left in their arsenal: continual nagging. They are constantly chiding their sons for being worthless louts. The young man who has dropped out of school or lost his job is all too well aware that this is what he is, at least by standards commonly accepted by the rest of society. To make matters worse, his sense of personal uselessness is often compounded by the absence of meaningful work for the family or the community. Is he really expected to pound breadfruit, farm or fish if food needs can be met in other ways? Does his family expect anything of him at all? If so, will they have the strength to make demands on him? Or will he be permitted to spend his days in the pool hall and his evenings in the bar, while being written off as a bum? As the ties of mutual love and respect that bound him to members of his family and his community dissolve, the young man's lack of self-esteem gives rise to anger at those who have refused to accept him, shame at his own worthlessness, and a profound self-pity. For some this is literally one step away from the grave.

If many suicides in Micronesia are a final act of despair by a person whose life has become intolerable as his most meaningful relations have deteriorated, they are not only this. They are a thinly disguised act of aggression as well. The violent deed may be perpetrated against oneself, but the actual intended victims are frequently the parents, family or friends of the person who takes his own life. The young boy who swore to his father that he would soon have to spend a large sum of money because he refused him a mere dollar simply articulated a revenge motive that is implicit in many other cases. "I'll get back at you by destroying myself" is seen as a particularly effective way of avenging insults or blows from

close relatives or friends. The rage that is present in the victim finds its most extreme expression in suicide, and also its most exquisite revenge. The victim knows that his survivors will have to continually savor the bitter shame and grief of knowing that they caused his death. Even if he hangs himself with the expectation that he will be cut down by someone before he strangles to death, he will have succeeded in shaming those who are to blame for his wounded pride.

In some Micronesian cultures, particularly in eastern Micronesia, indirect forms of vengeance are frequently employed to get back at offending parties. It is not at all unusual to shame with exaggerated displays of kindness a person who has done one some injury, thereby "heaping burning coals upon his head." There are in Truk and in Ponape instances in which the mother of a murdered son sought to adopt in her dead son's place the young man who killed him. Is this an exalted form of Christian forgiveness, or is it a subtle form of revenge in which the murderer is condemned to be forever reminded of his guilt by the continual presence of his victim's mother? It is certainly not inconceivable that suicide too is an indirect means of lashing back at those against those who are the objects of the victim's anger.

The tentative analysis that I have offered here goes well beyond the limited data with which the paper began. But if it is at all accurate, then certain conclusions follow immediately. In the first place, the suicide epidemic in Micronesia is only the symptom of a much broader problem, and it will be impossible to check it through such partial measures as setting up counseling or referral centers, establishing recreation programs and job training centers, and providing additional employment for the "disadvantaged". The solution to the suicide problem will require nothing short of restored, revitalized and reintegrated communities at various levels in society. The individual is shaped for good or bad by his community, and mounting evidence attests to the fact that there is something seriously wrong with the way our communities presently function in Micronesia. We might seriously ask ourselves what forces are responsible for the disintegration of our families and communities today, and what can be done to mend them in the future.

If we neglect to do this, we are almost certain to see Thomas' tragedy repeated more and more frequently in the years to come. In that case, the only sensible advice that might be offered to parents is to keep ropes, kerosene cans and Clorox bottles well hidden.

## TAKING THE LONG VIEW

Not too long ago a gentleman visited these islands offering a new eight million dollar college as a gift to the Micronesian people from the U.S. Congress. His offer met with an enthusiastic response almost everywhere. At last Micronesia would soon have its own four-year college! Not a conventional college, but one that would be specially tailored for providing training in vocational skills or whatever else is judged educationally relevant.

I was dismayed by the uncritical enthusiasm that greeted the visitor's offer, well-intentioned though it was. Don't people here know, I asked myself, that the new college will cost almost two million dollars a year to operate? A tidy sum, considering that the total amount of local revenues generated in the TT is only seven million dollars at present. Isn't this gesture, I thought, a bit like making a gift to a poor friend of a good-sized German Shepherd to guard his house, letting him know as you walk out the door that the animal eats five pounds of meat a day?

In any case, would a new four-year college of any kind help solve the burning question of how to promote economic development? Diplomas abound in the Trust Territory and marketable skills are on the increase. The real problem, of course, is jobs; and this won't be solved by adding another expensive educational mill. As long as the goal is to develop Micronesia's resources and make the islands more productive, a new college with an increased capacity can only make a bad situation worse. If you want a person to spend his life in a fishing boat or on a farm, the worst thing you can do is plant him in a chair for another four years. He will very likely never get out of it afterwards.

It's the old story, I said to myself. Another "gift" from abroad. . .more hidden costs, social and economic. . .and the dependency rut gets deeper and deeper.

How is it, I wondered, that this familiar story is repeated over and over again, even by individuals and groups that profess a commitment to self-reliance? Surely some of them must see the long-range effects of these projects.

Consider the response to the Headstart and Old Age Programs, to use as examples two federal programs designed to benefit opposite ends of the population.

No sooner was the Trust Territory made eligible for federal funds under these titles than every district opened an office, applied for government money, and began an earnest search for ways to spend it. The immediate benefits of the two federal programs were all too obvious—food for the young and the old, an income for those on the payroll, travel abroad for program directors and their understudies, and the promise of other good things to come.

But how about the fact that the palates of the young were being habituated to breakfasts of tomato juice and doughnuts? What about the danger of families abdicating their strongly-felt traditional responsibility to provide for the elderly? Or the risk of weakening family and community ties, as still another responsibility of theirs is surrendered to a government agency? Then, of course, there is again the matter of furthering the economic dependence of Micronesia on a global Superpower that has military interests to maintain.

Somehow these last questions were overlooked in the rush to expand the district payroll and get money rolling in. A paycheck and cases of corned beef are just a bit more real than such intangibles as family bonds and psychological dependence.

Do I sound a trifle "anti-progress," or possibly even cynical? Then let me make a public confession. Neither I nor the staff of the small private school of which I am Director have altogether resisted the temptations of "easy money" from abroad. We are receiving federal funds from the six-million dollar Federal Feeding Program, as are virtually all public schools and a good many mission schools as well.

To understand how an abomination of this sort might have happened, you would have to put yourself in the zories of a school administrator who is wondering how he will make it to the end of May without going broke. Local support groups have not come through, the school accounts are just about exhausted, and bills continue to pile higher on his desk. Just then, in walks a federal program officer with a sheaf of papers in hand who proudly announces that he has the funds to cover the entire cost of the school feeding program for the year. To the beleaguered school administrator it is a heaven-sent answer to a pressing problem. Naturally he signs on the dotted line, heaves a sigh of relief, and settles back to wait for the first check to come.

That, however, is only the beginning. A year later the administrator has to decide whether he shall continue to participate in the Feeding Program. He knows very well that the 25 thousand dollars he receives will not raise the nutritional quality of the food one bit. Healthy food is something that teenaged boarding students must have in ample quantity, no matter how financially hard-pressed the school may be. He knows that the Feeding Program of which his school is a beneficiary can only further reinforce the "handout" mentality of a people long accustomed to looking to Washington to pay all their bills. He recalls with a shudder all that he has read and heard about the stifling welfarism of Indian reservations. But he calculates that an additional 25 thousand dollars a year would allow him to build a garage, a maintenance shop and new water tanks which he thinks that the school may need. And so, dismissing the uncomfortable concern he feels for remote consequences, he signs on the dotted line as he did the year before.

Like the others in the examples cited earlier, he has responded to the immediate need and left the future to take care of itself.

Micronesia teems with persons like him (or should I say me?) whose decisions are based on answering today's needs at the expense of the future. Jobs, schools, roads and the like occupy our exclusive attention while the hidden costs of these "improvements" and the nature of the funds that finance them go uncalculated. This preoccupation with the short-term rewards might be called the national disease of Micronesia and it had infected every part of society. The employee who drinks up his paycheck on Friday and Saturday to the sorrow of his family for the following two weeks shows acute symptoms of it. So does the fish dynamiter who pulls in his haul, rubs his belly, and leaves the shattered reef to repair itself—in 20 years' time. Then there is the young college student who spends the two days before his semestral exams emptying Budweiser cans with his friends, and a week hence is looking for plane fare home from college. Is it simply an accident that a couple of years ago the theme song of the islands seemed to be "Help Me Make It Through the Night?"

The people of an island press for Congress of Micronesia funds to erect a seawall, conscious only of the money that will make its way into their pockets, but unmindful of the damage to their sense of community that loss of locally sponsored

labor projects will inflict. Congressmen vote to approve high-cost capital improvement projects to be funded by the U.S., knowing full well that the cost of maintaining these facilities will be a financial burden to Micronesia in later years. Top-level policy-makers campaign for higher wages for government employees, thereby undercutting any real hope of inducing young people to take up less lucrative but much-needed work in commercial agriculture and fishing. And everyone—parents and educators alike—encourages the greatest possible number of high school graduates to go off to college without the least idea of how they will occupy themselves when they return.

Entrepreneurs with an eye for a fast dollar build supermarkets, bars and moviehouses, thus helping to send the annual level of imports soaring still higher. Prominent businessmen who are instrumental in bringing television into their island make a killing on sales of TV sets, leaving the social consequences and the economic effects on families for others to handle.

Political decisions, I fear, are made in much the same way. Nothing can convince me that the people of the Marianas, when they signed their Covenant with the U.S. two years ago, were as fond of the American Eagle as the dollar on which it appears. Yet money buys good things, as I have already ungrudgingly admitted. Whether, however, it will also purchase an enduring social bliss for the Northern Marianas remains to be seen. I have never heard or read a cogent explanation of what any of the separatist districts wants politically and have despaired of ever doing so, although it is well-known what those districts expect by way of fiscal gains. I can only assume that they desire for themselves whatever their generous benefactors desire for them—whether these benefactors be America, Japan, Nauru, or the Sheikdom of Aden. Surely it would be difficult to maintain that their decisions are models of political far-sightedness, whatever else they may have to recommend them.

But the rest of us are in no position to smugly point an accusing finger at those districts that have sought greener pastures—or, to be more exact, greener bankrolls—elsewhere. Which of the remaining districts can honestly say that it would not have jumped at the chance to do likewise, had the opportunity been offered?

We all seem to have fallen prey to this obsession with the immediate pay-off. It may be that this is an all too human weakness, but it is a frightening irony

that our failings should be rationalized in the name of "progress" or "development." If development implies anything at all, it suggests a forward-looking approach—one that is as concerned with tomorrow and 20 years hence as with today.

With the coming of foreign currency to these islands a century and a half ago, Micronesians were for the first time able to accumulate a surplus, to hoard, to save and invest. Money created the possibility of a "tomorrow" in these islands. By a strange irony, however, foreign money is now being used to freeze us securely into the present and to anaesthetize us against a concern for the future.

Not that money, jobs, education, material improvements, and even federal programs are evil in themselves. The real problem is that these and other short-range benefits are so alluring that they overpower more distant considerations. And when they are offered to any of us gratis, their attraction is practically irresistible. An announcement is made that some new federal program is offering funds to establish national parks, buy library books, or develop curricular materials for teaching the metric system. We run to our desks and concoct a proposal that will enable us to receive our share of the funds. Why not take advantage of a windfall while it lasts, we reason!

The trouble is that the objectives we set down for our programs can all too easily be inconsistent with, or even run counter to, broader developmental goals in the Trust Territory.

There's certainly no harm in securing federal money to build a museum in which traditional artifacts will be displayed. . .or in providing emergency assistance for rebuilding houses after a typhoon. . .or in putting up a new sports center at U.S. expense. But we must not be surprised if the cumulative effect of all this on the community is to teach people that Santa Claus comes to Micronesia every day of the year. Over many a desk in Headquarters is posted the inspiring adage: "Give a person a fish and he has a meal today. Teach him how to fish and he has food for the rest of his life." It is very easy to understand how this lesson can be lost on our people today in the face of the mammoth give-away program that enervates our communities even as it showers on them its material "blessings."

Buying canned federal programs is a lot like buying canned fish. It is inexpensive, convenient and satisfying—an eminently sensible thing to do. But there are still those hidden costs to be reckoned with, as we know only too well.



Whether we weigh these costs in making any initial decision or not, they are bound to catch up with us in the end.

Those of us who take a dim view of canned programs funded from abroad—and I include myself here—do so on the grounds that their long-term costs usually outweigh their immediate benefits. These "costs" can be conveniently grouped under three broad headings: social, economic and political, although some would want to add "environmental" as a fourth heading. Let me now suggest a few examples of each.

Regarding social costs we may say this. Programs that introduce into a community a substantial amount of money to build a road, erect a community center or feed school children all too often bring about the psychological or social impoverishment of the community that they are intended to help. This happens when members of the community decide that it is more profitable for them to sit and wait for things to happen rather than to initiate development projects of their own. At this point, cooperative work by families on community projects sharply declines, and so does what we commonly call "community spirit." When most of its responsibilities are pre-empted by government agencies and alien institutions, the community simply loses confidence in its own effectiveness to achieve anything of real value. The same may be said of the family. As it relinquishes its responsibility for feeding toddlers, schoolchildren and the aged, the ties among its members will almost certainly weaken. The obvious question that must be asked of every development project, then, no matter what the source of funding, is whether its effect will be to increase or diminish the social fabric and sense of purpose of the community.

Micronesians commonly refer to their islands as "poor"—that is, as lacking adequate income to provide for themselves much of what they regard as desirable. For this reason, there is usually a mad rush to obtain whatever material benefits the U.S. or any other country might offer by way of assistance. What is often overlooked, however, is that certain gifts may make us poorer rather than richer. Expensive hospitals, water system and airports are also expensive to maintain year by year—and the future budget of a "poor" group of islands is bound to be very limited.

Moreover, some improvements can require an expanding network of expensive facilities and social services to support them (or clean up the social mess

they have made). Take the case of a costly new high school that is built of sufficient size to allow all school-age youth in the area to enroll. Soon after the new school opens discipline problems multiply, since there are clearly a large number of misfits who have been accepted in the campaign to make secondary education universal. To keep the poorer students in school, a special program for potential dropouts is funded through a federal grant. A recreation center is built and new staff is hired on to moderate the center's activities. Social therapists are trained—at additional expense—and hired to counsel "hardcore" problem students. Mental health facilities and referral centers are established through still another program. In short, everything possible is done, at prodigious expense, to keep in school young people who never wanted to be there in the first place.

As social services and physical facilities proliferate along with the programs that support them, Micronesians are gradually led to believe that a society without expensive gadgetry and quackery is entirely impossible. To have a school without sliding classroom dividers or a hospital without sophisticated laboratory equipment becomes unthinkable. It is no wonder that Micronesians have come to believe that they can't live without an extravagant subsidy from abroad! Naturally this means that they will have no recourse but to continue living in the shadow of the American eagle—with all that this implies politically and militarily.

Very few decisions today are simple decisions. Most have far-reaching implications on the future social, economic and political order in these islands.

We know this only too well, of course, but all of us still must adjust to making decisions at times as if there were no tomorrow. Until all of us learn to honestly and openly weigh the long-term effects of our choices, not just count the immediate gains, we will be deluding ourselves by using the catchword "progress" to describe our decisions. Real progress implies taking the long view of life!

## THE ANTHROPOLOGIST AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN MICRONESIA

### INTRODUCTION

We have witnessed the end of an era in Micronesian anthropological research, as I am sure you are aware. The day of the study of traditional kinship and land tenure systems to obtain baseline cultural data has well nigh passed, and anthropologists are now turning their attention to other facets of the culture. And well they might, for they are confronted with cultures that are undergoing rapid transformation under the impact of U.S. administrative policies of recent years. It is becoming ever more difficult for anthropologists to ignore the element of change, even on outer islands, in pursuit of a piece of the "pure" culture.

But if Micronesian cultures are changing, so too are the anthropologists who are coming to study them these days. It is my impression that the present generation of anthropologists feel a stronger moral responsibility to address themselves in their research to the pressing problems of the people among whom they work. More and more they seem to feel that, as professional anthropologists, they are not only required to contribute to the general fund of descriptive literature on the exotic cultures of the world, but that their work must somehow lead to an improved quality of human life among the very people that they study.

I do not mean to suggest that the anthropologists who came to Micronesia in an earlier day were unconcerned with helping the people. Some accepted administrative staff positions in the T.T. government precisely so that they would be in a position to assist in the day-to-day decisions that were having a cumulative effect on Micronesians' lives. They and many other anthropologists who left Micronesia immediately after completing their fieldwork have often maintained a continuing interest in the Trust Territory throughout their professional careers, returning to the islands from time to time to assist in short-term research projects or to undertake more problem-oriented studies. A number of others have expressed their concern for Micronesians by engaging in U.S.-based political movements on behalf of the colonial people they had studied and come to respect. And almost all anthropologists, of course, have made some attempt to provide some financial compensation to the individuals who have acted as informants and assisted them in other ways during their fieldwork.

The difference may be that today's anthropologists come to the field with the intention of addressing themselves from the outset to those change-related social problems that prove so vexing to Micronesians. Their conviction seems to be that they should immediately turn the valuable research tools with which their training has equipped them upon those problems that Micronesians themselves see as critical in their lives, not just on those areas that are designated as "problems" in professional anthropological circles. As human beings, they feel obligated to seek to understand and improve their world. As anthropologists, they look for ways to discharge this obligation in the very way they use their research skills for cultural analysis, not apart from it.

All of this is bound to present a devilish dilemma for the young graduate student as he prepares to embark on his fieldwork for the first time. With a social conscience and a set of ethical norms that demand that he assist the people he studies as he acquires the information he needs to complete his dissertation, he is only too conscious of the need to do "relevant" research. On the other hand, he enters the field as a stranger to the culture that he is to study and must, before he can assist the people in any appreciable way, come to understand them—how they live and work, what they cherish and fear, how they are bound to one another. In a word, he must know something of their culture, and ultimately contribute to others' understanding of the culture. Moreover, he must do this under what are often severe constraints: his choice of a research topic is influenced by the interests and competence of his advisor, and perhaps also by the dictates of the funding agency from which he seeks his research grant; and the length of time he remains in the field is limited by both funds and the pressure to complete his dissertation so as to establish himself in his profession. The neophyte in the field, then, can easily be forgiven if he elects to study land tenure or kinship for his doctoral research.

Much more may be justly expected of the veteran in the field, however. If the observations I have previously made have any validity, then it would seem that his research is bound to be increasingly determined by the life problems of those who are studied. Anthropologists will be putting their professional skills at the service of man: not merely homo academicus (the reader of tomorrow's HRAF cards), but Micronesian man as he exists now! I can only feel that this is as it should be. Micronesians obviously will be helped to the degree that they better

understand the complex socio-cultural elements that give rise to current problems in their societies. The discipline of anthropology, too, can be expected to benefit from research conducted in those frontier areas (such as urbanization) where anthropology and other social sciences must meet.

#### RECOMENDED THRUST OF RESEARCH TODAY

What is required of anthropology if it is to contribute to an understanding of social problems today? I would like to suggest four general directions that anthropological research in Micronesia might profitably take, before I go on to sketch some of the particular problem areas that might be studied. These dimensions have not, of course, been totally absent in past anthropological research, but studies undertaken today should incorporate these elements to a far greater degree than may have been desirable or necessary some years ago.

- 1) Diachronic studies should be emphasized. It is important in our day that Micronesians, and those who assist them, be able to identify with some precision the manifold forms of cultural change that have already occurred in the islands. Changes in land ownership patterns, kinship terminology usage, bestowal of titles and other traditional rewards, and ordinary respect behavior are only a few of the areas that might be studied.
- 2) Convergence and divergence between traditional and modern institutions should be another focus of research. This has already been done with respect to parallel political institutions in many of the different islands of Micronesia (Hughes and Lingenfelter: 1974). As of yet, however, studies in other areas besides the political are lacking. A study of the U.S. court and penal system, for instance, and its interplay with traditional systems of meting out justice has never been done.
- 3) Ethnographic studies of modern institutions that have become a permanent part of the culture are needed. Schools, private businesses, and hospitals are examples of such institutions that play an important part in the "town culture" of many Micronesian islands today. Clearly the ways in which these institutions function in Micronesia differ

considerably from the ways in which their models are employed in the U.S. and elsewhere. To give but one example, larger retail stores on Moen, Truk, frequently serve as shelters for newly arrived migrants from other islands. Even after migrants have moved out on land they have purchased, there is evidence to suggest that they continue to regard the store as something of a clubhouse, much as the Chinese throughout Asia maintain their Benevolent Association Houses.

- 4) An interdisciplinary thrust is needed in anthropological work today if researchers are to confront Micronesia's most pressing social problems. Without the use of models and concepts drawn from psychology, sociology, political science and other social sciences, anthropologists will be unable to bring their analytic tools to bear upon critical issues in those islands. Although an interdisciplinary orientation has never been completely foreign to past anthropological work in Micronesia, it must be even more fully utilized today.

## MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are any number of social problems, painfully obvious to those of us who live in Micronesia, that could provide splendid research opportunities for social scientists. In the remainder of this paper, I will briefly describe a few of what appear to me to be among the most critical problems that Micronesians generally must face. At the end of each brief description, I will try to raise a few basic questions that might be explored by anthropologists or other social scientists.

1. Alienation of Youth. Micronesians are quick to acknowledge the presence of a large and influential youth sub-culture throughout their islands today. This sub-culture, with its own distinctive values and behavior, is especially prominent in the towns, although its presence is felt in many of the outlying areas as well. Rapid socio-cultural change, years of formal education in American-patterned schools, the opportunity to attend college abroad that has become available for greater numbers of young Micronesians in recent years, and the considerable influence of their peer groups have all been important contributing causes of the development of this youth subculture.

Many Micronesian adults see the young as attempting to subvert the traditional values and customs to which they claim to adhere, but very often without honestly acknowledging their own key role in initiating those changes that have contributed to the very formation of this sub-culture. They complain of a "generation gap," but understand only imperfectly, if at all, those social forces that have created such a gap. Most adults would seem to desire more schooling for the young, a greater participation in the money economy, and a larger share of the material improvements that the Western world offers. And yet, they are reluctant to accept the value changes and other effects of modernization upon the young.

An understanding of the forces that have fostered and continue to nurture the youth sub-culture is imperative if Micronesians are to make sound decisions for the future. Some fruitful areas of investigation for the social scientist, in my opinion, would be the following:

- a) Roles. How have roles, especially of youth residing in towns, changed from what they were traditionally? Do the new roles that youth have appropriated provide the same opportunity for cooperation with adults and for full integration into the life of the community that more traditional ones offered?
- b) Socialization. To what extent has socialization begun to take place outside of traditional kin groups? What are the new mechanisms for socialization that have partially supplanted former ones? How effective are they? What values do they promote that may be at variance with the traditional value system? What, if any, common symptoms of personal tension arising from value conflict can be observed in Micronesian societies today?
- c) Social controls. To what extent have traditional rewards and controls become ineffective in influencing the behavior of the young? What new rewards and controls may have superseded the old? How effective are they?

2. Debilitation of local communities. The past two decades have seen a progressive weakening of local communities almost everywhere in Micronesia. Some years ago, these communities planned and executed improvement projects such as the building of docks, the repair of roads, and the construction of water systems. The labor for these projects was supplied by the communities themselves, often at the behest of the village or island chief. Schools were built and repaired by the community, and salaries were partially paid for out of local funds. The upshot of this approach was a slowly paced development, but one that recognized as paramount the responsibility of community members themselves to initiate and sustain the many projects from which they might hope to benefit.

But all of that has changed today. Where the sectional chief or magistrate was once an organizer and initiator of activities requiring the cooperation of all in the community, his role now seems to be more that of solicitor of outside funds for improvement projects. With materials and money available from various sources for the asking, most communities wonder why they should have to do anything more than sit and wait until the Government provides the wherewithal to act on their behalf. Roads in Truk are constructed by Air Force Civic Action Teams, dispensaries and municipal offices are put up by contracted labor with district or Congress of Micronesia funds, and students are fed by the U.S.-sponsored Feeding Program.

My impression is that communities have learned to surrender far too much responsibility to the higher levels of government. The overall result is a decline in initiative within these communities, a growing sense of their powerlessness to cope with their own needs, and a weakening of community cohesiveness as opportunities to actively cooperate on projects diminish. If this is the case, then most of those projects that currently go under the title of "community development" projects may actually have the effect of weakening the community rather than strengthening it. Perhaps these personal observations of mine could be tested by studies of contrasting communities. A comparative study of Satawal, an isolated atoll at the eastern end of the Yap District, and Falalap in Ulithi Atoll, for instance, might yield some interesting conclusions.



What effects does easy access to large sums of welfare money have on traditional institutions, especially as they function to draw people together for collaboration on island or village projects? What other psycho-cultural effects might result from welfarism? Are new secondary associations such as clubs, churches, etc., beginning to develop to satisfy the affiliative needs of islanders in more modernized areas?

3. Migration into Towns. Over the last five years, the population growth rate of Micronesian towns (Majuro, Ebeye, Kolonia, Moen, Rull-Weloy, Saipan and Koror) has averaged seven percent each year. Their rate of growth has been double that of the Trust Territory as a whole, and by 1980 it is predicted that fully two-thirds of all Micronesians will be living in one of these seven towns (Kay: 1974). There has been some evidence of a backwash into outlying areas in very recent years, but the towns will probably continue to show a net gain in population through in-migration.

Most Micronesian towns have the normal problems attendant upon heavy in-migration: overcrowding, a marginal existence for some of the new arrivals who have neither land nor wage employment, and pressure on the physical and social resources of the towns. Characteristically, at least in Truk, a new migrant and his family will live with a kinsman or a patron from his own island. In some cases the sponsor is a businessman who may offer him employment for a nominal wage in addition to food and shelter. Often enough, it is a relative with a government job who might be providing for as many as 25 or 30 kinsfolk in his household.

As the town grows well beyond the point where its residents can all know one another personally and can maintain regular face-to-face contact with one another, traditional social controls which may have been apt for a smaller tight-knit community lose their effectiveness. With the increasing anonymity of town residents, people look to external mechanisms—notably the police force and the court system—to keep peace. At the same time, the small homogeneous sub-communities that have sprung up and become tiny ethnic enclaves develop their own authority systems and social mechanisms for dealing with their own members, and perhaps also for

relating to other similar sub-communities. Usually these ethnic groups maintain ties with their kin on the home island and continue to discharge at least some of their customary obligations towards those who live back home. The town, as a whole, will ordinarily retain the political forms that it had when it was much smaller, but the way in which these function is bound to change.

It would be useful to know the manner in which these sub-communities function, the strength of ties with the parent island or region, the type of authority system that unifies their members, and the ways in which these sub-communities maintain ties, either formal or informal, with one another and the larger political unit.

4. Alcohol-related Violence and Crime. Law enforcement officers in Micronesia estimate that 90 percent of the crimes reported to them are in some way alcohol-related. As anyone who has the slightest familiarity with Micronesia knows, a person who wishes to settle a grudge, carry out a misdeed, speak his mind to another with whom he disagrees, or approach a strange girl on or off the dance floor will almost invariably take a drink (or more usually, several!) to release his inhibitions before doing so. Often it appears that it is not so much the actual quantity of his alcohol intake that frees the person to pursue his original intention, but his success in establishing in the eyes of others present the fact that he is "drunk" (i.e., has been drinking). Thus, it would seem that consumption of alcohol, in whatever quantity, has a cultural significance, quite apart from any physiological effects on the individual. As soon as he is defined as "drunk," the Micronesian (or at least the Trukese!) is exempted from the normal code of behavior that regulates what one may or may not do.

There are, of course, any number of fights and other violent acts that spontaneously erupt among genuinely intoxicated persons. But my personal experiences, including occasional encounters with belligerent "drunks", lead me to believe that the cultural dimension of drinking plays a larger part in determining behavior than bodily chemical effects. For this reason, most of the measures short of total abolition that are so often proposed as remedies to the alcohol problem in Micronesia are doomed to failure. What is

required, in my opinion, is nothing less than a cultural redefinition of the considerable tolerance that is to be given the "drunk". Society must hold him responsible for what he does while and after drinking, and the court system must reinforce this by refusing to admit intoxication as a mitigating factor in judging the gravity of criminal acts.

Cultural attitudes towards alcohol, especially the relaxation of norms of conduct in the case of the "drunk", deserve much more attention than they have so far gotten from social scientists working in Micronesia. Frank Mahoney's monograph on alcohol abuse (1973) and Mac and Les Marshall's forthcoming book on alcohol in Truk are the only works with which I am familiar. Some questions that might profitably be explored are these. Why is drinking generally regarded as an important part of the male adult's role? What are the general expectations that Micronesians have of a "drunk's" behavior? What ritualized behavior may be part of drunken comportment?

5. Suicide. Official Trust Territory statistics are notoriously unreliable, but there is fairly good evidence to indicate that Micronesia's suicide rate has been rising in recent years. Last year the overall rate, which varied considerably from district to district was 20 per 100,000. The incidence of suicide among the 15-25 age group is alarmingly high; 18 of 23 suicides tabulated during the past year fell within his age bracket (Hezel: 1976). In almost every case the suicide was occasioned by a falling out that the victim had with parents, close relative or spouse over what would appear to be a trifling matter. Suicide, it would seem, is usually a response, both self-pitying and aggressive, to the threat that a close interpersonal relationship will be terminated or at least deprived of real meaning.

Most of the literature on suicide, including Emile Durkheim's classic study, sheds little light on Micronesian suicides, since the latter do not correspond to the pattern traced in either the Western World or in the more achievement-oriented cultures of the East, such as Japan and China. It is only reasonable to suppose that the motives for committing suicide in a given society furnish us with an index to the most important values in that society. Hence, in a society in which money, career success, and youth are highly prized, the absence of any or all of these paramount social values will

most frequently figure as the cause of the desperate act of suicide. Certainly it is difficult to imagine a Micronesian youth ending his life because his business went bankrupt (as in the U.S.) or because he failed an entrance examination for college (as might happen in Japan).

Making all necessary allowances for individual personality differences, I would still propose that the suicide pattern in Micronesia represents a phenomenon that must be studied from a cultural perspective. Social anthropologists might attempt to answer questions such as these. What do suicide patterns in Micronesia tell us about the value hierarchy in these cultures? Is there in some Micronesian cultures a pronounced tendency to displace aggressive feelings towards others by inflicting injury on oneself? How prevalent is this masochistic tendency? To what extent has anomie in this period of rapid socio-cultural change contributed to the suicide increase in Micronesia? In what sense has the traditional family been weakened through modernization, and how large a factor has this been in the suicide increase?

6. Over-Education. Last year more than 2,000 young Micronesians were attending college abroad, and the estimate for this current school year puts the number at close to 3,000. The ease with which a high school graduate can obtain U.S. funds for college, available to Micronesian students since 1973, explains in great part the tertiary education explosion in the Trust Territory. Something similar is happening on the secondary level as well. There are currently more than 8,000 Micronesians attending high schools in the Trust Territory, compared to 5,000 in 1970 before the expansion of the public high school system.

At a time when Micronesia's political leaders are repeatedly calling for development of their islands' resources in order to achieve a measure of economic self-reliance, the expansion of educational opportunities presents a real problem. Relative to the number of wage employment opportunities available for those who enter the labor pool, the number of college-educated Micronesians who will return to their islands within the next few years is alarmingly high. To make matters even more difficult, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Five-Year Indicative Plan projects a cutback

in existing government employment levels. However intrinsically valuable education may be, 16 years of formal schooling is bound to foster in many young Micronesians expectations that can not be fulfilled in years to come. Given the underdeveloped state of Micronesia's economy at present, it is impossible to believe that the 3,000 Micronesian students away at college can all hope to obtain government jobs when they return from school. Will they leave Micronesia for good to seek employment elsewhere? If they remain, will scarcity of jobs bring upon the educated young widespread frustration at not being able to enjoy the lifestyle to which they aspire?

#### CONCLUSION

At the bottom of all the social problems sketched above lies the fact of modernization (not so much political as socio-economic) which has greatly altered the course of life for Micronesians today. If anthropology is to pay its dues to what surely must be one of the most studied regions in the world, it will have to sharpen its tools and bring these to bear on Micronesian towns and villages, not as they might have been, but as they exist today: partly transformed by the modernization that U.S. dollars have brought. It would be a pity to leave the critical task of analysis of socio-cultural change to economic planners, legal consultants and political advisors alone. And, I might add, to well-intentioned but professionally unequipped missionaries like myself.

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## LOOKING AHEAD TO THE END OF TRUSTEESHIP, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Nearly nine years have passed since the Congress of Micronesia began negotiations with the United States government on the future political status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands after the termination of the present Trusteeship Agreement. In the meantime, the T.T.P.I. has acquired the distinction of being the only one of the 11 post-World War II UN trust territories to remain in that political limbo. Just two years ago the U.S. Administration proposed 1981 as the date at which the present trusteeship status would come to an end, but recent political currents have left Micronesia's political future three years hence more uncertain than ever.

From the very outset of its status negotiations with the U.S., Micronesian representatives have been bargaining for Free Association—a loose relationship with the U.S. in which the latter would assume responsibility for overseeing the islands' foreign affairs and defence, while also providing a stipulated amount of financial assistance each year.<sup>1</sup> Work on the Compact of Free Association had been progressing slowly but steadily until formal negotiations sputtered to a complete halt in late 1973 after the Seventh Round of the Status Talks. The alleged reason for the breakdown of the talks was a major disagreement between the U.S. and Micronesia over the amount of financial assistance to be offered under Free Association.<sup>2</sup> It was almost three years before formal negotiations were resumed in May 1976 and a mutually acceptable definition of future U.S. budgetary assistance to Micronesia reached.<sup>3</sup> Changes were made in the draft compact at the Eighth Round of the Status Talks to give the government of Micronesia wider latitude in foreign affairs and to meet other demands of Micronesian negotiators. Just as momentum seemed to be restored, however, key persons on both negotiating teams were replaced—U.S. Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams was recalled shortly before the change in administration that came with the election of President Carter, while Senator Lazarus Salii, the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Future Status, was replaced by former Senator Andon Amaraich,

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who was appointed to preside over an entirely new Committee created by the Congress of Micronesia.

But it is neither the turnover on the negotiating team nor the continuing debate over such controversial points as jurisdiction over the 200-mile off-shore economic zone that has presented the greatest obstacle to recent progress in the Status Talks. The political tensions within Micronesia itself have proved the greatest hurdle. The past three years have seen the growth of strong separatist movements in the two administrative districts of Palau and the Marshalls, as well as the complete breakaway of the Northern Marianas from the rest of the Trust Territory. The Northern Marianas, which as early as 1971 had formally made known its desire to secede from the Trust Territory and to seek a closer relationship with the U.S., had its Covenant of Commonwealth approved by the U.S. Congress in March 1976. With a solid 78% of the Northern Marianas population voting in favour of the Covenant in a special referendum, there was little that even the staunchest advocates of Micronesian unity in Washington could do to oppose the ratification. The following month the Marianas were placed under a separate provisional government, with Erwin D. Canham named as Resident Commissioner.<sup>4</sup> The Congress of Micronesia (COM), which had strongly opposed the separatist tendencies in the Marianas from the very beginning, finally bowed to the inevitable—while recording its own strong objection to the separation of the Marianas prior to the actual termination of the Trusteeship.<sup>5</sup>

Even before the referendum approving the Covenant for the Northern Marianas, there were already loud rumblings in Palau and the Marshalls indicating the desire of each of these districts for separate negotiations with the U.S. These rumblings have grown into something of a roar in the past year or two. In March 1974 the Marshall Islands District Legislature adopted a resolution informing the United Nations that it intended to begin its own negotiations with the U.S.<sup>6</sup> At the time the Marshalls, which was generating a major share of the COM's income tax revenues through its U.S.-operated missile base on Kwajalein, were deep in conflict with the Congress over revenue-sharing. Even after the COM passed legislation that turned over to the district legislature half of all locally generated revenue, the separatist movement in the Marshalls continued to grow in strength. The initial reaction of the U.S. to continuing demands from the Marshalls for separate



negotiations was to reject them out of hand as incompatible with the unity of the islands that was envisioned in the Trusteeship Agreement. The precedent of the Marianas' breakaway, of course, made this argument less than convincing to Marshallese separatists.

By the summer of 1975 Palau had formally submitted its own request for separate negotiations. Like the Marshalls, Palau quickly formed its own Political Status Commission which it hoped to employ as a negotiating team as soon as the U.S. yielded to its demands for separate talks, and authorized a non-binding referendum in the district to gauge—or perhaps display—the strength of popular separatist desires. The returns of the Palau referendum held in September 1976 showed 88% in favour of separation, while the vote taken in the Marshalls in July 1977 yielded a 62% majority for separation.<sup>7</sup> Despite the very substantial support for separation in Palau and the Marshalls, both districts contain opposition groups that have become ever more vociferous in their stand in favour of Micronesian unity—notably the 'Voice of the Marshalls' group and an anti-separation faction from Pelilieu Island in Palau.

Growth of separatist tendencies in both districts seems to be solidly rooted in economic considerations. When the U.S. military first publicly presented its future land requirements in Micronesia during the Fifth Round of the Status Talks in July 1972, it specified Palau, the Marshalls and the Northern Marianas as those districts where it wished to acquire or retain the use of existing land and harbour rights.<sup>8</sup> Along with the military's request, of course, went the unspoken guarantee that the U.S. government would pay well for lease rights to those military retention areas. When the potential tax revenue from the American military or civilian population that would staff those bases was counted in, the U.S. defence requests appeared to be an economic bonanza. For Palau, however, there was an even greater economic boon in the offing. In 1975 Palauan officials were approached by Japanese business interests—chiefly the Nissho-Iwai Corporation and the Industrial Bank of Japan—with a proposal to build a one-half billion dollar supertanker port and oil storage facility on Palau.<sup>9</sup> The proposed complex would call for utilization of large tracts of land on Babeldaop, the largest island in Palau, and would employ 12,000 persons when in full operation—nearly the equivalent of the district's present population. The proposed superport has in the last two years become a controversial issue in its own right. The leadership of Palau, which has come out

almost unanimously in support of political autonomy separate from the rest of Micronesia appears to be divided over the superport; several of the traditional leaders are opposed to the plan because of what they regard as its harmful environmental and social impact on the island group. At present the issue is still being debated, while the Nissho-Iwai Corporation completes the environmental impact study that it has undertaken at the request of the Trust Territory Administration.

The separatist desires of Palau and the Marshalls, which at first were largely ignored by the U.S. while the overtures of these districts for separate status negotiations were repeatedly spurned, have of late become too loudly and insistently voiced to be disregarded any longer. Although the U.S. has continually reiterated in official statements its wish to see the remaining districts of the Trust Territory retain some form of political unity at the termination of the Trusteeship, it has lately softened its once strong stance against separate negotiations of any sort. Shortly after his appointment in 1977, the U.S. Representative to the U.S.-Micronesian Status Talks, Ambassador Peter Rosenblatt, announced that teams from Palau and the Marshalls would be admitted to future status negotiations.<sup>10</sup> The Congress of Micronesia and its Commission on Future Political Status and Transition would continue to represent only the four central districts of Yap, Truk, Ponape and Kosrae.<sup>11</sup> Informal talks, under this arrangement, resumed in Molokai in October 1977, although no substantive agreement was reached on any of the key issues. With the presence of three district negotiating teams from Micronesia—all currently attempting to work out some form of Free Association with the U.S.—the talks have necessarily become two-tiered. The U.S. has officially stated its willingness to negotiate a single basic document defining its future political relationship with the six districts and proposes to use the still unfinished draft Compact of Free Association as the working basis for this relationship. To accommodate the desire of the Palau and Marshalls delegation for greater autonomy, however, certain portions of the document would cover those unique aspects of the relationship applicable to each of the three negotiating parties. The new structure for the Status Talks leaves the door open for any other district to begin to negotiate with the U.S. on a bilateral basis, providing that it continues to participate in the multi-lateral negotiations along with the rest of Micronesia. Through the compromise structure that has been recently adopted for talks, the

U.S. clearly hopes to encourage the districts to establish a common political entity of some sort—however tenuous—while seeking to honour the cries of the two separatist districts for a greater measure of political autonomy.

A lingering question of substantial importance to the success of the Status Talks, now that they have been resumed, is what is to be done with the Micronesian Constitution. In the summer of 1975 representatives from all the districts, including the Marianas, met for three months to assemble what was designated 'The Constitution for the Federated States of Micronesia'. The Constitution as drafted provides for a parliamentarian central government with limited powers over the districts or 'states'. Inasmuch as the constitution is to be the 'supreme law of the Federated States of Micronesia',<sup>12</sup> any agreements between Micronesia and other nations—notably the U.S.—would be bound to conform to it. Seemingly shelved during the height of the separatist crisis, the issue of the Constitution has again emerged as a critical one. The Constitution is to be presented to all the districts in a referendum scheduled for 12 July 1978, and if ratified by them it will take effect within a year.

Ambassador Rosenblatt, like his predecessor F. Haydn Williams, holds that the draft Constitution is 'almost at complete variance' with the Free Association that has been the subject of negotiations for several years past, since the Constitution would accord sovereignty to the Micronesian government.<sup>13</sup> U.S. negotiators maintain that according to the terms of Free Association, sovereignty would reside in the U.S. government. On several occasions recently the U.S. has insisted that supremacy be given to the Compact of Free Association in areas where its provisions might conflict with the Constitution.<sup>14</sup> The Congress of Micronesia is reluctant to go as far as the U.S. would like in this matter, but it has amended the mandate given to its own Commission on Future Political Status and Transition to allow it to negotiate without feeling constrained by the provisions of the draft Constitution.<sup>15</sup> Status Talks can now proceed freely for a time without any reference to the Constitution, but eventually the question as to which document shall have precedence over the other must be raised again—and answered.

As attempts to work out a clear formula for the future political status of the T.T.P.I. continue, efforts are being made to provide a solid economic base for a

future government. For an island territory that exports a mere \$6 million in copra and fish while importing \$38 million worth of foreign goods, this is no small order.<sup>16</sup> For years the Trust Territory government has been the preponderant factor in the Micronesian economy, employing about as many persons as does the entire private sector. Yearly T.T. budget increases, combined more recently with funds from ever proliferating U.S. federal programmes, appear to have retarded rather than stimulated genuine economic productivity.

Faced with this unpromising situation and a 1981 termination date for the Trusteeship, the Congress of Micronesia contracted in 1976 with the United Nations Development Programme to prepare a five-year economic plan for Micronesia that would help to make the new government of Micronesia self-supporting. A group of international experts who were brought to the Trust Territory to work on the study produced an Indicative Development Plan (IDP) that, with minor changes, was approved by COM and submitted to the districts for adaptation and implementation on the local level. The two basic objectives of the IDP, as stated in the Introduction to the Plan, are:

to correct the present imbalances in the economy . . . [ requiring ] a reallocation of resources away from unproductive government expenditures and toward the productive sectors: . . . and to stimulate more production and raise per capita income levels . . . [with] high priority on the development of Micronesia's marine and agricultural resources.<sup>17</sup>

Some of the major recommendations made in the IDP have already been at least partially implemented. Recent legislation by the COM has increased the income tax rate and given Micronesia a simple but graduated tax scale. Certain government departments, particularly the Department of Health Services, have increased their fees beyond the former nominal charges in an effort to recoup a greater percentage of their costs. A serious effort to lower the cost of government, however, will require a reduction in the number of Micronesians and expatriates on the government payroll—possibly combined with a lowering of the inflated salaries—inflated in terms of what Micronesia can afford—that are now being paid. The threat of civil suits by public school teachers in three districts when a mandatory 'furlough without pay' was announced may have discouraged further attempts to cut back pay levels or to make slashes in the government work force. So far there have been no serious attempts to restrict importation of goods that might be produced locally, nor has there been a noticeable increase in

agricultural and marine productivity. At this time it appears that legislators and administrators are still undecided on whether to put into effect the unpopular austerity measures that are required to fully implement the IDP and bring Micronesia closer to full self-support, or to walk the easier path of growing reliance on U.S. financial aid.

Much of Micronesia's hope for future economic prosperity has been pinned on the outcome of the series of Law of the Sea conferences sponsored by the UN, at which representatives from all corners of the globe have been trying to draw up an international treaty to govern the distribution and use of ocean resources. If, as is expected, the international law should eventually establish a 12-mile territorial limit in offshore waters and 188-mile exclusive economic resource zone, land-poor Micronesia would become ocean-rich. All fishing rights (except for certain migrating species) as well as undersea mineral rights over an expanse of waters amounting to nearly two million square miles would belong to Micronesia. The potential wealth from such a vast resource would, many Micronesian leaders anticipate, enable its new government to become entirely self-supporting. Understandably, Micronesian interest in the progress of the Conference has been keen.

In August 1972 the COM created its own Joint Committee on the Law of the Sea, which almost immediately began meetings with the U.S. delegation to the Conference in the hope of having the Micronesian position promoted at forthcoming international meetings.<sup>18</sup> As the marked difference between the U.S. and Micronesian positions became clear, Micronesian legislators petitioned the U.S. for separate representation at future sessions of the Conference. After refusing this request on at least two separate occasions, the U.S. finally reluctantly agreed to allow the Joint Committee to represent the Micronesian position at the 1974 meeting in Caracas, Venezuela. Thereafter a Micronesian delegation has attended the Conference in a non-voting observer status. In October 1977 legislation passed by the COM was signed into law by the High Commissioner establishing a 200-mile fisheries zone around the islands of Micronesia and authorizing the newly created Micronesian Maritime Authority to regulate this zone.<sup>19</sup> This law represents the first attempt by the COM to legislate Micronesian control of its offshore waters according to the 200-mile zone concept that has gained wide acceptance at the Law of the Sea Conference.

The issue is by no means settled, however. An earlier version of this recent legislation was vetoed by the High Commissioner, in part because it provided for direct negotiations between Micronesia and foreign governments over the concession of fishing and mineral rights. The question of whether Micronesia shall be granted full jurisdiction over the 200-mile economic zone under Free Association is still under dispute at the Status Talks, with the U.S. maintaining that Micronesian control could conflict with U.S. responsibilities under the foreign affairs and defence clauses of the Compact. Implicit in this controversy, of course, is the broader issue of the measure of sovereignty that the Micronesian government—or governments—can expect to exercise at the end of the Trusteeship. After nine years of negotiations, this question is far from being answered.

## FOOTNOTES

1. A draft of the uncompleted Compact of Free Association was published at the conclusion of the Fifth Round of the Status Talks in August 1972; Joint Committee on Future Status, Draft Compact of Free Association ... Presented to the Congress of Micronesia, Saipan, Aug. 1972.
2. For a summary of the results of the first seven rounds of Status Talks, see Donald McHenry, Micronesia: Trust Betrayed (New York 1975), 87-128, 240-4.
3. The level of U.S. support agreed upon under Free Association was an annual allotment of \$57 million for the first five years, \$52 million for the second five years, and \$47 million for the third five.
4. On 11 Jan. 1978 the first elected Governor of the Marianas, Carlos Camacho, assumed office, replacing Canham as the Chief Executive in the New Commonwealth.
5. McHenry, op. cit., 133.
6. McHenry, op. cit., 134.
7. Pacific Daily News, 28 Sept. 1976; 31 Aug. 1977.
8. Joint Committee on Future Status, Draft Compact of Free Association, Annex B.
9. Japan's strict environmental laws rule out the possibility of building the port on its own soil, and according to a preliminary study authored by Robert Panero, Palau was identified as the most feasible site for what came to be known as 'Port Pacific'.
10. Pacific Daily News, 18 Sept. 1977.
11. Kosrae, formerly a part of Ponape, was constituted a separate District on 1 Jan. 1977, thus replacing the Northern Marianas as the sixth star on the Micronesian flag.
12. 'Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia', Art. II, Section 1.
13. Micronesian Independent, VIII, 7, 23 Dec. 1977, 2.
14. Samuel McPhetres, 'Towards 1981—Micronesian Political Development in 1976', South Pacific Bulletin, XXVI, 4 (1976), 23-5.
15. Public Law No. 7-63, Laws and Resolutions of the Congress of Micronesia, Seventh Congress, First Special Session: August 15-29th, 1977 (Saipan 1977), 39-43.

16. U.S. Department of State, Trust Territory 1976: 29th Annual Report to the UN (Washington 1976), 204.
17. Congress of Micronesia, Five Year Indicative Development Plan (1976-1981), Saipan, July 1976, 2.
18. Public Law No. 4C-92, Laws and Resolutions of the Congress of Micronesia, Fourth Congress, Second Special Session: August 14-September 2, 1972 (Saipan 1977), 16-8.
19. Public Law No. 7-71, Laws and Resolutions of COM, Seventh Congress, First Special Session, 65-90.



## THE EDUCATION EXPLOSION IN TRUK

The sound that you all heard in the late 1960s and early 1970s was that of the education explosion in Micronesia. It was not a single thunderous blast, but a series of loud ominous rumblings that have produced fearful tremors in the islands and shaken them to their core. Whatsmore, the explosion has unleashed a gigantic tidal wave of young graduates that threatens to engulf the islands, from the tiniest and most traditional atoll to the most populous and modernized of the district centers.

Nowhere has the explosion been felt more strongly than in the Truk District where school expansion in recent years has been enormous. In 1965 there was a single moderate-sized high school serving the entire district; today there are no fewer than six. In that year there were a total of 200 Trukese with high school diplomas; today there are more than 2300. A single senior class at Truk High School today produces more Trukese high school graduates that were turned out during the entire first twenty years of American Administration in the TT (1945-1964). In 1965 there were 35 Trukese away at college; today there are over 600 studying abroad. The number of graduates, at the high school and college level, has increased since 1965 by a factor of ten or more.

Truk is almost literally awash with the young graduates that its schools have been mass-producing for some years now. What has been their impact upon their communities, Trukese society as a whole, and the money economy of the district? What are they presently doing and what are their prospects for the future?

This paper will attempt to review some of the highlights of the secondary and post-secondary education explosion in Truk, describe the more immediate consequences of the explosion, and look to its possible impact in the years ahead. The data used here is drawn from a survey of all Trukese high school graduates that Lynn Ilon completed in June 1978 with the assistance of two Xavier High School seniors, Lester Muritok and Speeder Setile. The information that they so laboriously gathered on graduates was used to compile an individual education/employment profile for each. These were then coded and, with the generous assistance of the TT Office of Planning and Statistics, programmed for a computer run. A printout of the data was graciously furnished to the author for preparation of this paper.

## The High School Boom

We might do well to begin by reviewing the history of secondary school development in Truk, for it is high school expansion more than any other single factor that accounts for the prodigious education explosion of recent years. Most of us have come to think of only two phases in the American education system in the TT: that period of controlled growth prior to 1963, and the years of rapid expansion that followed the Kennedy Administration with their annual budget increments. In actual fact, however, the data that has been collected on Trukese graduates reveals five quantum leaps that high school education in the district has made since the end of World War II. Each of them was introduced by a major educational policy change and a notable expansion of high school facilities which resulted in significant swelling of high school enrollment. Let us take a brief look at each of these five periods in the history of secondary education in Truk.

### 1. 1947-1951: Early Teacher Training Schools.

In 1947 MATTS (Marianas Area Teacher Training School) was established on Guam as the first post-intermediate school for Micronesian students. It was replaced the following year by PITTS (Pacific Islands Teacher Training School) which was located in Truk and expanded, at first to a two-year, then to a three-year course of studies. A total of 22 Trukese earned their diplomas during these four years, yielding an average of about five graduates a year during this period.

### 2. 1952-1964: Central TT-Wide High School.

With the changeover from Naval to Civilian Administration in the Trust Territory, PITTS was renamed PICS (Pacific Islands Central School). During its initial years, PICS remained primarily a teacher-training school, although it offered a variety of technical and academic training programs. By 1956, however, it had been transformed into a full three-year senior high school. Three years later it was moved to Ponape where it remained the only public senior high school in the Trust Territory until it was phased out in 1965. Xavier High School, a small private school that enrolled boys from all the districts, was opened as a high school in 1953 and graduated its first class three years later. A total of 170 Trukese graduated from PICS and Xavier during this thirteen-year period, or an average of thirteen per year.

### 3. 1965-1969: District High School.

1965 might be considered a watershed in the history of secondary education in Truk since it marked the first graduating class of Truk High School. During the early 1960s the single interdistrict central high school (PICS) was being replaced by full four-year high schools in each of the districts. Secondary school enrollment was everywhere increased to keep pace with the accelerated

elementary school program that was begun in the late Kennedy years. The major educational policy shift was towards a full high school education for as many within the district as possible. In addition, Mizpah High School, an interdistrict high school run by the Protestant Mission, was opened in Truk in 1965. In this five-year period 298 Trukese received their high school diplomas, making an average of 60 a year.

4. 1970-1973: Establishment of Junior High Schools.

In 1970 the community-built vocational schools that had been set up on Ulul, Satawan and Tol during the height of the "Occupational Education" era were transformed into junior high schools and given full academic standing. In 1972 another junior high school was established on Moen at the site of Mizpah, which had ceased operating as a private school; and in 1974 another was built on Toloas. Eventually a system of five junior high schools was completed, all of them funneling their students into Truk High School and swelling its enrollment. The size of graduating classes at Truk High School more than doubled during these years. A total of 607 Trukese completed high school during these four years—more than had graduated during the entire 25 years of U.S. administration prior to 1970. An average of 152 young men and women finished high school each year.

5. 1974-present: Expansion of Truk High School.

Construction of the new classroom buildings at Truk High School was finished in 1974 and its conversion into a two-year senior high school was complete. Work on the facilities had begun in 1972 with the assistance of Typhoon Relief Funds. The size of graduating classes again doubled during this period, with an average of 294 receiving their diploma each year. In the years 1974-1977, the total number of graduates was 1175.

Throughout the years secondary education in the TT has evolved from a single central school aimed at upgrading the skills of teachers to a sprawling system of local schools whose purpose is to provide a general education for all who want it. The growing percentage of high school-age Trukese boys and girls who actually obtain their diplomas clearly reflects this substantial change in educational policy. In the years 1947-1951, the age of the teacher training school, only 2.3 percent of all eligible youth received a school certificate. The percentage increased slightly to 3.8 in the years 1952-1964, the era of the single central high school. In 1965-1969, 13.9 percent of all those who were old enough to graduate from high school actually did so. As the idea of universal secondary education gained currency, finally winning official endorsement by the Administration in 1970, the figures rose even more sharply. During the years 1970-73, the percentage

doubled to 27.6; and, in the last four years covered by our study, it increased to 43.9 percent. (See Table 2).

By whatever measure we choose to employ, the proportions of the high school boom in Truk are simply staggering, far more so than the population explosion in the district that has aroused such serious concern. In 1964 there were not quite 200 Trukese with high school diplomas; five years later, however, there were about 500. Within another four years, by 1974, the total had more than doubled again to reach 1100. That figure once again doubled after still another four years, giving Truk almost 2300 high school graduates by 1977. (See Table 2). The total population of the Truk District may be doubling every 22 years, but its high school graduate population has been doubling every four. Since 1970, while Truk's entire population was growing by about 25 percent, its number of graduates has increased by 360 percent. Educational expansion on such a grand scale may not bring more mouths to feed, but it surely leaves us with minds to be nourished and other whetted appetites to be satisfied. It gives rise to a feeding problem of a different sort.

We might note here that the stake of females in the high school boom has risen steadily over the past decade or so. In the years 1965-1969 only sixteen percent of the total high school graduates were girls. During the following four years, girls accounted for 25 percent of the total; and in the most recent years, they have made up 38 percent of the number of graduates. Altogether the nearly 700 Trukese young women who have finished high school since 1965 represent about 30 percent of the total graduates. (See Table 3). Education of women, on the secondary and post-secondary level, has become a generally accepted fact in Truk within recent years. With it has come the search for new roles—beyond those of housewife, school teacher, or clerk-secretary—that the young educated females today can assume in their society.

### The Surge to College

Towards the end of August each year, the Truk Airport regularly overflows with swarms of young people, decked out in their Sunday best and heaped with mwaramwars, bidding a tearful goodbye to their parents and friends before they leave Truk, most of them for the first time. They are the latest crop of the

college-bound and their number has become legion of late. Equipped with their I-20 form, a college address and a little pocket money, they are off to just about every conceivable corner of the U.S. to sample a world that they know only through the movies. They leave in search of an adventure. For some the adventure may be an intellectual one, but for most it is an opportunity to satisfy their curiosity about American life and to take up the challenge of "making it" in an alien culture. Still others board the plane in August because everyone else they know is leaving for college and they would be ashamed to admit that they were not going away too.

The mass exodus to college, following close on the heels of the expanded high school enrollments, is an important part of the total education explosion. Even if the upsurge in the number of college-bound does not easily fall into the kind of tidy little divisions that we used in the last section of this paper, a brief historical survey will help us grasp the magnitude of the increase in Trukese college students.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the number of Trukese who attended college remained rather small; there were only 38 abroad at schools in 1966 and 49 in 1970. (See Table 4). Most of those who did go on to college attended the College of Guam, usually on a TT Government scholarship, and resided at a special dormitory for Micronesian students located at the edge of the campus. A few others attended college elsewhere, notably Fiji and the Philippines, on medical scholarships and for other specialized training. A mere handful of Trukese got as far as mainland U.S. and those who did usually went on private scholarships. For the most part, young people who attended college in those earlier years were carefully screened through scholarship selection processes and represented the intellectual elite of their schools.

By 1970 some notable changes had occurred in this picture. Although Trukese college students had not grown very much in number by then, a perceptible drift eastward had clearly begun towards colleges in Hawaii. Scholarship Hall at the College of Guam had been closed sometimes in the late 1960s and the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii had begun to offer technical training courses and other short-term programs to Micronesian participants. Honolulu was becoming the new educational mecca for young Micronesians. Meanwhile, the yearly amount of money made available for college scholarships was growing.

Besides the usual TT Government awards, there were also a number of college scholarships funded by the Congress of Micronesia and still others granted by the district legislatures.

The college tide continued to surge in the early 1970s with the increase in scholarship funds, the initiation of a post-secondary vocational program at MOC in 1970, and the opening of CCM (formerly the Micronesian Teacher Education Center) as a two-year college in 1971. But the greatest impetus of all came late in 1972 when Micronesian students were first declared eligible for U.S. Federal education grants for the economically and socially "disadvantaged." Within a year, Trukese students in great numbers were filing applications for BEOGs and a host of other grants that virtually assured them of the wherewithal to continue their education in the U.S. With the advent of the Federal college grant, pursuit of a college education was no longer contingent upon whether a boy or girl received a scholarship grant. College, in other words, was no longer the prerogative of the intellectually gifted; it became a universal right. As a result, the number of Trukese attending college increased dramatically during these years—from 50 in 1970, to 240 in 1974, to 600 in 1978. Because of the stipulation that these grants could be used only in American institutions, the drift eastward continued, naturally enough, in the direction of the U.S. mainland where two-thirds of the students currently abroad are doing their college studies.

The rise in the number of college-bound Trukese has been, if anything, even more impressive than the increase in the district's high school population. Nine of the Trukese graduates in 1965 went on for further education, as compared to well over 100 in each of the years between 1974 and 1977. The college exodus appears to have peaked with the class of 1976 which had almost 190 of its number continue their studies abroad. (See Table 5).

The percentage of high school graduates going on to college has also increased over the years, but not nearly as dramatically as the absolute numbers might suggest. This is understandable, of course, when we recall that the influx into college was occurring concomitantly with expanding high school enrollment. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, the percentage of college-bound graduates in each year fluctuated between 35 and 50 percent. Only in the last six years, with the availability of U.S. Federal funds for all who want them, has the number of

those going on to college consistently exceeded 50 percent of the class. In 1975 and 1976, the two peaks years, it reached over 60 percent.

Not only is a greater percentage of each graduating class going on for further studies today, but these students are generally enrolling in college academic courses rather than the special training programs that many of the earlier graduates took. Although nineteen (or roughly half) of the 1966 graduates, for example, are listed as having pursued post-secondary education, only seven of these attended what could properly be called colleges. The others went off to special training programs—for police work, practical nursing, surveying and the like—that varied greatly in type and length. In 1972, by contrast, two-thirds of those who went on for further education attended college in the strict sense of the word. All indications are that in more recent years an even higher ratio attend college, although we have no hard data to support this claim.

Especially talented high school graduates, whether in past years or in our own day, have always been virtually guaranteed the opportunity to continue their education. The top third of the class have usually found the funds, generally through scholarships, to go off to college. Today's situation, however, differs markedly from that of past years in this respect: a greater percentage of a much larger and less select high school class are pursuing more ambitious studies programs abroad. Unless the quality of the high schools and their clientel has notably improved since the 1960s, we can only assume that a good number of today's college-bound are insufficiently gifted to meet the challenges of a rigorous college program in a strange culture. This should be borne in mind when considering the success rate of Trukese students in college today.

Even those high school graduates who are seriously deficient in basic skills seem to have little difficulty in finding a college to admit them. The liberal admissions policies of many American colleges today are due at least as much to declining enrollments as to the intellectual conviction that no one should be denied an education, whatever his ability and background might be. Micronesian students are a particularly attractive prize for small obscure colleges today; they not only fill empty desks, but "minority group" quotas as well, thus qualifying these financially hard-pressed schools for coveted federal funds. A number of these colleges have begun aggressive recruiting campaigns in Truk as elsewhere in Micronesia, and the word is out that they will accept anyone who will have them.

Given all these factors, it is difficult to discuss in any meaningful way the success rate of Trukese college students today. Does "success" mean finishing a two-year degree course in a rural community college with an open admissions policy and no academic standards to speak of? Or does it mean completion of a fairly rigorous academic program at a respectable university? Is it "failure" for a student to return home before the completion of his studies if his father is sick, or his funds are exhausted, or he realizes he is hopelessly over his head in college, or he is simply homesick? Rather than attempt to define success and failure here, perhaps all that we can reasonably hope to do is present a summary of the raw data. Between 1965 and 1977, about 270 Trukese students have completed a degree program at some level leading to the reception of an AA, AB, MA or their equivalents, with about 90 of them earning a Bachelor's degree or higher. (See Table 6). During the same period, another 171 have left school for some reason before the completion of their program. If we should choose to regard the former groups as successful, then the "success rate" of Trukese students abroad is 62 percent.

#### What They Do After School

"What will they all do after they finish high school?" is the question that is often raised of young Trukese students today. What they actually have done is rather clear from the data that has been collected. The general pattern that emerges follows those lines.

First they submit their applications to college, work to win their family's approval, and try to scrape together enough money for their plane fare to the U.S. Slightly more than one-half of all the high school graduates since 1965 have successfully managed all of these things and have gone off to college, many of them prompted by the hope of better job prospects after earning a higher degree. Those who, for some reason, do not make it to college look for a job—preferably, it seems, on their home island where family ties still hold a strong attraction for them. In earlier years, it was rather easy for high school graduates to find employment on their own islands as elementary school teachers. Of the Truk High School graduating class of 1966, for example, 25 out of 37 found jobs in education, almost all of them on their home islands. More recently, however, teaching



positions in village schools have become much more difficult to obtain; they have long since been filled by the earlier waves of high school graduates. And there is virtually no other salaried employment available in the villages!

With the lack of openings in the elementary schools, recent graduates who want a regular paycheck are forced to leave their home islands and follow the job harvest. That, of course, leads them to Moen Island where a growing number of young men and women have settled of late. This accounts for the fact that only 45 percent of the Class of 1972 have returned to their home islands to live, compared with 70 percent of the Class of 1966.

If there are no jobs for them on Moen, then most young people eventually leave for their own island where they can at least live off the land and count on the support of close kin. They may dally in the district center for a year or two to "catch a piece of the action" while they half-heartedly hunt for a job, but they soon tire of this footloose life and return home to live with their families and await their turn for a CETA salary. Some will keep a close lookout for an opportunity to get to college, perhaps to temporarily escape the tedium of life on a small island or possibly to improve their chances of finding a job in the future. Most, however, simply marry, have children, and settle into the quiet village life that they had known before their high school days.

Admittedly this description runs contrary to the prevailing myth that high school students, once seduced by the bright lights of Moen, will not willingly "return to the farm." Whether willingly or not, they do return. The facts show that over 60 percent of all high school graduates not currently in college are now living on their home islands. (See Table 7). Of the 400 (or 30 percent of the total) who have taken up residence on Moen, all but 70 have found full salary employment. This latter number, it should be noted, is only slightly larger than that of the high school graduates who have moved from their home island to all the other islands in Truk combined, usually by reason of marriage. The 70 (or five percent of the total) who have remained in the district center without employment include young men and women who have found spouses from Moen and are raising families there besides those temporary drifters who are kicking up their heels a bit before settling down on their own islands. All of this hardly confirms the popular view of the district center as overrun with jobless high school graduates who fast become

habitués of the local jail. Our data shows an altogether different picture: very few high school graduates remain on Moen unless they have found a job (or a spouse) there—and those who do will not usually remain very long.

Much of what has just been said of high school graduates can also be applied analogously to those who have gone away to college. Very few of those who have ended their college studies have chosen to remain permanently in the U.S. or other parts of the world. Our data shows 55 Trukese not now in studies residing outside of Truk District, thirteen of them living in the U.S.; this figure represents a mere four percent of all the graduates who have finished their studies. In short, there has been no appreciable "brain drain" out of Truk up to the present. Nearly all those who have gone on to college in past years have returned to Truk, confident of finding jobs in the district to match their qualifications. Inasmuch as those who have returned with college degrees number only about 200 and have been scattered throughout a period of several years, they have seldom been disappointed. Like the early high school graduates who were fortunate enough to be able to return to both family and a job on their home island, these college degree-holders have found both a cultural home and employment upon their return from abroad.

More of the college-educated are making their home on Moen, as we might expect, presumably because of the availability of better-paying and higher status jobs in the district center. Forty-two percent of those with a two-year degree and 43 percent of those who have earned a four-year degree have taken up residence on Moen. (See Table 7). By comparison, 30 percent of those who have returned after less than two years abroad and 26 percent of those who have never gone away have moved to the district center. It appears, understandably enough, that the greater one's college attainment, the more likely one is to return to Moen to live.

If there has yet been no evidence of any substantial "brain drain" in Truk, we must remember that the real impact of the college exodus has not yet been felt in the district. Almost two-thirds of all those who have gone on to college are still away. Those who have come back, as we have already mentioned, have been absorbed into an expanding economy over a rather extended period of time. In general, those Trukese who have finished college have not yet been required to make the difficult choice between returning home to remain idle or finding a sure job overseas. If in the future employment opportunities in Truk should diminish,

then those in college might face this perplexing decision. Would they follow their homing instinct and return to Truk without guarantee of a job, or would they remain abroad to find salaried employment? As of yet this remains an unanswered question.

### Facing the Job Crunch

A good majority (about 60 percent) of the high school graduates have, as we have seen, returned to their home islands to live. To help us understand what awaits them there, it might be well to take a closer look at one such island—Patta Municipality on the western side of Tol whose population was given as 690 in the 1973 census.

In 1973, when I was living on Patta, there were only twelve high school graduates from that island, all of them employed. Ten were elementary school teachers working on Patta or on nearby Polle, and two had jobs on Moen in health services, one of whom commuted each day from Patta. Nine of the graduates resided on Patta and another lived quite close by.

As of last year, the number of graduates had tripled to 36, but the employment situation in education and health services had not changed very much in the meantime. Eight of the original ten teachers still had their jobs and three people were now working in public health. (The commuter had moved to Moen, but continued to work in the dental clinic.) Two more graduates had found jobs on Patta, one in the district legislature and the other for a small business, while another two found employment on Moen where they now live. The total number working for a salary was now fifteen, a net gain of three jobs in the intervening five years.

What about the rest? Eight of them, one of whom now resides on Moen, are listed as "unemployed" and are presumably tending their taro patches and diving for octopus. Eleven more who are away at college have not even entered the job market yet. When they do, it is highly doubtful that they will find any improvement in the employment situation on their own island. With the local teaching positions filled and the hospital staffed to its budgetary limits, the best they can reasonably expect is a short-term training job funded by CETA. An increase of three jobs and 24 graduates over a five-year period does not bode well

for the future. The picture that our data gives of Patta—as of just about every other island in Truk—is of a woefully stagnant economy that has little to offer those young diploma-bearers who must have jobs to be happy.

"The lucky ones were those Micronesians who finished school in the 1960s and had no trouble getting jobs right away." Anyone who has spent time with today's crop of high school students has probably heard this remark dozens of times over. There is, of course, a great deal of truth to it, and some justification as well for the tinge of resentment with which it is often spoken.

Today's mammoth educational system was conceived in the last decade by planners who were riding the crest of an employment boom. With the implementation of the newly-formulated policy of Micronesianization, many positions formerly held by expatriates were being offered to qualified Micronesians (and often the qualifications meant little more than having a degree in hand!). The new schools that were built in the early 1960s had to be staffed with educated Micronesians, for American contract teachers were being phased out and Peace Corps was soon to finally take a firm stand against deploying its volunteers to fill teaching slots. Moreover, with the yearly increment in the TT Budget, there were new offices conjured into being everytime one looked around—and new desks in these offices to be filled! They were indeed fortunate times for young Micronesians and heady ones for educational planners.

And so the schools were expanded and enrollments soared, while planners kept a far more careful eye on population projections than on employment prospects. Universal education—first at the elementary level, then at the secondary—was the rallying cry of almost everyone in the Trust Territory at the time. But as the schools were filled and the budget reached a ceiling and actually threatened to dip, educators and those being educated alike realized that there was trouble ahead. "Where do we find jobs for all those finishing school?" was the next refrain to be heard.

"Not in the government," was the reply of administrators struggling to achieve that next to impossible feat of laying off personnel. "We're faced with budget cuts and can't afford to be an employment agency any longer."

"Don't expect much of the private sector," was the echo of businessmen. "The day of the big tourist industry just hasn't arrived, and everyone knows that our

expansion depends on government salaries. Where the administration goes, we follow."

"Don't look at us," the educators said. "We only promised you knowledge, perhaps even wisdom, but never jobs. These you will have to create for yourselves."

Out of what?" asked the disappointed school children, who, to take their minds off their unpromising future, went on to more schools hoping that some answer would be found before they ran out of schools to attend and degrees to collect.

Indeed, the massive exodus to college within the last four or five years has softened the impact of the hordes of recent high school graduates on the creaking job market. More than half of Truk's recent high school graduates are still abroad for studies, after all. College, then, has been something of a solution to the job shortage—but only a temporary one, of course. It has merely postponed the day of reckoning for the young and all the rest of us.

Even with more than 600 college students withdrawn for a time from the labor force, Truk has still had to absorb over 1600 high school graduates into its economy since 1965. Considering their number, they have fared surprisingly well. About two-thirds of them have managed to find jobs, the vast majority (76 percent) with the government. (See Table 8). The remaining third—the 500 unemployed—include 200 females, many of whom have probably adopted the full-time role of housewife. The 300 young men who have not found jobs are, as we have already pointed out, well distributed throughout the many islands of the district, not huddled together in a small enclave feeding one another's discontent and plotting violent revolutions. At present, the unemployed comprise an amazingly small percentage of the total number of high school graduates in Truk, and this despite the dormant village economies that have been illustrated above.

How, might we ask, has Truk been able to perform the economic miracle required to find jobs for so many of its recent graduates? Will it be able to duplicate this feat again and again in future years as its 600-plus college students return and high school graduates continue to pour out of its schools?

To answer the first question, we must turn to employment and TT Budget figures for Truk District. A glance at the employment figures reveals that during

the twelve years between 1963 and 1975 the number of positions held by Trukese increased from about 1000 to 2800. (See Table 9). This comes to an average gain of 150 jobs a year during those boom years when the budget was increased annually and private businesses were proliferating. By 1975, however, the budget had leveled off and government reductions-in-force were being announced almost daily. Nonetheless, an astonishing 900 jobs were added in Fiscal Year 1976, and a whopping 1200 more in 1977. Employment in Truk expanded more during those two years than it had in the previous dozen, the heyday of the "growing economy."

The economic "miracle" that gave rise to so many additional jobs and made possible the employment of great numbers of young graduates (and others as well) resulted from funds provided by U.S. Federal Programs. CETA alone employed 1500 persons in the last three years, although not all were on year-round jobs. A raft of other Federal programs, especially in education, health and other social services, accounted for the employment of many others. Just as it was Federal programs that built the schools in the first place, and another Federal program that enabled so many of their graduates to attend college, so it was still others that provided employment for those finishing studies, enabling Truk to avert a major employment crisis.

Can this "miracle" be duplicated in the years ahead? Certainly not at the present level of U.S. Federal program funding. Monies available to be tapped—as the euphemism goes—would have to be incremented enormously in order to provide jobs for all the educated who will seek them. Employment for those 600 college students alone who will be returning within the next four years would cost about two million dollars a year in salaries. In any case, the very existence of Federal programs after the termination of the Trusteeship Status in 1981 is questionable. There may well be no future economic miracles at all. It is unfair, after all, to expect miracles to happen on a regular basis! It's also unrealistic, given the prodigious number of dollars that would be required to solve the unemployment problem in Truk.

Sooner or later, the people of Truk will have to accept the plain facts and learn to live with them. There will very likely never again be nearly enough salaried jobs for everyone who has finished Truk High School and Xavier, and probably not even enough for those who have done their two years at Antelope

Valley or Spoon River Community College. We have a large and costly school system that has been inherited from the 1960s and early 70s and barely enough money to run it, but we certainly do not have the funds to do all this and furnish jobs as well for all the young people that the schools disgorge.

The education explosion in Truk is a fact. Schools need not be shut down, but students and parents ought to know that the aspirations they have nourished will probably not be fully realized—at least not in Truk. No good purpose is served by encouraging them to build castles in the sky. In the past few years, several hundred Trukese graduates, displaying powers of readjustment greater than many of us would have imagined possible, have settled back into their island communities with apparent good grace. A great many more will almost certainly have to do the same in the years ahead. Whether those who are now in college or will soon be there will be willing to do likewise remains to be seen. If they are not, and barring another economic "miracle," we shall at last see the beginning of the "brain drain" in Truk.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF TRUKESE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BY YEAR

1948 - 3	1958 - 5	1968 - 78
1949 - 4	1959 - 6	1969 - 74
1950 - 6	1960 - 9	1970 - 133
1951 - 9	1961 - 10	1971 - 127
1952 - 8	1962 - 15	1972 - 188
1953 - 18	1963 - 25	1973 - 159
1954 - 14	1964 - 20	1974 - 242
1955 - 16	1965 - 38	1975 - 306
1956 - 14	1966 - 61	1976 - 334
1957 - 10	1967 - 54	1977 - 293

Note: Total of graduates listed here is 2,279. For 33 of the 2,312 total used in the study data the year of graduation is not known.

Sources: For years 1948-1964, Paul Williams, "Graduates of MITTS, PITTS, PICS and Truk High School," 30 July 1968. For years 1965-1977, Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Graduates," September 1978.



TABLE 2  
 AVERAGE POPULATION OF TRUK DISTRICT, TOTAL 19-YEAR OLD POPULATION, NUMBER OF  
 H.S. GRADUATES AND PERCENT OF AGE-GROUP GRADUATING

<u>Period</u>	<u>Avg. Truk Pop. for Period</u>	<u>Avg. No. 19-yr Olds per year</u>	<u>Total HS Grads in Period</u>	<u>Ann Avg HS Grads</u>	<u>% of Age-Gp Graduating</u>
1948 - 51	15,000	240	22	5	2.3%
1952 - 64	20,000	340	170	13	3.8
1965 - 69	26,000	440	305	61	13.9
1970 - 73	29,000	550	607	152	27.6
1974 - 77	33,500	670	1175	294	43.9

Note: The 19-year old cohort of the population was taken to represent those who were eligible for graduation.

Sources: Population figures were taken from the reports on the 1958, 1967 and 1973 censuses as well as from the Annual Report to the UN for those years covered.

TABLE 3  
 NUMBER OF FEMALE GRADUATES AND PERCENTAGE  
 OF ALL GRADUATES FOR EACH PERIOD

<u>Period</u>	<u>Total H S Grads</u>	<u>No. of Females</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1948 - 51	22	3	14 %
1952 - 64	170	18	11
1965 - 69	305	49	16
1970 - 73	607	151	25
1974 - 77	1175	441	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2279</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>29</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

TABLE 4  
 NUMBER OF TRUKESE IN COLLEGE AND THEIR LOCATION  
 DURING GIVEN YEARS

	<u>1966</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1978</u>
CCM / MOC	0	0	56	57
Guam / Saipan	23	21	62	72
Hawaii	4	16	52	51
U.S. Mainland	3	4	48	414
Other	8	8	19	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>660</b>

Sources: Figures for 1966, 1970 and 1974 were taken from Annual Report to UN for these years. 1978 figures are from Lynn Ilon. "Trukese High School Graduates," Table 3.

TABLE 5  
TOTAL H.S. GRADUATES, NUMBER OF COLLEGE-BOUND,  
AND PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGE-BOUND BY YEAR,  
1965 - 1977

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total H S Grads</u>	<u>(Corrected Total*)</u>	<u>College-Bound</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1965	38	27	9	33 %
1966	61	53	19	36
1967	54	49	20	41
1968	78	72	19	26
1969	74	74	40	54
1970	133	122	55	45
1971	127	115	52	45
1972	188	169	99	59
1973	159	149	80	54
1974	242	227	131	58
1975	306	280	177	63
1976	334	309	189	61
1977	293	276	117	42

\*"Corrected Total" indicates total of high school graduates minus those whose post-high school career is given as "unknown."

Sources: Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Graduates," Table 1 A.

TABLE 6  
TOTAL TRUKESE H.S. GRADUATES BY SEX, COLLEGE EDUCATION  
AND DEGREE OBTAINED

<u>College Education</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
None	626	369	995
Less than 2 years	127	44	171
A A Degree	149	55	204
B A Degree	62	10	72
M A Degree	15	2	17
Still in School	488	172	660
Unknown	152	41	193
TOTAL	1619	693	2312

Source: Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Graduates," Tables 1A and 3.

TABLE 7  
PRESENT RESIDENCE OF H.S. GRADUATES NOT PRESENTLY IN SCHOOL  
BY ATTAINMENT OF COLLEGE EDUCATION

<u>College Education</u>	<u>Home Isl.</u>		<u>Moer</u>		<u>Elsewhere in Truk</u>		<u>Out of Dist.</u>	
None	613	(67)	239	(26)	40	(4)	26	(3)
Less than 2 years	97	(63)	45	(30)	8	(5)	4	(2)
A A Degree	72	(46)	66	(42)	10	(6)	10	(6)
B A Degree or higher	25	(37)	29	(43)	4	(6)	10	(14)
Unknown	67		52		5		5	
TOTAL	874	(61)	431	(30)	67	(5)	55	(4)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages. The sum of each horizontal row is 100%.

Source: Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Traduates," Table 2A.

TABLE 8  
PRESENT EMPLOYMENT OF H.S. GRADUATES  
WHO HAVE FINISHED STUDIES

<u>Employment</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Education	337	85	422
Other Government	236	109	345
Private	138	99	237
Total Employed	711	293	1004
Unemployed	308	199	507

Source: Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Graduates, Table 5A.

TABLE 9  
NUMBER OF T.T. CITIZENS EMPLOYED IN TRUK FOR GIVEN YEARS

<u>Year</u>	<u>T.T. Govt</u>	<u>Private</u>	<u>Total Employed</u>
1963	449	594	1,043
1967	694	849	1,543
1970	1,077	755	1,832
1973	1,356	1,159	2,515
1975	1,457	1,346	2,803
1976	2,148	1,595	3,743
1977	NA	NA	4,970

Note:

"T.T. Govt" includes only those on the T.T. Administration payroll and does not include persons employed by Congress of Micronesia, District Legislature or municipalities.

Sources:

Annual Reports to UN for 1963 to 1976. Figures for 1977 were taken from T.T. Office of Planning and Statistics, Bulletin of Statistics, Vol. 1, No. 2 (June 1978).

## THE NEW FORMULA FOR SELF-RELIANCE

I remember back in the sixties when Micronesians used to speak with real fervor of the need for self-reliance. It was generally assumed in those simpler days that a self-supporting island state was the ultimate goal and the touchstone of anything that went under the name of economic development. Not everyone was enthusiastic about full self-government, to be sure, but those who were accepted the fact that it meant Micronesia would pay its own way. The glorious march towards self-reliance, as the word was understood in those days, implied a certain degree of material deprivation or belt-tightening in the name of more important distant goals. There might not be as many cars on the road or as many canned goods on store shelves, to say nothing of government jobs available. But the asceticism that would have to be borne was seen as paying rich dividends in the self-esteem and political autonomy of a people who were destined to rule themselves.

I remember high school debaters and would-be journalists holding forth on whether self-reliance would be best achieved by planting rice and bananas or farming the sea. (Superports, manganese nodules and the 200-mile economic zone had not yet entered the political lexicon in those days.) The growing yearly appropriations from the U.S. made some Micronesians sceptical about the realism of eventual self-reliance, of course. Still, there remained a hard core of visionaries—vigorous young students and a handful of political leaders, supported by Peace Corps volunteers and other expatriates—who believed that self-reliance was viable if people only wanted it badly enough. The formula was simple and incontestable: economic development (increased productivity and reduction of imports) + cut-back in cost of government = self-reliance = political autonomy.

But those were the uncomplicated (and naive, some would say) years of another era. That was before universal secondary education, before the advent of CETA and the raft of Federal programs, before the new airfields and roads and sewer systems, before the Single-Pay Plan, before the Law of the Sea and the beginning of the Status negotiations. It was before people had learned that cancer detection units, PEACESAT and special education for the handicapped were basic necessities, not luxuries, for rich and poor nations alike. It was also before

Micronesians had learned that a national income was not entirely dependent upon the pounds of fish or bars of soap or hotel rooms the nation sold; it could just as well be generated through the sale of rights—fishing, defense or denial rights.

Today, ten years later, the four political entities in the Trust Territory are further away from self-reliance than ever. Indeed, one of these entities—the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas—has abandoned the pursuit altogether. The cost of government this year was \$130 million, compared with the \$31 million spent in 1969—a whopping increase, even when allowance is made for inflation. The value of exports for the TT (excluding the Northern Marianas) may have risen from \$3 million to about \$9 million (if the "invisible export" of tourism is included), but imports have skyrocketed from \$10 million to the neighborhood of \$50 million.

No one set out expressly to subvert the goal of self-reliance; it was just a star a bit too distant and faint to steer by. A thousand government functionaries and political leaders found something of real value in the here-and-now purchases and programs that fired their imagination. Bookmobiles, new college facilities, longer airport runways, and extra file clerks or secretaries were all good and useful things, and the money was available—so why not? Somewhere along the way, that romantic old notion of self-reliance was allowed to pass into the shadows and gradually forgotten. It was always something of an embarrassment anyway in this modern age of satellite communication and the global village!

There are a few diehards who now and then still invoke that quaint old principle of self-reliance, but they are fast becoming an endangered species. For the most part, Micronesians and expatriates espouse a different creed: "Eat, drink and enjoy your ample government services, for in a couple of years we'll all become fully self-governing anyway." The outdated vision of the sixties has given way to a new formula: political autonomy can be bought cheaply without the sacrifices and austerity measures that were once thought necessary. The cost of government need not be slashed after all. We can have all the services to which we have grown accustomed and the full number of jobs that they bring. There is a new and painless way to achieve political maturity while maintaining the present level of government services.

If self-reliance means anything at all today, it means a guaranteed income from some source that is adequate to provide us with what we have come to regard as the necessities of life. There is no serious discussion of a major cut-back in government expenditures; the Indicative Development Plan, which recommended such a curtailment, has been consigned to the shelf alongside the Nathan Report, the Stanford Research Institute Report, and those other long-abandoned development programs. None of the three Micronesian status teams that are currently negotiating with the U.S. for self-government are proposing anything resembling a reduction in the cost of local government. Why should they, after all, when they can appeal to a new formula for political autonomy?

The new island states in Micronesia are being built upon two very different assumptions from those that guided the visionaries of the sixties. First is the belief that the existing level of government services in 1979 must be preserved, whatever else happens. Second is the conviction that economic development will gradually happen if only we allow ourselves time and find enough seed money for enterprise. Conservative that I am, I feel uncomfortable regarding both these premises and more uncomfortable still when I see the widespread support that they command. Hence, this article.

My quarrel all along with Federal programs, as with a universal educational system and other costly social programs, has not been that they are culturally destructive or without real merit (although this may be true in a few cases). Most of these programs provide tangible benefits to Micronesians that we all applaud. My objection is only that they are expensive amenities that are unfortunately beyond our means at this point of time. This objection is usually met by the argument that such services are not luxuries at all, but basic needs. Here the dialogue usually stalls. Who is to determine what is an essential service and what is merely a convenience in a colonial territory that is rapidly moving towards self-government? By some quirk of irony, official positions have been completely reversed in recent years. Washington, which ten years ago was busy piling up new forms of financial aid for the TT one upon another, is now calling for modest government spending in line with the avowed goal of self-reliance. Meanwhile, Micronesians who formerly spoke eloquently of keeping costs under control have now become the chief proponents of large government and high budgets.



Isn't it rather incongruous to seek almost total self-rule while retaining the costly burden of a mammoth colonial government, one might ask? Only if we think in terms of yesterday's political and economic formulas, it would appear. Governments may be financed not only by the resources that a nation markets, but also by the rights that it puts on the block. Accordingly, the Federated States, Palau and the Marshalls are bargaining at the conference table with military and denial rights to their territories and are gambling on the willingness of the U.S. to pay enough for these rights to allow them to maintain their present governmental apparatus. In this Micronesian negotiators may well be right, given the recurrent unwillingness of the U.S. in the past to take a firm stand on just about anything. The island-states of Micronesia have pinned their hopes on their own negotiating skills and on America's sense of moral obligation (or shame) rather than on the utilization of their own scant resources.

And what of the dreams of rice fields, pepper plantations, a fishing industry and the other economic development ventures that were conjured up by the romantics of the sixties? They are all very nice and everyone would be happy to see some of these fine projects materialize, but no one is putting his money on it happening. Micronesia's meal ticket is its rights, not its resources, and economic development has lately become a superfluity rather than the imperative it was always thought to be. Increased productivity in a state that is resigned to supporting itself mainly on remuneratory payments for military concessions is hardly an urgent matter. And so the rest of the traditional formula for political autonomy is laid to rest. Import substitution and production of goods and services for sale abroad are really not essential after all!

The new governments in Micronesia plan to go on promoting economic development, of course. The funding plan for the first fifteen years of Free Association drawn up by the Federated States calls for an investment of millions of dollars in development projects once the infrastructure is completed. There will be new attempts to build up commercial agriculture, fishing, tourism and light industries with the money allocated for this purpose. Some planners foresee the day when \$10 or \$15 million annually may be found to capitalize such projects. It's only a matter of sufficient time and money before the requisite business skills are

mastered, an entrepreneurial class surfaces and the economy takes off, some of the hardier optimists maintain.

What they forget, however, is that genuine economic development depends on motivation just as much as on money. People—especially those who dwell in a "tropical paradise"—must have a very good reason for breaking their backs in a factory or field five days a week. A personal income, even a substantial one, is not a strong enough motive to induce the majority of people to take up this kind of work, as commercial farming experiments in past years have repeatedly shown us. Most Micronesians can live reasonably comfortable lives—either off the land or off a kinfolk's government salary—without recourse to this demanding work. For that matter, the governments too will be able to do nicely without their people's productive efforts; they will have no reason to pressure them into taking on work that is not to their liking. A certain number of Micronesians will enter the service industries, of course, even as they do now. Restaurants, retail stores and bars will continue to be the most attractive commercial outlets for talented entrepreneurs as long as there are numerous government salaries to be spent. But productive industries will be generally ignored; those few that are begun will languish and die after a short time.

One does not create a service economy, especially one fueled by a large government payroll, and then expect to turn it around into a productive economy by mere fiat or more dollars. This will not happen—at least if Guam can be used as a reliable gauge. There is no reason for it to happen!

Where do we stand, then? The three political entities presently negotiating with the U.S., as they work out the features of their self-government, are also making economic decisions of enormous magnitude. All three, it seems, are on the verge of confirming once and for all the service economy patterns that they have begun under colonial rule. In doing so, they are effectively ruling out the option of any significant growth in economic productivity—not for lack of money, but for lack of motivation. Economic development in the future will almost certainly amount to nothing more than a proliferation of the same kinds of service industries that have sprung up in the past. Self-reliance, therefore, will mean reliance by Micronesians upon their own abilities to negotiate what sums of money they need in return for whatever marketable rights they are willing to surrender.

I'm sure that this is not quite what those high school debaters had in mind when they rhapsodized on self-reliance long ago. But as events change, so do our real options. It could be that the course Micronesian leaders are plotting is the only viable one at this time. I have full confidence in their judgment; it's just that those conservative fears of mine won't be stilled.

## YESTERDAY'S MYTHS, TODAY'S REALITIES

Island Micronesia with its bleached sands, gentle Pacific rollers, and smiling people is everything that Somerset Maugham or Louis Becke might have led us to believe. Or so, at least, it appears to the bedazzled visitor who steps off the plane for the first time. But we long-time foreign residents of Microensia know better. Each day we see the detritus of modern life—the smashed vodka bottles, the rusty corrugated tin roofs of village shanties, the wrecked cars abandoned off the roads—to say nothing of the wrecked human lives. Almost every week there is a report of another suicide and a story of violence during a drunken brawl. Then, too, there are the signs of those diseases that accompany modernization everywhere in the world; high blood pressure, diabetes and, of course, galloping consumption. Touched by the apocalyptic scene that we survey from our well-ventilated homes, we foreigners mourn for the passing of an age that exists only in literature and a few remote islands, far from the mainstream of Micronesian life today.

Where have the good old days gone, the days of simple wants and a spare lifestyle? If we have come to such a terrible state of things today, what new horrors can we expect tomorrow?

Our Micronesian friends listen to our gloomy prophecies patiently but unconvinced. After all, today's missionaries, like most Peace Corps volunteers and other expatriates working in the islands, are known to be generally infected with a good dose of Rousseauvian romanticism. Our earnest injunctions to our people not to part with their beautiful heritage and to preserve their identity by preserving their past are put off with a smile. Micronesians know full well that they have bitten into the apple, as a Pacific islander so aptly put it as a recent education conference, and there is no turning back now. Under the impact of a century and a half of Western influence under four foreign flags, they have acquired cultivated tastes for schooling, blue jeans and cheeseburgers, and they will not be denied the opportunity to satisfy these tastes. So it is that Micronesians, like their neighbors elsewhere in Oceania, have chosen to march headlong into the modern world with all its vapid delights and neuroses, despite our well-meaning cautions. The islands' future, in the eyes of its people, is as much tied up with multi-nationals, inflation rates and the current price of gold as with breadfruit-pounding and canoe construction.

The pressing issue today, however, is not whether Micronesians will choose modernization, but on what terms they will have it. Will they be able to develop a sufficiently strong economy to support their ever more expensive tastes, while acquiring that degree of political autonomy that they have long desired? Westernization, after all, leaves a people with much more than a fondness for cold beer and perfumed soap; it usually carries the intense nationalist longings that can only be satisfied by self-government that is that in fact as well as in name. The terrible irony of westernization is that while it lays out the dazzling wares of the developed world to the eyes of the colonized, it hands these indigent people the price tag, saying "Only when you are able to pay for all of these things will you truly be free."

Micronesia, which since World War II has been a UN Trust Territory administered by the United States, took a sharp turn in the direction of rapid modernization in the Kennedy years of the early 1960s. The islands, the stage of some of the bitterest battles of World War II, had enormous strategic value for the Pentagon, and the U.S. was determined to retain its control over them for security reasons. On April 18, 1962, President Kennedy signed a National Security Action Memorandum setting in motion policy changes that would, it was hoped, eventually lead to the Micronesian people's choice of a permanent association with the U.S. at the end of the trusteeship. While such a ploy was recognized as running counter to anti-colonial sentiment in the Free World, there was a seemingly genuing belief that what was in the best interests of the U.S. happily coincided with the greatest good for the Micronesian people.

Development theory of the day, with its emphasis on "investment in man," furnished a convincing rationale for the new policies that were soon to be implemented in Micronesia. Development would best be served, the theory held, not so much by investment in factories and other means of production as in the health and education of the general populace. A strong and informed people, bold enough to "break the crust of custom," would in time create their own sources of wealth. Accordingly, elementary schools and dispensaries were built on just about every one of the hundred or so inhabited islands of the Trust Territory. American contract teachers were hired to upgrade the English programs in the new schools, and within a few years Peace Corps arrived to install its volunteers in the classrooms.

By the early 1970s the focus of attention had shifted from the elementary to the secondary school system in Micronesia. New classrooms were built to expand existing facilities and enrollments doubled or tripled practically overnight. But what would all these young people do after they graduated from high school? Go off to college, of course—on the U.S. Federal assistance grants for the disadvantaged that were first extended to the Trust Territory in 1973. With the advent of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant, large numbers of young Micronesians poured into U.S. colleges to obtain the degree that they saw as the passkey to later employment and a share in the "Good Life." A college education was no longer the prerogative of the intellectually gifted, as it had been for years; it had become a universal right.

The magnitude of the education explosion that shook Micronesia can be gauged by a detailed look at just one of the island groups. Truk, with a present population of about 38,000, was producing thirteen high school graduates a year in the early 1960s. Five years later it was turning out sixty; by the early 1970s 150; and a few years later 300. Meanwhile, the number of Trukese attending college jumped almost as dramatically—from fifty in 1970, to 240 by 1974, and finally to almost 700 just two years ago.

Last year \$18 million was spent on education—over twice the total annual Trust Territory operating budget in the early 1960s before the massive infusion of U.S. funds into social services. Currently employing a work force of over 2500 Micronesians, education has become far and away the largest industry in the Trust Territory. When health services, which cost \$10 million last year, are counted in, the total "investment in man" amounts to \$28 million a year.

Has the investment paid off? In one respect, at least, it has. U.S. annual appropriations to the Trust Territory, which have skyrocketed to an average \$75 million over the past ten years (apart from the additional U.S. Federal program funds), make it possible for the government to employ almost 9000 Micronesians. Their payroll, totaling about \$35 million a year, is the backbone of the entire Trust Territory economy. Government spending has made possible the proliferation of services industries—the bars, restaurants, movie theaters and supermarkets—that employ another 7500 Micronesians in the private sector. Trust Territory government payroll dollars, funded by the U.S., pay for the appurtenances of

modernization that are to be seen everywhere in Micronesia today. The tape recorders and stereo sets, the cement-block houses, and the new Hondas and Toyotas are all bank-rolled in Washington, as every educated Micronesian knows full well.

Then, too, there are the obvious educational benefits of the "investment in man" policy that has been adopted since 1963. Close to 10,000 Micronesians now have their high school diploma or the equivalent, and this number will very likely double within the next ten years. Along with their education, they have acquired a desire to claim a share in the relative prosperity of today's Micronesia. Leaving behind the life of semi-subsistence fishing and farming, they are knocking on the doors of government offices in unprecedented numbers in their search for the only sure source of employment to be found. Education may well have brought personal enrichment to their lives, just as it certainly brought the craving for jobs, but it has yet to turn around the economy, as we were promised by those early development theorists. The only sense in which they could be said to have "created their own sources of wealth" is by serving as a pressure for the further expansion of the TT government, and the increase in U.S. dollars that support it, so that it might furnish them with employment in the future.

Meanwhile, the productive sector of the economy stumbles sluggishly along—like the weather, everyone talks about it, but no one does anything. The value of exports for the Trust Territory has risen from about \$3 million in 1963 to perhaps \$10 million today, with most of that figure deriving from the U.S.-owned and Okinawan-operated fishery operating in Palau. In the same period of time, however, imports have grown from \$5 million to nearly \$50.

If, as it appears, the purpose of the rapid modernization program in the early 1960s, with its emphasis on providing social services rather than stimulating economic productivity, was to engender Micronesia's dependency on the U.S., then the program was an unqualified success. As the annual budgets have steadily mounted, services that were once thought of as niceties have come to be regarded as indispensable and demands for new programs continue. Those U.S. dollars that support the swelling Trust Territory bureaucracy are more highly regarded with each passing year. When the U.S. Administration in the mid-1970s held the ceiling on its annual appropriations in an effort to prepare the territory for the end of its

trusteeship, a sudden upsurge of supplementary U.S. Federal program funds came to the rescue and insured the growth of government even in these past few years. The Federal program grants, which increased from about \$5 million in 1973 to a high of \$34 million in 1978, provided new government jobs for that crop of recent graduates who were queuing up outside the Personnel Department office and gave the illusion of on-going economic growth in the islands. The net effect of these programs, of course, was to raise the cost of government to an even higher level at precisely that time that it should have been winding down.

The myth of the "investment in man" approach to development has been quietly laid to rest, but the consequences are very much still with us in Micronesia. The Trust Territory bears the ponderous weight of a government structure that now costs almost \$80 million a year to maintain, about ten times the total value of all its exports. Moreover, there are the thousand or so new high school graduates that swell the territory's labor pool each year demanding their rightful share of the "Good Life." All of this comes at a time when the three political entities into which the Trust Territory has broken down face the end of their thirty-five year trusteeship under U.S. administration. Next year these three entities—the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands—are scheduled to become self-governing states in a peculiar political status that is known as Free Association with the U.S. According to the terms of the Compact of Free Association that has been negotiated over the past ten years, the three states will assume complete control over their internal affairs and a major portion of the responsibility for their foreign affairs. The U.S. has agreed to provide for the defense of the islands and furnish gradually tapering financial assistance over the next fifteen years in return for the right to military access to the islands.

U.S. policy towards Micronesia, at least in some departments in Washington, appears to have changed since the Kennedy era. Perhaps this is due to the growing clamor against colonialism in any guise, much of it originating in Washington itself. Perhaps it is owing to the pragmatic realization that a fettered ally, even when the bonds are forged only of greenbacks, is no ally at all. Whatever the reason, President Carter has made known his intention to accede fully to the requests of the Micronesian people on the matter of their political status, even if they should choose complete independence.



Ironically but understandably, it is now Micronesians who seem to hesitate at the opportunity to gain full independence. Even the limited self-government that they will enjoy under Free Association is a frightening prospect for many islanders, who see it as hailing an end to those prosperous years of growing budgets, abundant jobs and well-stocked pantry shelves. After all, there are still the recently acquired addictions to schooling, blue jeans and cheeseburgers to take account of. Must these and all the other conveniences that the recent years of plenty have brought be sacrificed to the nebulous goal of self-reliance? If so, then the price of self-government may well be too high!

Micronesian political leaders, then, find themselves in the quandary of having to find a way to sell self-government to their people in a palatable form before the referendum on the compact that is scheduled for next year. The cries for austerity measures that they regularly made in the past have become muted in recent years as people have grown more comfortable under fatter budgets and better government services. As recently as five years ago these same leaders commissioned a team of UN advisors to draw up a development plan to assist them in preparing for the termination of the trusteeship. Today that plan, which called for a drastic reduction in the cost of government and a diversion of manpower into the private sector, lies on their shelves ignored. To slash government operations would mean closing schools and dispensaries, curtailing youth programs in the towns, and laying off a large number of government employees. In short, it would be political suicide.

Micronesian leaders, in despair at finding a politically expedient way of imposing those cutbacks which they know are necessary for real economic growth in the future, have lately resorted to another approach. With considerable assistance from American advisors, they have fashioned a new plan that offers the hope of painless economic development. "You can have all the benefits of big government and true economic growth as well," the plan promises, despite overwhelming empirical evidence to the contrary. Indeed, there is reason to fear that it is less a plan than a myth.

Growth of productive industries in Micronesia will be grafted on to the existing economy, the plan holds, without any cutback in government services. In fact, U.S. allocations for governmental operations are actually to be increased by

as much as twenty percent over their present level during the first five years of Free Association. There need be no budget cuts, no reductions in force, and no disjuncture from the present modus vivendi, providing two other conditions are fulfilled.

Economic development will occur, the plan goes on to suggest, if infrastructure expansion takes place at a rapid enough pace to insure the completion of new facilities as development opportunities open up. Hence, the first phase of a vast capital improvements program that covers airfields and docks, road paving, and power and water facilities is being rushed to completion now. The cost of this five-year program, borne by the U.S. under a special funding package, is expected to run to about \$200 million. Even as the first phase nears completion, plans are being made for the next phase of the program which will bring water, power and roads to outlying areas. The unavoidable problem, of course, is that the new facilities that are being built will require additional funds and personnel for their maintenance. Current forecasts put the operational and repair costs for these new facilities at about \$35 million a year, a staggering increase in the burden that the new governments of Micronesia will eventually have to bear.

When the infrastructure is in place, the plan continues, an adequate amount of seed money for development projects will insure the formation of new industries and the generation of new sources of income. Under the terms of Free Association, moreover, generous amounts of money are reserved for capitalizing development projects. Yet, experience in Micronesia over the past two decades has shown that it is not lack of adequate capital that has accounted for the negligible productive activity in the islands. Nor is it lack of entrepreneurial skills. The most resourceful and talented Micronesians in past years have either gone into government service or, if they have ventured into business at all, have gone into the relatively safe businesses such as retailing. Virtually no one has launched into commercial fishing or other productive industries. But why should they embark on such hazardous ventures when there are much surer and easier ways to make a dollar? All of this strongly suggests that economic development is born from real need, not just from ready capital.

But if all else fails and their development plans come to nothing, the island states of Micronesia have a final trump card to play. They can at very least

continue to barter rights—the right to the military use of their land and the right to fish within their 200-mile economic zone—in exchange for a sufficient sum of money to allow them to maintain a reasonably adequate level of government. To do this, however, might be to sacrifice the goal of ultimate political independence.

On the whole, this development plan can provide for the continuation of the fairly comfortable government-fueled economy that obtains today, but it cannot possibly turn it around into a productive economy that will eventually be able to support its own government. If any industry is generated in the years ahead, it will very likely be dwarfed by the expanding costs of an ever-growing government, one that shall have to continue to look to the U.S. or some other foreign government to pay its bills. This, in effect, is to condemn the future governments of Micronesia to the status of permanent dependencies, however much internal self-government they might assume.

Shall Micronesian leaders tear down the extravagances that have been installed in these declining years of the trusteeship or shall they put their trust in the myth that they have been forced to create as a last desperate hope? Caught between the aspirations of their people and the political realities of today's world, they are in an unenviable position which, if anything, becomes worse with the passing months.

Even at the present time, officials from Washington are touring the Trust Territory to search for ways in which new U.S. Federal programs might be extended to the islands. Meanwhile, the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs, Representative Philip Burton from California, is supporting a policy of open Federal grants to Micronesia and other island dependencies. The net effect of such well-intentioned but misguided efforts can only be to make these dependencies even more dependent than formerly. With each Federal program dollar, even if given in the name of humanity for the aging or the handicapped, the future island states of Micronesia move ever further away from the stated goal of self-reliance and political autonomy. In this age of concern for human rights, one would hope that struggling nations-to-be would be granted the right to find their own constructive solutions to social problems that they may have. For well-meaning U.S. legislators and bureaucrats to dangle an attractive array of costly social programs before the Micronesian people is to seduce them from a more

austere, but sounder path of economic growth that is to their best interests in the long run.

In the face of all this, the foreign missionary in Micronesia finds himself in a dilemma every bit as real as that of the local leaders. Shall he utter his caveats, often bread cast upon the waters, at the risk of seeming to presume to speak on behalf of his people even when he speaks to them? Shall he reprove his people for choices that they are making after years spent in encouraging them to make their own decisions and speak with a voice of their own? When all else fails, shall he, in what he still believes to be the best interests of his people, take his case to the American public?

Not long ago I spoke at a seminar on the imperative need of the new states of Micronesia to forego some of the trappings of modernization if they were ever to achieve self-reliance. It was an old theme and one of my former students, after hearing his fill of my criticism of present policies, made a telling retort. He asked why I would deny him and his children the advantages that I myself enjoyed. "You have refrigerators and automobiles and a good education," he said. "why shouldn't we have these things too?" He went on to assure us that if the U.S. is foolish enough to pile one gift upon another, Micronesians can take advantage of its silly liberality without "getting hooked."

I tried to explain to him that, far from denying him the benefits that modernization brings, I wanted to insure that these benefits would be lasting, not fleeting ones. The only sound basis for modernization without surrendering legitimate political aspirations, it seemed to me, was to adopt a gradualist approach. The pickups, air-conditioning units and advanced degrees would come in time, I tried to assure him, but rapid gains in wealth would be chimerical if they were not founded on a solid economy that could support the material desires of its population. If, as a wag once suggested, Micronesia is a society that has champagne tastes with a beer drinker's budget, can't we settle for brew, at least for the time being?

Afterwards in a moment of reflection, I asked myself what I would do if I were in the position of that young man. Probably, I had to admit, push for big budgets, more Federal programs and the other immediate gains that gave the illusion of progress. If I had grown up using a makeshift over-the-water toilet and

had later been exposed to the convenience of indoor plumbing, I don't suppose that I would readily embrace a return to the past in the name of some rather distant and nebulous economic goals. There's something more immediate and compelling about blue jeans and cheeseburgers than full political autonomy—that's exactly the problem in Micronesia these days.

On the other hand, if I were in a legislative office on Capitol Hill, I know that I wouldn't be pushing legislation to pay for that indoor plumbing.