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FROM A TIME OF STARVATION TO A TIME FOR HOPE

(The Relocation of the Bikini Marshallese)

by

LEONARD MASON

"Rongerik Report" (1948)

"The Bikinians: A Transplanted Population" (1950)

"Kili Community in Transition" (1958)

"Bikini Day 1988" (10 March)

"Notes on a Visit to Kili Island" (1988)

Photographs by

LEONARD MASON

# BIKINI DAY 1988

MARCH 10TH  
KILI ISLAND

Dear Dr. Mason,

On the behalf of Minister Henchi Balos, the Council of the Kili/Bikini/Ejit Local Government and all the Bikinian people, it is my honor to invite you to be present on Kili Island for the day of March 10th for our Bikini Day festivities. On March 6, 1946 we were moved from Bikini Atoll to Rongerik Atoll, 140 miles east of Bikini, so that the U.S. could begin the testing of their nuclear weapons. After severe food shortages that resulted in a serious bout with starvation in 1946-1947, we were relocated to a temporary camp on Kwajalein Atoll in March of 1948. Finally, in late September of 1948, we found ourselves on Kili island, 425 miles south of Bikini, where we remain to this day waiting for our atoll to be cleaned. This celebration marks 42 years of exile from our homelands, 40 years since we moved from Rongerik to Kwajalein, 20 years from the time President Johnson prematurely proclaimed our islands to be safe for resettlement and ten years since we discovered the true extent of the damage done to our islands by the nuclear tests. It also marks the 34th anniversary of the March 1, 1954 Bravo blast, the first U.S. test of a deliverable hydrogen bomb. This year is a year of great hope for us as we feel that Congress is moving closer towards giving us the funding we need to do the clean-up of our beloved islands. Please come and help us make this Bikini Day a memorable occasion.

We have scheduled a flight to Kili on Thursday, March 10, at 9 a.m. and will return on the same day to Majuro arriving by 7:00 p.m.

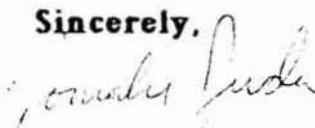
We ask that you please inform us as to whether or not you can attend the ceremonies so that we will be able to make appropriate arrangements.

You can do so by writing: Bikini/Kili/Ejit Local Government  
c/o Jack Niedenthal  
P.O. BOX 1096  
Majuro, M.L. 96960

Or phone 3177 at your convenience.

Thank you very much for considering our invitation.

Sincerely,



Mayor Tomaki Juda  
Bikini/Kili/Ejit Local Government

RONGERIK REPORT

by

Leonard Mason

A survey requested by the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, including a field visit to Rongerik Atoll by L. Mason, 24 January to 8 February 1948. Report was written in March 1948 at the University of Hawaii.

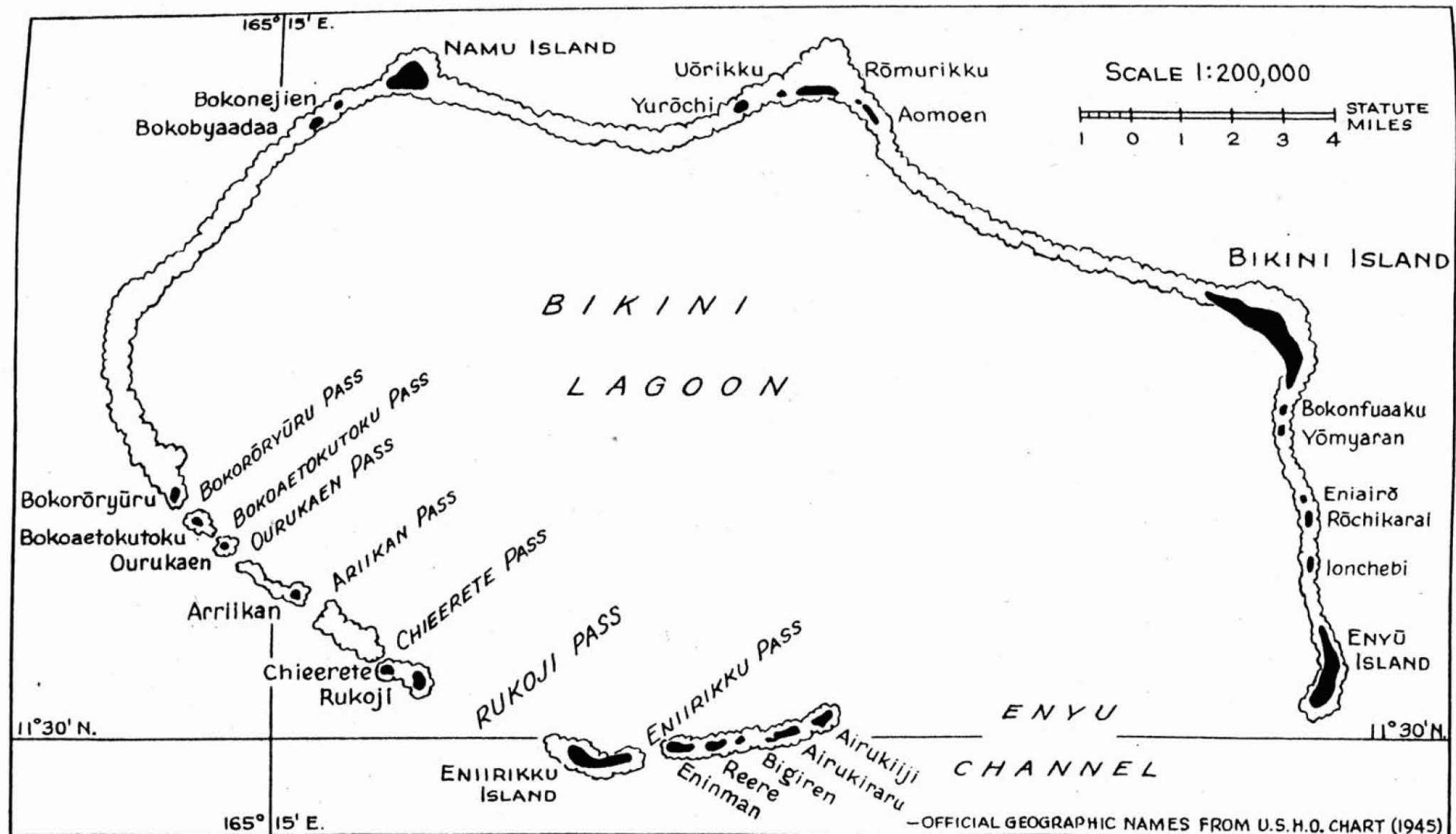


FIG. 2. MAP OF BIKINI ATOLL

RONGERIK REPORT

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. The Bikinians, having resided for nearly two years on Rongerik Atoll, were discovered to be in an extreme state of impoverishment, due to the exhaustion of local food resources, and to the failure of the former Civil Administrator at Kwajalein to assess the true nature of a situation which had been developing within the past year. There was no indication of negligence on the part of the native population for the existing state of affairs.
2. Removal from Rongerik Atoll is recommended as soon as possible. (Already, the Bikinians have been temporarily removed to Kwajalein, and are being maintained on an emergency basis until selection of a final site is made. The present Civil Administration at Kwajalein could not have acted more quickly than they did, when a verbal report from me apprised them of the seriousness of the situation at Rongerik.)
3. Kili Island, near Jaluit Atoll, is recommended as the best site in the Marshalls for resettlement of the Bikinians. All indications at present point to its suitability, but further investigation at Kili should be made to confirm these indications. Lack of a lagoon appears to be no great disadvantage in the minds of the Bikinians.
4. Should Kili be found adequate, guidance and leadership in the techniques of living in the southern Marshalls should be provided for a period of at least six months after the bikinians have been transferred to the island. This guidance will be best supplied in the person of a Marshallese native or half-caste who has intelligence, leadership, and a practical knowledge of the southern Marshalls environment. Specifically, James Milne (Civil Administration interpreter at Kwajalein) is recommended for this task.

RONGERIK - JAN. 31, 1948

(M-76)



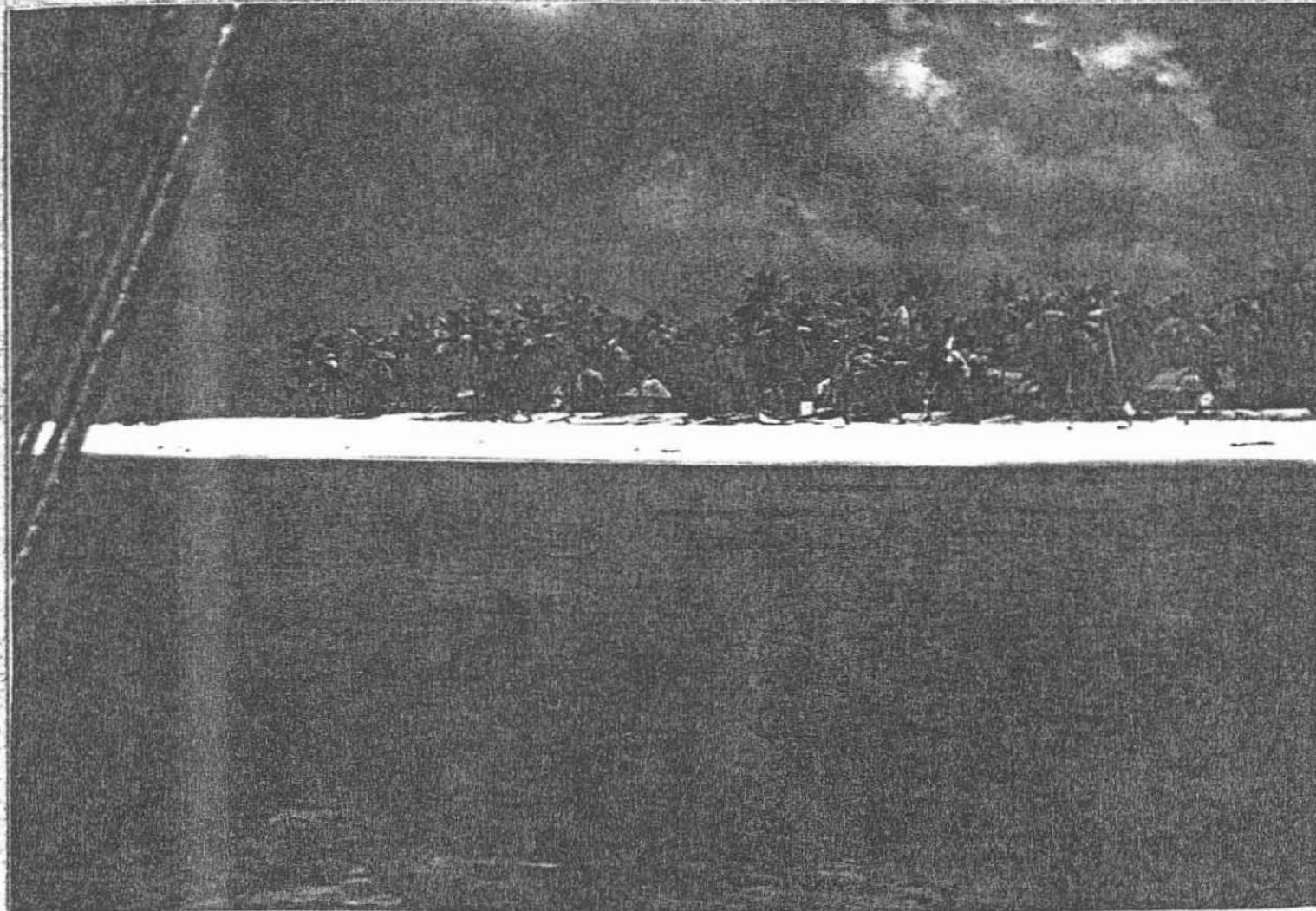
OUTRIGGER COMES TO MEET PLANE FROM KWAJ.

RONGERIK REPORT

Log.....	1
Population.....	5
Evacuation of Bikini.....	8
Organization of the Rongerik Community.....	10
Adjustment at Rongerik.....	13
Community Reorientation in the Emergency.....	17
An Evaluation of Rongerik.....	20
An Evaluation of Ujae, Wotho, and other Marshall Island Areas.....	20
An Evaluation of Kili Island.....	22
Recommendations.....	25

RONGERIK - JAN. 31, 1948

(M-79)



LAGOON SIDE, RONGERIK ISLAND.

RONGERIK REPORT

LOG (24 January - 8 February 1948)

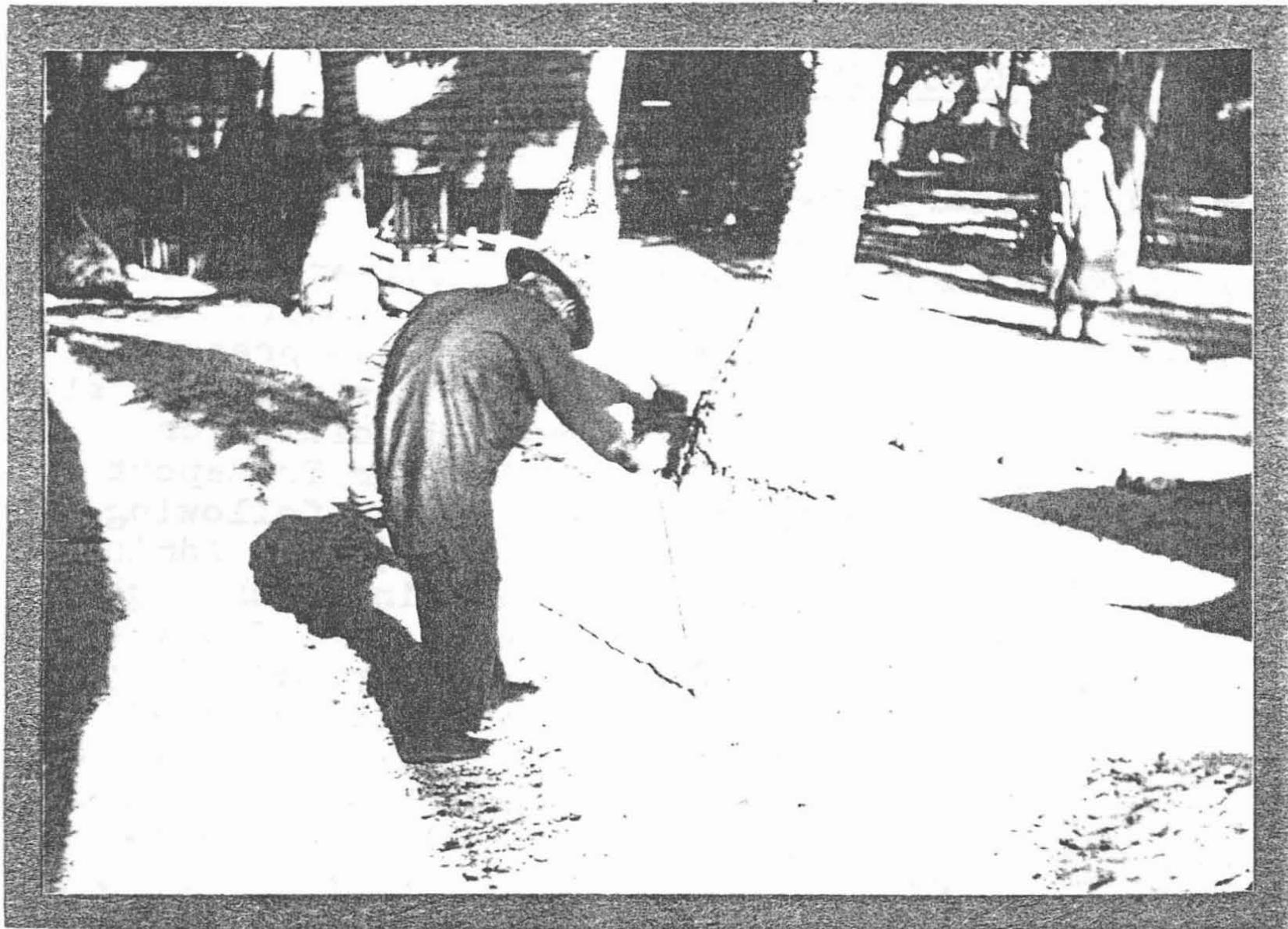
By means of an arrangement between the University of Hawaii and the Commander in Chief Pacific and US Pacific Fleet for the purpose of conducting an investigation into present conditions relating to the displaced Bikinians now resident at Rongerik Atoll (Marshall Islands), I departed Honolulu for Kwajalein at 1615 on 24 January 1948 via Naval Air Transport Service. At Kwajalein air terminal about 0200 the following morning, I was met by Cmdr. E. F. Ferguson, USN (Civil Administrator, Kwajalein). During the next five days in which high winds made impossible any flight to Rongerik lagoon, I was excellently accommodated at the VIP mess and quarters provided by Capt. J. P. W. Vest, USN (Governor of the Marshall Islands). Fortunately, the presence of some fifteen Bikinians at the Native Labor Camp provided means of beginning my investigation. Aid and information on various aspects of the problem were made available by Cmdr. G. M. Malcolm, (SC) USN, Lt. (jg) H. B. Cope and Lt. (jg) William A. Conover (Civ Ad Medical Unit), Mr. John Spivey (Island Trading Company), and Mr. Edward Milne (Advisor on Native Affairs). At Kwajalein and later at Rongerik, I was ably assisted in my relations with the Marshallese by Mr. James Milne, interpreter for Civil Administration; in the short time at my disposal I could not have accomplished as much as I did without his excellent services.

About 1000 on 31 January, James Milne and I departed Kwajalein in a PBY amphibian to land on the lagoon at Rongerik less than two hours later. The usual outrigger transport was provided us by the Marshallese, and our gear and stores were ferried ashore with us. The PBY returned to Kwajalein shortly thereafter. We arranged to occupy an empty thatched hut in the village and hired a young man, Bilemon, to cook and do odd jobs for us. At a council meeting with Chief Juda and a number of headmen (alaps) we acquainted them with the purpose of our visit and requested their cooperation. The rest of the day was occupied with setting our new household in order and preparing our equipment to begin work first thing the following morning. We had two primary questions to answer: (1) given expert guidance in crop production and other food collecting activities together with improved local organization and leadership, is Rongerik supplied with enough food and other local resources to support the existing population of 180, or (2) if not, what other locations in the Marshall Islands would suit native requirements.

Sunday morning brought home to us the extreme condition of want which characterized the population at that time. The morning meal on this occasion consisted of 100 pounds of flour (the last food in the store) mixed with water and served on a

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-188)



LOKWIAR IN RONGERIK VILLAGE.

community basis -- one-half canteen cup for each individual. Further prospects for food that day were not apparent. A taboo on Sunday fishing prevented any attempts to stock the village larder from that source. From extra food stores which we had brought with us from Kwajalein for trading purposes, we contributed sufficient flour, sugar, and salt to make a flour dumpling soup that evening for the entire village. In anticipation of no outside aid for another week, we were compelled to ration our own stores in sharing what we had with the Bikinians. It was on the occasion of this unexpected "feast" that Lokwiar, aged and retired chief of the group, delivered before the assembled throng a remarkable speech in which he emphasized the dire want of the people and the minimal resources of their present home. As in the Bible, he remarked, the people in those days were in trouble and the Lord sent down his own Son from Heaven to live with the people and to give them help; so now the people at Rongerik are in trouble and the Government has sent Mr. Mason to Rongerik to discover their needs and to bring them aid. It is wonderful, he concluded. That night it was difficult to sleep for the frequent crying of babies who were still hungry.

On Monday the weather had returned to normal, and a council meeting was called to organize the day's program of work. Small parties of men were assigned to fish, to plant pandanus and coconut trees, to spray the heads and bait flytraps (if any bait could be found), and the women generally were to continue their labors in handicraft for sale to the trader on his arrival. We learned that these organization meetings had occurred daily for several weeks, that all work was carried out on a community basis, and that the products of work were distributed likewise. Following the meeting, a small supply of arrowroot, which had been processed and brought back earlier by a special work party from another island, was divided four ways and cooked in four sections of the village to provide the only meal in prospect for the Bikinians that day. We continued our survey of the community, house by house, collecting data on individual members of each household, on their recent experiences at Rongerik, and on their attitudes toward possible resettlement elsewhere. At first, we met with considerable opposition due to a psychological atmosphere among the Marshallese which grew up during the administration of Cmdr. E. B. Miller, former Civil Administrator at Kwajalein. Their first reaction was actually one of fear in expressing their true thoughts because they had been rebuffed so harshly on previous occasions by Cmdr. Miller. When we were able to overcome this handicap by a reasonable approach, we found the villagers everywhere anxious to answer our queries. Late in the afternoon, the fishing party returned with 128 small fish, most of which were slightly poisonous -- a fact which did not deter the hungry populace from eating them as the only available food. We contributed four cans of corned beef and eight of evaporated milk for those in the village who required something more digestible. The effects of the fish on human systems were revealed the next morning in the ominous silence which met the dawn

RONGERIK - FEB. 1, 1948

(M-87)



MEN'S CHOW LINE.

instead of the characteristic sounds related to the usual clean-up activity on the grounds surrounding the houses.

Tuesday morning, therefore, the work parties were smaller though organized in the customary manner in the council. Since no other food was on hand, the alaps came to a decision to cut some young coconuts and pandanus for children and old people, even though it was realized that such action would curtail greater returns of mature fruit. This action I was able to counteract by supplying eight cans of beef-and-vegetable soup for those in extreme need (I learned later that in one group, which included 25 children plus a few elderly folk, two cans of this soup had been diluted with one and a half gallons of water in order to go around). Toward noon, Lt. C. B. Watson (Executive Officer, Kwajalein), who was to spend the remaining part of the week with me in my assignment, arrived from Kwajalein in the PBY amphibian. He was informed immediately of the critical situation existing at Rongerik, and we agreed to send back to Capt. Vest a letter summarizing conditions and asking for emergency aid in advance of the trading ship expected the following week. It had also been revealed that a water shortage on the island was approaching a critical stage. The rest of the day was spent in bringing Lt. Watson up-to-date on the local situation. That night we furnished a quantity of rice and canned peaches to feed the otherwise provisionless community. Some more poisonous fish had been caught earlier in the day but were so few in number that we persuaded the Marshallese to use them for flytrap bait instead.

On Wednesday morning, before we could eat breakfast, relief from Kwajalein appeared as the PBY once more landed on the lagoon, this time with Cmdr. Ferguson (Civil Administrator) and Lt. (jg) Conover (Medical Unit) together with a full day's ration of food for the entire village -- oranges, rice, canned salmon, canned fruit, and evaporated milk. Upon receipt of my urgent request of the previous day, the Governor had acted immediately in ordering six additional rations, of the quantity which had just arrived by plane, to be placed aboard an LCI leaving the same night for Rongerik on another mission. Commander Ferguson further told us that the Governor had decided to place the entire Rongerik population on an emergency basis until a final decision was made as to their future, that the seven days' ration outlined above was intended to tide them over until the next week when the regular trading ship would bring four weeks' food supplies -- none of which would require any payment on the part of the Bikinians. The doctor meanwhile had examined the population briefly and declared their condition generally to be that of a starving people. He left a quantity of vitamin tablets and evaporated milk with instructions to the Native Medical Practitioner for their periodic administration. By the end of the day, a marked change in the atmosphere in Rongerik village was evident, for the people smiled more frequently and patted their stomachs in obvious satisfaction after the first full meal in several weeks. Cmdr. Ferguson and his party returned to Kwajalein.

RONGERIK - FEB. 1, 1948

(M-93)



LIKOMEIUKOK.

Work parties were assigned Thursday morning to offload the LCI which had dropped anchor in the lagoon the previous evening. Water, as well as food, was on board the LCI for use of the villagers, but difficulties were encountered in transferring the water to shore. In the meantime, the council met once more; one of the items of business concerned the unanimous approval of Killi Island in the southern Marshalls as the choice of the alaps for a relocation site. Lt. Watson received this opinion and expressed his willingness to transmit that decision to the Governor.

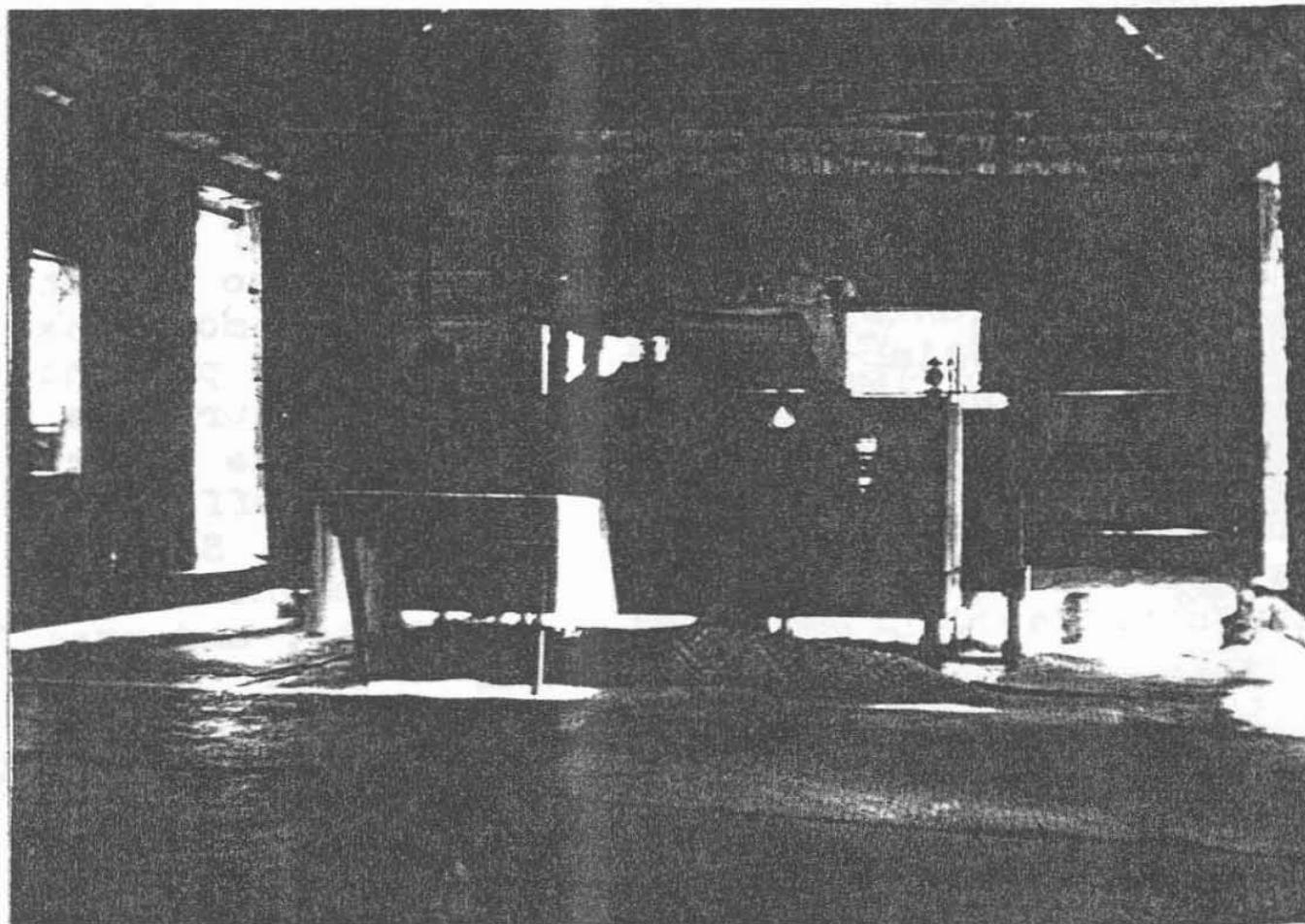
Friday proved to be a relatively uneventful day in a week of recurring visitations from Kwajalein. Most of the day was devoted to cleaning cisterns and to laundering clothes; the water supply was thus further diminished but communal organization of the work assured the most efficient use of the water. That evening, the villagers arranged a farewell party for Lt. Watson and myself, providing song, dance, and the customary gifts of handicraft in appreciation for the series of relief measures taken thus far by Civil Administration.

Saturday proved a climax to a week of surprises for the Bikinians, for that morning the PBY brought the Governor himself from Kwajalein. In a brief conference with Lt. Watson and myself, Capt. Vest presented a plan of operation in regard to the Bikinians and their plight, involving (1) the removal of the entire group from Rongerik after four or five weeks, during which time the labor of some twenty men would be required on an unrelated project on a nearby island at prevailing wages for native labor, and (2) the subsequent temporary quartering of the group at Kwajalein in a tent area specially set up apart from the Labor Camp, for a period necessary to locate a permanent site for them and to prepare it for occupation. During the Kwajalein lay-over the group would be entirely supported by Civil Administration as regards food, while a money income for some would be available through work on the base in various capacities. We were in agreement on the desirability of this action, if the residence at Kwajalein were kept as brief as possible so as not to disturb the normal functioning of the community any more than necessary. In a council meeting with all the villagers present, Capt. Vest presented the plan to the people; their concurrence was enthusiastically given. While he was addressing the assemblage, the LST of the Island Trading Company anchored offshore in the lagoon and supplies began to be ferried ashore. Shortly after lunch, this operation was interrupted for a moment as the PBY took off with Capt. Vest, Lt. Watson, James Milne, and myself to return to Kwajalein -- mission accomplished.

Space was secured for me on a NATS flight leaving Kwajalein for Honolulu at 0700 the next morning, 8 February 1948. An enforced delay at Johnston Island extended the time of arrival at Honolulu to 0200 the day after. I wish to conclude that throughout the fourteen days of my work away from Honolulu, I received on every hand the utmost cooperation from Navy officials

RONGERIK - FEB. 1, 1948

(M-91)



CHURCH INTERIOR.

and other personnel. While some misconceptions regarding the condition and attitudes of the Bikinians were encountered, I was given every opportunity to form my own opinion of the situation -- indeed, I was encouraged to do so. The remainder of this report will deal with various aspects of that situation as I was able to determine them.

#### POPULATION

From 31 January to 7 February at Rongerik I conducted a population survey to provide a base for evaluating the community organization. While time did not permit the completion of the plan in every detail, a fairly comprehensive picture of the group was obtained. The actual population at that time was 167, although 14 additional residents were temporarily located at Kwajalein in the Native Labor Camp; thus, the normal population at Rongerik is 181.

#### Age and Sex Distribution

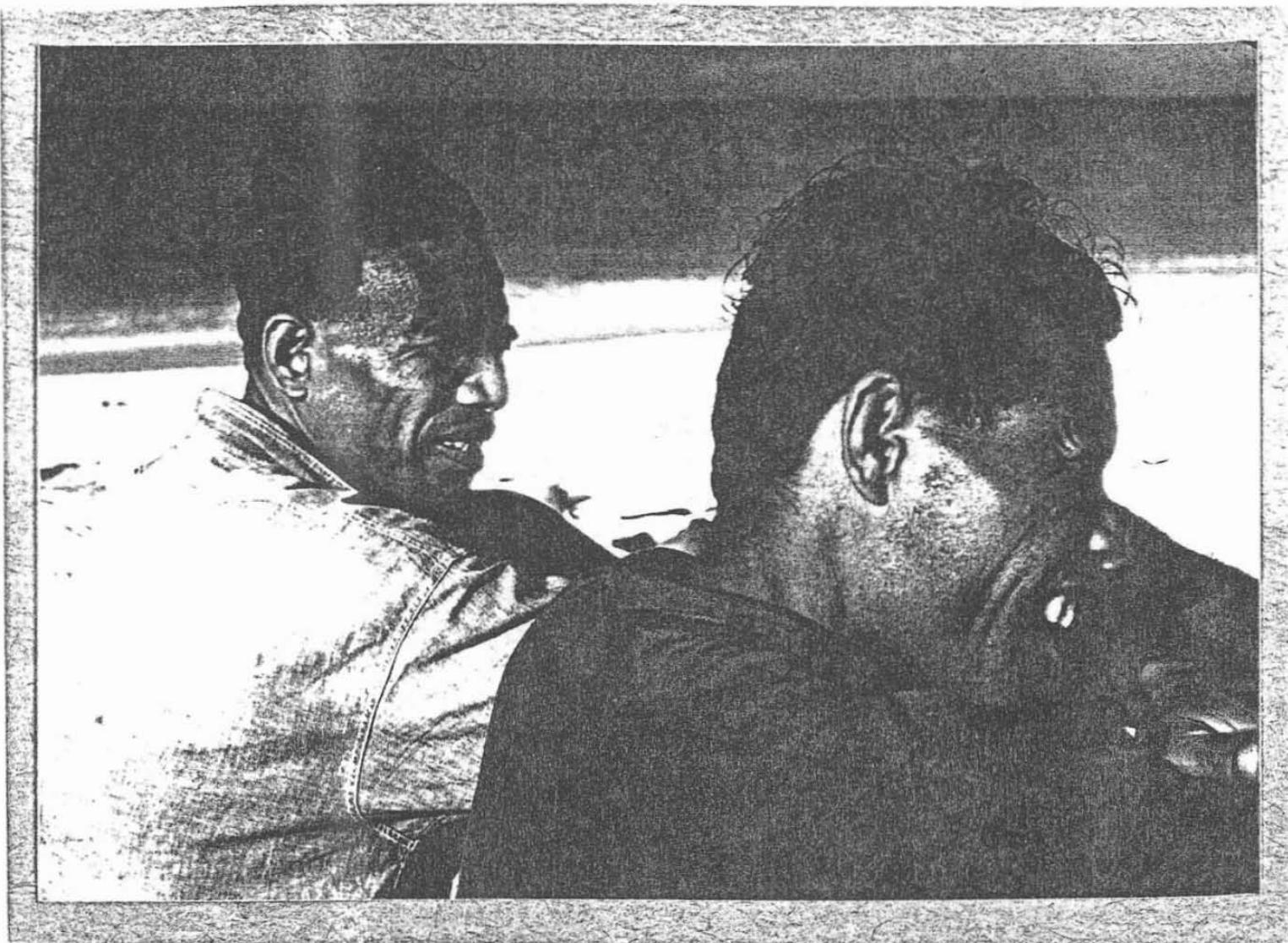
Age Group <sup>1</sup>	Male	Female	Total
76-80	-	1	1
71-75	-	1	1
66-70	2	-	2
61-65	-	1	1
56-60	3	2	5
51-55	4	3	7
46-50	4	1	5
41-45	3	6	9
36-40	5	2	7
31-35	2	4	6
26-30	4	8	12
21-25	13	12	25
16-20	12	15	27
11-15	6	19	25
6-10	12	8	20
0- 5	14	14	28
 Total	84	97	181

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<sup>1</sup> Age in years is that indicated in the records of the Village Scribe, or as corrected by individuals themselves in personal interviews. Actual age may be several years off either way, especially for older people. No records from German or Japanese administrations are available.

RONGERIK - FEB. 4, 1948

(M-203)



JIBAJ AND JUDA ON LAGOON BEACH.

Clan Affiliation<sup>2</sup>

Clan	Male	Female	Total
<u>magaoliej</u>	43	47	90
<u>ijjirik</u>	27	31	58
<u>ri namu</u>	14	14	28
<u>ri bikarij</u>	--	2	2
(not known)	--	3	3
	—	—	—
Total	84	97	181

2 Three primary clans are represented. Each is ranked as follows: ijjirik, magaoliej, and ri namu. The chief is traditionally a member of ijjirik. The alaps are leaders of lineages in the three clans. From genealogies, it is apparent that the number of ijjirik and ri namu have remained fairly constant, but that magaoliej, which four generations ago was in the minority, is now by far the largest group.

RONGERIK - FEB. 1, 1948

(M-94)



MAIN STREET, TO NORTH (TOWN HALL, IN CENTER).

House Groups<sup>3</sup>

House Head	Male	Female	Total
Aitap	2	5	7
Anru	4	5	9
Bedwel	1	3	4
Ejkel	2	2	4
Jakeo	4	3	7
Jamore	2	4	6
Jamwel	2	1	3
Jattol	4	2	6
Jibaj	3	7	10
Joel	3	7	10
Jojaia	3	5	8
Jokru	4	6	10
Jonjen	4	3	7
Josep	2	2	4
Juda	4	3	7
Kelon	2	7	9
Laejo	6	1	7
Lanijit	3	3	6
Lewoj	4	5	9
Libtikoj	6	8	14
Lokwiar	3	4	7
Neiboj	2	6	8
Rujila	2	2	4
<hr/>			
Total	72	95	167

<sup>3</sup> The fourteen individuals at Kwajalein are not included, as in some cases it was not clear to which residence group they belonged. The actual number of occupants varies from time to time as the composition of the household changes to accommodate temporary illness or absence of one or both parents from the island. Generally, the occupants of each house are related by blood, marriage, or adoption (about 50 per cent of the population is adopted, although this does not necessarily mean that the individual is living with his foster parents).

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The Bikinians constitute a very closely related and intermarried group. In the past five or six generations, only five to ten individuals from other atolls are believed to have married into the Bikini population. Likewise, only a few Bikinians have deserted their birthplace to live elsewhere. Prior to 1940, very few Bikinians had visited other atolls in the Marshalls, and where travel had occurred it was confined

RONGERIK - JAN. 31, 1948

(M-71)



JOJAIA, AT STEERING OAR, TO MEET KWAS PBV.

largely to the Ralik chain. In other words, the people of Bikini have a long tradition of isolation from the rest of the world; since the war, they have experienced more inter-island travel on American ships than they had in their own canoes or on German and Japanese ships for a hundred years before. This point must be seriously considered in evaluating their reactions to Rongerik, to Kwajalein as an interim settlement, or to whatever future location is decided upon.

## EVACUATION OF BIKINI

As background, a summary of the evacuation of Bikini in March, 1946 will be helpful. This information is derived from an official report on the move and from interviews with the natives themselves. When "Operation Crossroads" made it necessary to relocate the Bikinians, official notification was given to them in a meeting at Bikini. They indicated their willingness to cooperate, and discussions followed as to a suitable location for resettlement. Counsel was sought from Jeimata, paramount chieftain at Ailinglaplap, whose jurisdiction included Bikini, Lae, Wotho, Ujae, and other areas in the Ralik chain. He is reported to have suggested removal to Lae, Wotho, or Ujae, each of which was already inhabited to some degree. (See table below for comparison of population, land area, and lagoon area of the atolls in question). Jeimata did not favor Rongerik for relocation of the Bikinians because that atoll was controlled by another paramount chieftain at Ailinglaplap (Lajore). However, Rongerik was finally selected as most suitable, probably since it was uninhabited and others suggested were not. Lajore is said to have concurred in the move to Rongerik, but no formal arrangement appears to have been made regarding his future rights to that atoll or to any produce which might result from the labors of the new occupants. He has not been to Rongerik since the move was completed. The Bikinians still feel that they "belong" to Jeimata even though they now occupy land belonging to another chieftain.

Prior to the evacuation of Bikini, the inhabitants (numbering at that time 167) were living in 26 thatched huts on Bikini Island. Other islands in the atoll were used as "garden islands" for additional coconuts, pandanus, arrowroot, etc. The lagoon constituted an important resource in terms of the fish and other marine life available for food. The relative extent of these resources, especially as Bikini is compared with Rongerik, may be seen in the following data concerning the atolls mentioned above.

Atoll	Main Island (Sq. mi.)	All Islands (Sq. mi.)	Lagoon (Sq. mi.)	Population (1946)
Bikini	0.66	2.32	229.4	167
Rongerik	0.17	0.65	55.4	---
Lae	0.24	0.56	6.8	103
Ujae	0.19	0.72	71.8	122
Wotho	0.98	1.67	36.6	36

RONGERIK-FEB. 1, 1948

(M-103)



BLOCK OF PROCESSED ARROWROOT.

Even before the move was made, Rongerik had the reputation throughout the northern Marshalls as a "bad" place. The atoll had never permanently been occupied, although on occasion one or two families from Rongelap visited Rongerik for a few months to utilize the additional resources available there. Bikinians and other Ralik islanders knew all about the supposed association in the mythical past between Rongerik and an evil spirit named Libokra. Libokra once lived in the southern Marshalls, according to the stories, and was reputed to dabble considerably with poisons. Once Rongerik had been a southern atoll, but Libokra stole it one day and hid it among the atolls in the north. Later, she attempted to settle at Bikini, but the good spirit, Orajabto, who lived there, repulsed her, compelling her to flee in turn to Wotho, Rongelap, Ujae, and finally to Kwajalein Atoll where she found refuge on the island of Ebaten at the extreme western end of the lagoon. Everywhere she stopped, her poisons affected the fish (Ebaten and Rongerik are believed to be the worst in this respect). She finally returned to Rongerik where she died, and her body was cast into the lagoon to be nibbled by the fish, who thus became poisonous to an even greater degree than before (some fish are said to have been wiser and did not take part in this feast; as a result, today, they are good to eat). Rongerik coconuts have also been affected by Libokra's presence, say the natives in explanation of the obviously poor quality of the nuts as compared with those from other Marshall atolls. Even one variety of pandanus (wonjeicom) is considered harmful to eat because it was a type preferred by Libokra; one informant described the effects of chewing wonjeicom, as follows: if eaten in the morning, the fruit sickens one toward afternoon with an ache and swelling in the abdominal region, and nausea which continues through the night. About twenty other varieties of pandanus at Rongerik are recognized by the inhabitants today as being all right. In a similar manner brackish water at Rongerik is bad to use -- only one well has been sunk on the main island, and the water tasted so bad that no more wells have been constructed, leaving the population entirely dependent on rainwater caught in cisterns. While all of these beliefs were current among the natives at the time of their move from Bikini, no mention was made of them to Military Government because, as one informant expressed it, the Bikinians believed they would be on Rongerik only a short while and would return to Bikini after the atomic bombs had been tested. It was considered too small a matter to mention in those circumstances.

After preliminary preparation of Rongerik by native and C-B labor, the move from Bikini was effected from 25 February to 8 March 1946. A number of huts were established on Rongerik Island and thatched with materials brought from Bikini. Cisterns were constructed, heads erected near the beach, the church and community house from Bikini were dismantled and transferred to Rongerik, as were fifteen outrigger canoes of various sizes. The entire operation was witnessed, and sometimes hampered, by representatives of several news agencies and newsreel companies. The natives were assigned to new quarters at Rongerik by Juda and the alaps, and occupied the same units in the same number as

RONGERIK - FEB. 6, 1948

(M-266)



LAIJO, LOKWIAR, NEIAUR, MARTA, AND CHILDREN.

they had at Bikini. In connection with the group's reaction to the new location, the official report reads: "The initial reaction was one of satisfaction without enthusiasm. In some quarters a feeling of dispiritedness, and this was not easily dissipated." During my recent visit to Rongerik, my informants amplified this statement: "The first night ashore, the children were told to be careful and not to eat fish or drink until their parents had checked to be sure the food and drink were safe. The people prayed before eating their first meal, and asked God to guide them in the use of coconut, pandanus, fish, and other things on this island which had been the home of the evil Libokra."

Military Government landed stores sufficient to feed the Bikinians several weeks until they could adjust to their new environment -- K rations, stew, chili, tinned meats, rice, flour, sugar, evaporated milk, coffee, and tea. All tools and surplus materials used in the operation were presented to the Marshallese for their future use. A radio communications receiver equipped with a gasoline generator was also donated to the islanders by Commodore Ben Wyatt, then commanding officer in the Marshalls area. (The receiver and the generator are on Rongerik today, rusting away and of no use to the Bikinians -- the equipment was operated successfully only a few weeks).

On 11 May 1946 a radio broadcasting company sent a party to Rongerik to record a program of Marshallese singing as one of a series of special broadcasts in connection with Operations Crossroad. I was present on that occasion, and had an opportunity to talk with many of the Bikinians only two months after they had left their ancestral home. The impression given, even then, was one of homesickness; though dry and limited at best, Bikini was considered more desirable than Rongerik, where the coconuts were too small, the flies too numerous, and the atmosphere hot and stifling.

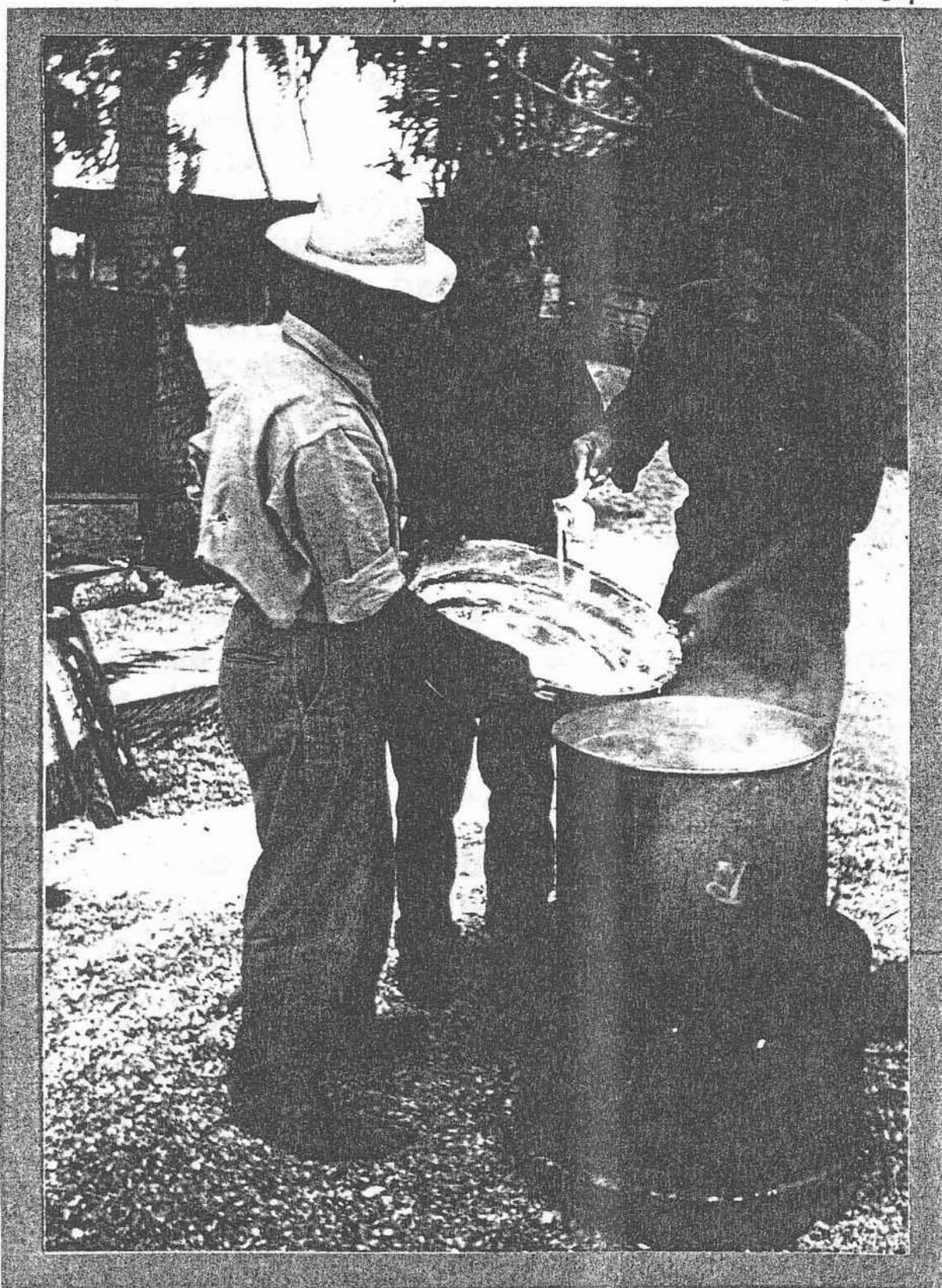
#### ORGANIZATION OF THE RONGERIK COMMUNITY

The Bikinians at Rongerik represent a tightly woven network of persons bound together by ties of kinship and association. Leadership is provided in the positions of chief (iroij) and headmen (alaps) which are inherited in accordance with Marshallese traditions of clan (jowi) and lineage (bwij).

The community at Rongerik is composed largely of members of three clans (ijjirik, magaoliej, and ri namu) each of which is represented in other parts of the Marshalls, especially in the Ralik chain. While ijjirik lineages provide the chiefs, 50 per cent of the population are magaoliej. Each clan at Rongerik comprises the descendants of one family which lived about six generations ago at Bikini. Since the total population appears to have remained fairly constant, except for an increase in magaoliej, this means that some lineages in the past became extinct -- a process in operation today in ijjirik. Each clan

RONGERIK - FEB. 2, 1948

(M-122)



JAMES MILNE LADLES FLOUR/WATER - ONLY FOOD!

is matrilineal and exogamous, that is to say that one's clan affiliation is determined through one's mother (not the father), and that an individual must marry someone not of his own clan. This has resulted in constant intermarriage of ijjirik and magaoliej, of magaoliej and ri namu, and in fewer cases of ri namu and ijjirik. Certain families of different clans have tended to intermarry, the children of brother and sister seeking each other in preference to a more distant relation. In a community as small as that at Rongerik, these marriage regulations and preferences have resulted in nearly everyone being related in some degree to everyone else. This situation has an important bearing on the organization of work activities and on the division of responsibility within the group. Furthermore, it provides excellent reason for maintaining the group as a unit throughout the procedure of resettlement if the latter measure is found to be desirable. The feeling of group identity, of the Bikinian against the outsider, is remarkable.

While the concept of clan acts to regulate marriage, the lineage (an extended family group within the clan) is actually the social unit which functions most in community life. Ijjirik clan is made up of three such lineages today, each of which has its own alap, usually the oldest male relative. Each of the ijjirik lineages is descended from one of three sisters (Likiap, Likajero, and Limarin). These lineages are ranked according to the relative age of the sisters, the oldest (Likiap) taking precedence. These sisters were of the generation born about 1830-1850; their youngest descendants today are four generations removed. Juda is alap in the lineage of Likiap, Jibaj for Likajero, and Josep for Limarin.

In magaoliej clan, there are likewise three lineages, descended from three sisters (Likiaj, Lijbokit, and Likirilim) whose mother (Limok) was a contemporary of the three ijjirik sisters. Jokru is the first alap of magaoliej by virtue of his being the oldest male in the lineage of the eldest sister (Likiaj); Lewoj is alap of the lineage of Lijbokit, although the lone survivor; and Ejkel is alap for the populous lineage of Likirilim. All magaoliej alaps are subordinate to Chief Juda, due to the higher position of ijjirik.

The three lineages of ri namu are the result of marriages of three sisters (Liroj, Likilono, and Lijeko) who were living at the same time as the three magaoliej sisters. The primary alap of ri namu is Jonjen, the oldest male in the lineage of Liroj; Jakeo, of Likilono's lineage, is an alap with no following since that line will become extinct in another generation; and Laejo is alap for Lijeko's people. As in the case of magaoliej, the alaps of ri namu all look to Chief Juda as their superior officer.

The Rongerik "government" rests in Chief Juda and eight other alaps, although in council meetings two or three alaps of the coming generation are often included. Ordinarily the council is composed of the following: Juda, Jibaj, Josep, Jokru, Lewoj, Ejkel, Jonjen, Jakeo, and Laejo. Jajua, under Ejkel in magaoliej, and Jattol, under Josep in ijjirik, are subordinate

RONGERIK - FEB. 1, 1948

(M-104)



JOKDRU.

alaps in lineages which have grown far beyond the average size of a lineage in Rongerik. The offices of chief (iroij) and alap alike are filled according to Marshallese traditions of succession by a younger brother or by a sister's eldest son, a principle which accents the female line and ignores the male line. Bikinians have continued to observe quite rigidly this rule of succession.

Since Juda's technical right to the position of iroij has been questioned by various officials in the Administration, a searching examination of this point was made at Rongerik. Every testimony supports Juda as the rightful heir to that position without question. The iroij succession among Bikinians has been reconstructed as follows: For the generation born between 1810 and 1830, a man known as Lebajirik was iroij. He was succeeded by his sister's eldest son, Lakabwij, who in turn was followed by his younger brothers, Laninjokrik and Lakejbuki. The maternal nephew of these brothers, Lebartace, was next in line, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Laninmaljit. According to custom, Laninmaljit was followed by his older sister's son, Lokwiar, who is living today and reputed to be about 65 or 70 years old; Lokwiar has, however, retired and has relinquished his position to his younger brother, Juda. The kin relationship between Lokwiar and Juda is an interesting one -- they have the same father (Lajurilik of magaolie) but different mothers (Likiotak and Likomweuiukulk of ijjirik, both of them daughters of Likiap). The older daughter, Likiotak, was Lajurilik's first wife and bore him Lokwiar; upon her death, her younger sister, Likomweuiukuik, married Lajurilik and bore him Juda. Likomweuiukuik is today a member of the Rongerik community and, some 80 years old, resides with Juda's son-in-law. From the Marshallese point of view, Lokwiar and Juda are not brothers in the strict sense of the word, since the father doesn't count for much in this respect, but for purposes of succession, the title of iroij has passed legitimately from Lokwiar to his mother's younger sister's son. As there are no other males in the lineage of Likiap, the chief's position will be filled on Juda's death by a man from the next oldest lineage in ijjirik, that of Likajero, whose alap is Jibaj. The Bikinians are in complete accord on Juda's succession to Lokwiar; actually, there is still considerable interchange of ideas between the two men, as Juda is seen frequently conferring with Lokwiar at the latter's home. In a similar way there is also much informal interaction between Juda and the alaps of his own clan as well as with those of the other two clans.

Economic activities appear to be organized as much on the basis of geographical association of individuals in households as on the bonds of blood relationship. There are 26 houses scattered in haphazard fashion along the borders of an L-shaped street which is Rongerik; of these only 23 were occupied at the time of my visit. The composition of a single household is determined by factors of blood relationship, marriage, and adoption. In many cases several households located next to each other formed a compact unit due to close kinship ties existing among the various members. Thus, at one end of the village are four households

RONGERIK - FEB. 2, 1948

(M-131)



JUDA PLANTING YOUNG COCONUT.

associated by reason of a close tie with Jonjen, the first alap of ri namu: one house contains Jonjen, his wife, and their children; a second house is occupied by a married daughter of Jonjen, her husband, and their children; a third house includes Jonjen's brother, the latter's wife, and their children; and the fourth household is composed of the children of a deceased sister of Jonjen, her husband, and a younger sister of Jonjen who took her sister's place as wife and mother. Such a group of people, numbering 34 in all, would share the use of a large outrigger sailing-canoe, constructed by the men on a cooperative basis, and employed in a cooperative fishing expedition. Likewise, when one of the houses required new thatching, the women of the group would contribute their labors in making thatch panels of pandanus leaves, and the men would tie the thatch to the roof frame. The coconut and pandanus trees growing near the four houses would be considered the property of each household and could be drawn upon for food or construction material at any time by members of the group. Perhaps five or six other groups of this sort exist in Rongerik, although time did not permit a detailed investigation of this point.

#### ADJUSTMENT AT RONGERIK

Natural resources at Rongerik are extremely limited. The only agricultural products available in normal times are coconut, pandanus, breadfruit, and arrowroot.

Breadfruit, the staff of life in the southern Marshalls, occurs hardly at all on Rongerik. I counted only six trees on the main island, and the fruit was reported to be exceedingly small in season. The climate is too dry and the soil is too sterile to support breadfruit trees in the latitudes of the northern Marshalls generally. Of course, there are no papayas, bananas, or taro at Rongerik for the same reasons.

Pandanus appears to grow fairly well, and there are a number of varieties available. The adverse effect of one variety, wonjeiom, has been noted in connection with Libokra. However, the fruit of pandanus is not large at Rongerik, and there is said to be very little in surplus during the season of maturity for purposes of preservation. Plantings of pandanus have been made regularly in recent months in an attempt to replant an area which was destroyed by fire in May, 1947 -- an area about one-fifth of the main island.

Arrowroot is an important staple in the northern islands and has been plentiful at Rongerik, though the product itself is small in size. The Bikinians, however, have exhausted the supply on the main island of Rongerik, leaving only the smallest arrowroot in the ground for the next crop. Operations had extended to and nearly depleted all supplies of arrowroot on other islands in the atoll. Much work is involved in processing arrowroot into meal, used customarily as an ingredient to be mixed with pandanus or

RONGERIK - FEB. 5, 1948

(M-225)



LIEOEQ AND JAKEO.

coconut; in itself, it is nutritious but far from palatable, being in taste and consistency something like laundry starch, when dissolved in water.

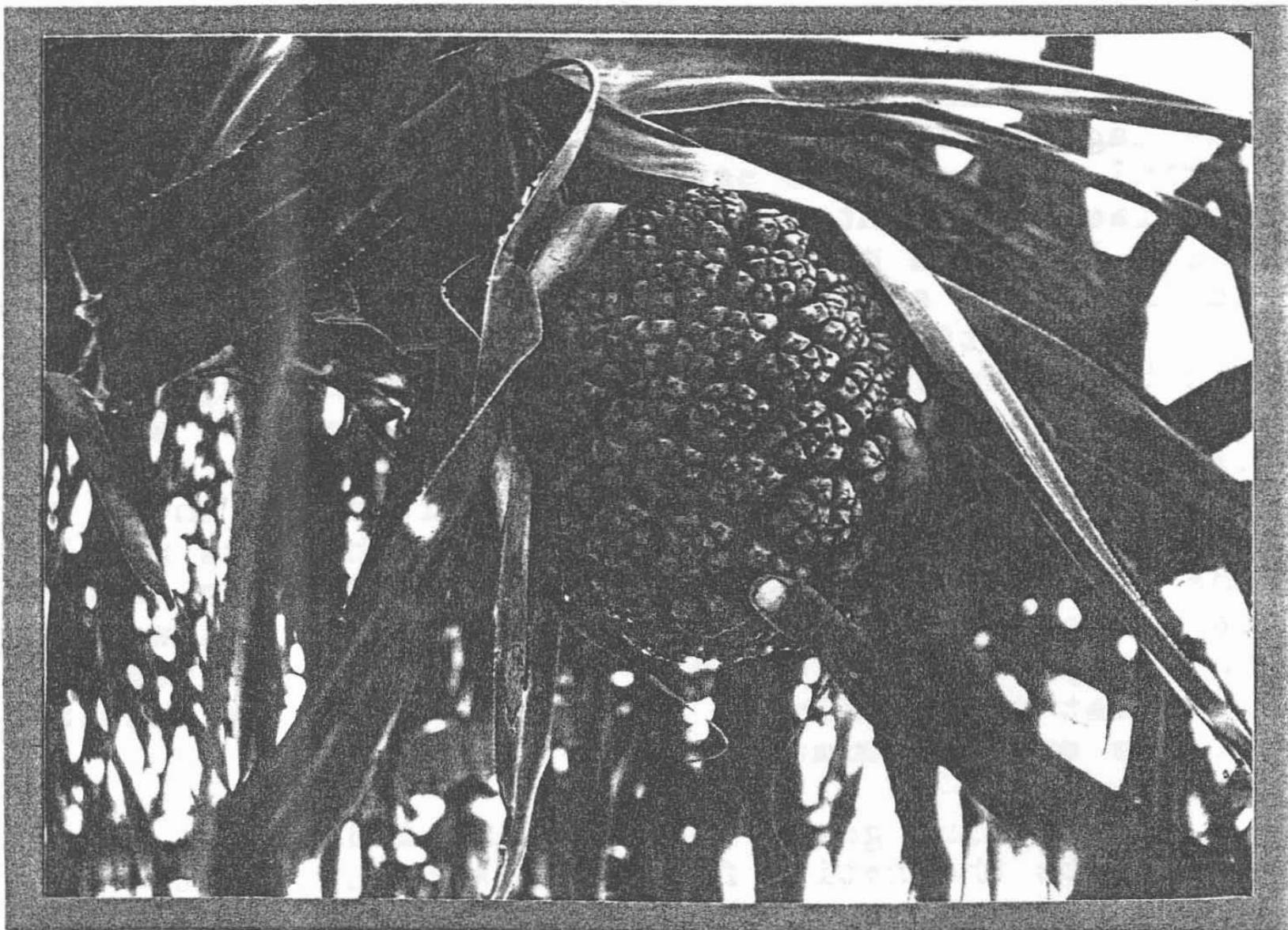
Coconuts are small and not particularly good to taste at Rongerik. Some use has been made of the sap (jekaru) obtained by tapping the inflorescence of the tree, but techniques for this operation are not as efficient as farther south. When the Bikinians first arrived at Rongerik, they report, a good supply of coconuts was available for awhile, but the continued use of coconut exhausted the crop in a few months. Then, according to some informants, all the coconut trees ceased production, beginning in August, 1946 -- like nothing they had ever encountered previously. A short time later nuts appeared once more on the trees. In December, 1947, when the food situation became critical and stores had given out, the alaps discussed the possibility of cutting out certain coconut trees to obtain the heart-of-palm, an action which they all realized would still further restrict their future food supply on the island. The practical necessity of obtaining food at the moment overrode any objection of that sort; a few trees were selected, and the palm-hearts were carefully rationed among families having children or old people. When this practice was brought to the attention of Civil Administration officials a few weeks later, a ban was placed on the killing of trees in this manner but no immediate steps were taken to remedy the situation which gave rise to the cutting. As with pandanus, many young coconut sprouts have been planted in recent months in a kind of reforestation program; while the pandanus seems to have thrived, the coconut plantings do poorly, many of them wilting and falling to the ground. This latter condition is more characteristic of certain parts of the island, especially on the outer side.

Fishing at Rongerik has not been satisfactory. Many of the lagoon fish have proven to be poisonous, even some which at Bikini were good to eat. During my stay at Rongerik, fishing parties were sent out three times; out of a total catch of 160 fish, 150 were of a species known as utot which causes numbness in the limbs and a diarrhea for about 24 hours. Due to limited boat facilities in recent months, much of the fishing activity has been confined to a few areas in the lagoon near the main island, and the fish there have become wary and difficult to catch. In normal times, should such a wariness be encountered, the Marshallese fishermen would alternate those areas with others in another part of the lagoon, but this has not been possible in the existing circumstances. Sea food other than fish appears to be extremely limited at Rongerik. Small clams comprise about the only resource of this kind; during the week of the Bikinian's greatest need, only 30 such clams could be obtained for the use of the entire community.

Fishing gear, such as line and hooks, is not adequate or suited to the native fisherman's requirements. The Island Trading Company is aware of this deficiency and is making every effort to

RONGERIK - FEB. 2, 1948

(M-142)



PANDANUS FRUIT.

procure the proper items for all Marshall islanders. Particularly lacking in Rongerik are the items needed for deep-sea tuna fishing.

Fifteen outrigger canoes were brought from Bikini to Rongerik in March, 1946, of which eight were equipped with sail. Only four of the sailing canoes can be used today, and three of these are in need of constant repair. Sailcloth is required to recondition some of the canoes, others need Manila rope for sheets and halyards, and all urgently need quantities of sennit (coconut fiber cord) to replace old and worn lashings on the outrigger. Sennit cannot be made at Rongerik in quantity due to scarcity of the fiber and to its poor quality. ITC has been aware of this requirement by the Bikinians and has just purchased and received from Truk (Caroline Islands) 10,000 feet of sennit at one-half the cost which pertains in the Marshalls. No new canoes have been built at Rongerik because wood of the proper size and quality is not available. Bikini was rich in hard kono wood, but Rongerik has virtually none. Breadfruit trees in the other Marshall atolls supply much timber for canoes, but even these are practically non-existent at Rongerik. Driftwood is the only other practical resource.

Bikini canoes, like those made at Eniwetok, are the largest in the Marshalls, and the people of those two atolls are expert in handling their sailing craft on the high seas as well as in the lagoon. From June to September, 1947, Bikinians were making frequent trips of six hours by outrigger from Rongerik to Rongelap in order to relieve the strain on limited food resources at Rongerik. Old people and children especially were sent to Rongelap for a month or two, and returned with surpluses of coconuts, clams, and other staples from Rongelap. These trips were usually made by three or four canoes in company, never fewer than two for safety reasons, but the people at Rongerik today are unwilling to undertake the same trip considering the poor condition of their canoes at the present.

As regards clothing and housing, the Rongerik community is adequately prepared. Of the 26 houses erected, three are empty at the moment due to the absence of some villagers working at Kwajalein. All houses are well thatched with pandanus leaf and the side walls are neatly panelled in the same material. As customary in the Marshalls, interior furnishings are restricted to a number of mats, kerosene lamp, bedding, and wooden chests for storage of personal possessions. The general appearance of the interiors impressed me as neat and clean, in conformity with the appearance of the village area itself. Everyone has sufficient clothing, although men's marine greens and women's dresses fashioned from mosquito netting and other service fabrics were considerably in evidence. The striking similarity of cloth designs and colors encountered at Sunday church gatherings is necessitated by a lack of variety in store stocks, but little concern on this matter has been expressed in the face of the acute food problems facing the community.

RANGERIK - FEB. 6, 1948

(M-261)



BILIB, SON OF LIBTIKOJ.

Since the Bikinians moved to Rongerik, the ratio of their exports to imports has undergone a progressive change in the direction of greater dependence on imports and an almost complete decline of exports. No copra has been processed for export at Rongerik due to the greater need for coconuts as food. In any case, to quote from the Military Government report: "The quality of coconuts did not appear high; the potential copra yield from Rongerik Island could be estimated as modest at best, and the remaining islands of the atoll looked unpromising from this standpoint."

Manufacture of handicraft provides the only other important source of money income in the Marshalls. In this respect the work of the Bikinians is not of the highest quality. Although adequate supplies of coconut leaves exist from which to make fans, a good quality of pandanus leaf for mat-work is not available; moreover, the fire in May, 1947, destroyed many pandanus trees, thus sharply curtailing even the quantity of this raw material at Rongerik. As for kono wood, a fine-grained, brown hardwood used elsewhere in the Marshalls for curio manufacture, it has already been pointed out that Rongerik is sadly lacking in this resource. Handicraft purchases by the U. S. Commercial Co. trader from the people at Rongerik for the past 22 months (1946-1947) total \$3,074.80, or about \$10 annual income per capita. These purchases are itemized by lots, as recorded in Military Government monthly reports:

March	1946	\$ 107.50
August	"	134.95
November	"	374.85
February	1947	508.25
June	"	288.50
August	"	272.10
September	"	456.65
October	"	588.00
December	"	344.00

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Total income from handicraft at Rongerik (1946-1947)	\$3,074.80
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A minor source of money income is gained by a small percentage of the Rongerik population by employment in the Kwajalein Labor Camp, and in salaries paid to Magistrate, Scribe, Medical Practitioner, and School Teacher. Most of the money earned in this way at Kwajalein is dissipated there and does not benefit the Rongerik population to any great degree.

The annual income of Bikinians, therefore, since they have been living at Rongerik, amounts to a few dollars annually for each individual. With this limited cash income, the community must buy from the trader such desired items as rice, flour, sugar, biscuits, tinned foods, matches, kerosene, fishing gear, cloth,

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-163)



TOTAL FISH CATCH OF THE DAY!

sewing materials, cigarettes, composition books, and the like. The U. S. Commercial Co. has maintained a store outlet at Rongerik with a native storekeeper in charge; accurate figures are not available for all of 1946-1947, but from invoices held by the storekeeper, it appears that from March, 1946 through January, 1948, the Rongerik people bought over \$6,000.00 in store goods from the trader (USCC, and after January 1, 1948, ITC). Food purchases increased in proportion to other goods toward the end of 1947, and for the months of November and December (1947) and January (1948) amounted to 92 per cent of a total \$971.69; this reflected the increasing dependence of the Bikinians as local food resources on Rongerik became exhausted. Their income, however, did not keep pace with their expenditures, and as of 5 January 1948 the community was in debt to the Island Trading Company in the amount of \$641.16. On 30 January 1948, Mr. John Spivey, Island Trading Company representative at Kwajalein, was notified by his superiors at Guam that it was not in accordance with the policy of the Company to extend credit to the Micronesians; arrangements were immediately made by the Civil Administration at Kwajalein to assume the indebtedness until such time as the Rongerik problem was settled.

#### COMMUNITY REORIENTATION IN THE EMERGENCY

The week preceding my visit to Rongerik represented the most extreme food shortage in the history of the Bikinians, and came as a climax after months of gradual exhaustion of the Rongerik resources. As the Navy medical officer observed on Wednesday of the week following, "These people are starving." The stormy weather prevailing during that critical week effectively prevented any attempts to fish, even in the lagoon. Diving parties operated off the reef to secure a meager supply of 30 or 40 small clams (me jowor); children and old folks were given young coconuts for the milk and soft flesh, as well as for what could be derived from the softer part of the shell itself; small amounts of coconut toddy (kekaru) were collected for infants; and babies nursed at their mothers' breasts. For the community of 167 natives, the only other food available was flour -- enough that when mixed with water into a kind of gruel each individual received one-half canteen cupful each day of that week.

Under the stress of these sub-marginal conditions at Rongerik, the entire community became reorganized as a single unit, operating in the most communalistic manner I have ever chanced to witness. All work was contributed for the welfare of the community (not the family or the clan, as customary); the products of whatever activity were equally distributed among all members of the village. This kind of organization was supervised by the "government," or Chief Juda and the alaps. Four districts (bukwons) were established within the village, each under the leadership of an alap: Juda, Jibaj, Jokru, and Jonjen. Juda and Jibaj divided responsibility for households headed by ijjirik persons; Jokru was in charge of households under the authority of

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-156)



LIUA AND FAMILY; WITH REAB

magaoliej persons; and Jonjen likewise vis-a-vis ri namu. Roughly each bukwon comprised about 40 or 45 individuals. Fish, arrowroot, and other available food supplies collected on a communal basis, were always divided into four equal shares, each for one bukwon, to be further subdivided among its members by the alap in charge.

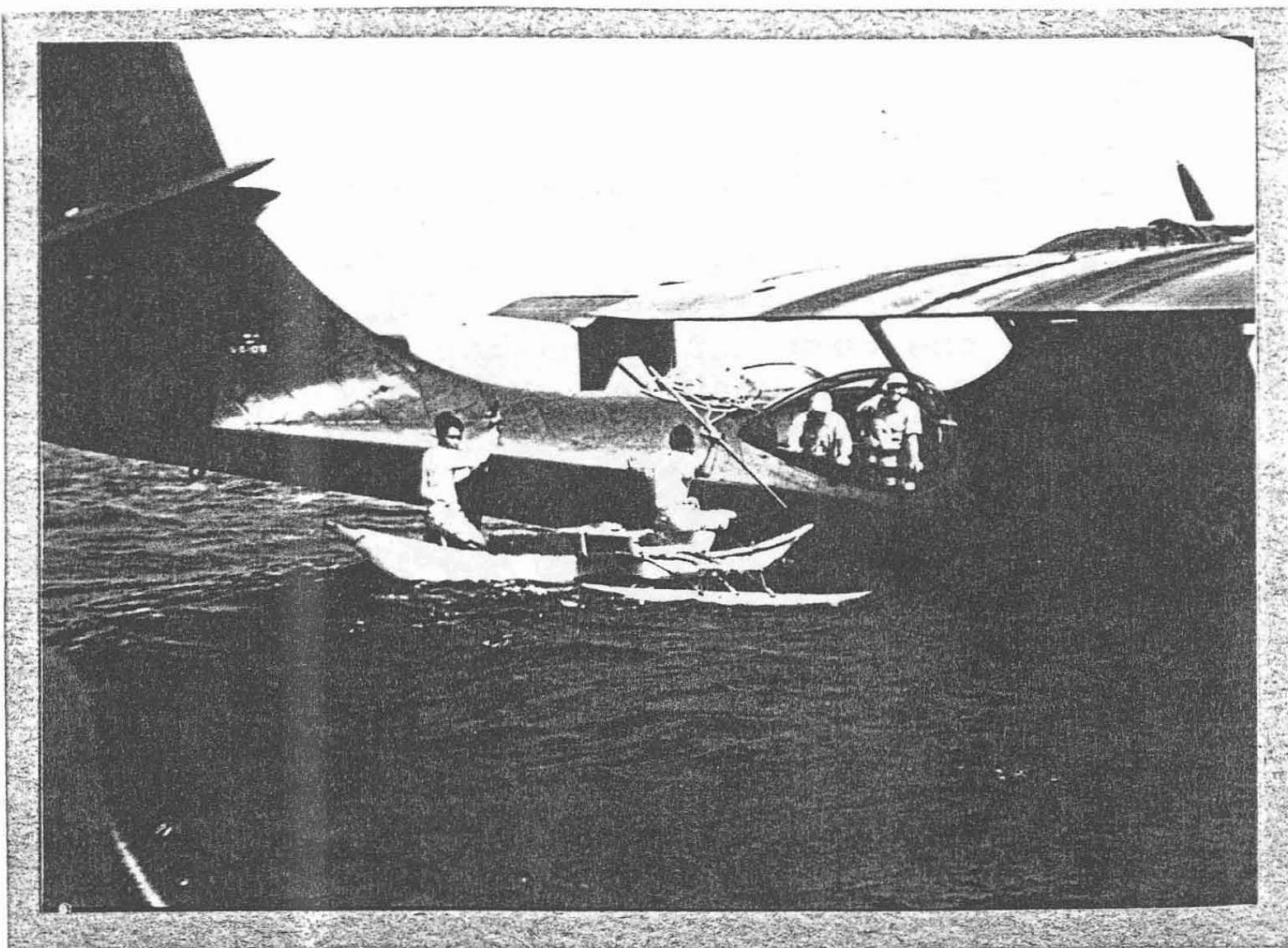
As an integral part of this reorientation, a new institution has come into being -- the daily morning meeting of the chief and the alaps in the community house to plan the day's work for the entire village (this occurred every day of the week except Sunday when religious taboos (Christian) on work were rigidly observed). On the morning of 2 February 1948, such a meeting was called to order about 8:00 a.m. As a prelude, the native missionary offered a prayer that God would give them knowledge to choose the best men that day for the work to be accomplished. Chief Juda then announced that groups of men would be assigned to fish, to plant coconuts and pandanus, and to spray the latrines, while the women were to continue their work in handicraft manufactures. All work was to begin immediately after the meeting; if anyone was physically unable to work that day, the "government" should be informed, and he would be excused. The native medical practitioner read off the names of men assigned to each detail: (1) to fish -- Anru in charge, Ejkel, Jeladik, Emon, Joel, Laejo, Bobori, Mark, Lanijit, and Kiron; (2) to plant -- Josep in charge, Jonjen, Jakeo, Lewoj, Jojaia, Jokru, Jukua, Jamore, Bilip; and (3) to spray -- Bilemon and Antipaj. Those who were to fish would take the two canoes in best condition, one group to fish on the other side of the lagoon with drop-lines, the other group to trap fish with net and leaf-surround off a nearby island. Those who were to plant would each be responsible for five coconut sprouts and five pandanus slips, and when finished would return to help the women prepare leaf materials for handicraft. The sanitation detail would spray all latrines with disinfectant and would try to find bait for the flytraps. The next item of business concerned some arrowroot which had been collected from one of the other islands by a party of men returned late the preceding afternoon; if, after it had been divided among the four district groups, it was discovered that there was insufficient for all, the food should be given only to the old people and children -- the rest were to wait for the fishing party to return. School for the children would be held in the community house after the "government" had concluded. The meeting was adjourned.

The assigned tasks were carried out as ordered. The arrowroot proved to be enough only for the elders and the children. The planters completed their duty in the outlying areas of the island, and returned to aid their womenfolk. The latrines were sprayed, and some flytraps were baited with discarded coconut shells which had already been scraped through by individuals attempting to wrest some nutritive value therefrom. The women continued throughout the day their weaving of coconut leaf fiber into fans and belts to be sold to the trader.

The fishing parties returned shortly after 4:00 p.m., having spent most of the day on the far side of the lagoon. The

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-181)



KWAS MILITARY GOVT PLANE ARRIVES.

first canoe to beach was met by the hungry adults, but only seven medium-sized fish comprised the catch. The second canoe brought 121 small fish, most of which were called utot and known to be slightly poisonous; however, since only a small piece of fish would be received by each individual, all were willing to suffer the slight inconvenience which they knew would result the next day. All of the fish were carried up the beach and thrown on the sand, and Juda directed one of the men to divide the catch into four piles of equal numbers, good fish and bad alike. A representative of each bukwon came with a leaf basket and carried away his group's portion to be further divided among the households in his district. The fish were cleaned by the women and roasted on coals in the family cook-hearths; the meager meal was eaten at the fire, each person sucking the flesh from the bones of the fish or part of a fish which constituted his share.

If the occupants of a house desire some of the coconuts or pandanus fruit from trees growing in their yard (and normally their exclusive property), permission has to be gained from the "government." Such permission is usually granted if the case is an extreme one, as when a 74-year-old woman got angry one morning because she was hungry and wanted something to eat; there was nothing else available, and her grandson was sent by the house-head to ask Chief Juda for permission to cut a green coconut for her. She was finishing the last of the coconut's soft shell with a spoon when I arrived to interview the family.

Likewise, rainwater from the cisterns was rationed by the "government" in the face of an extended dry spell. Five of the eight concrete cisterns (each about 8 x 8 x 5 ft. inside) in the village area were empty during my visit, and in the three others a total of 6 ft. 4 in. of water remained (a little over 3,000 gallons of water). Even with each household reduced to one bucket of water per day, the supply on hand would not last through February; no amount of rain was expected during February or March. The water supply in the northern Marshall atolls is always marginal at best during the winter months, but the case at Rongerik was even worse, due to the fact that no brackish wells had been constructed.

Criticism has been leveled at Chief Juda by Administration officials for the manner in which he has rationed store supplies in this emergency. It was reported to me at Kwajalein that on 10 January 1948, Island Trading Company had left stores at Rongerik, including 1,000 pounds of rice, 800 pounds of flour, 200 pounds of sugar, and miscellaneous biscuits, tinned meats, and evaporated milk -- considered as sufficient to carry the Bikinians for six weeks until the next trading visit; one week later, I was told, the store was empty and no food was in evidence in the village. This situation was checked in detail at Rongerik, and the following information secured. The trade order was delivered as stated, and all items were checked into the store by the native storekeeper, Jamore. The "government" announced that the community would receive a daily ration of one 100-pound

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-179)



JOEL, ON GANDE TO MEET KWAS. MIL GOVT.

sack of flour, or rice, alternating until the supply was exhausted; this ration would be supplemented with minor quantities of the other items as long as they lasted. The first day after the trading ship had departed, one bag of rice (\$15.00) was sold by the storekeeper from his stock; he was paid by individual contributions, approximately 10¢ each, as determined by the "government." This rice was divided by the bukwon leaders, under Chief Juda's supervision, into two parts to be cooked in the chow-halls set aside for use of men and women respectively. While rice and flour were bought on a community basis, other items in more limited quantity (tinned meats, biscuits, and evaporated milk) were purchased separately by alaps with money received by their womenfolk from sales of handicraft, and were divided equally among the households contributing. The second day saw 100 pounds of flour used in the same way as the rice the day before. The sugar lasted only four days (Marshallese have become accustomed to use an inordinate amount of sugar), but the rice and flour together constituted eighteen days of rationed food; with some stretching of rations toward the end, the last remaining bag of flour was sold and eaten on 1 February, the day after my arrival at Rongerik. The significant fact in this situation is that with little or no available foods locally, the community was almost completely dependent on store food, and that for 167 individuals the ITC stores offloaded at Rongerik on 10 January could not have been expected to last more than three weeks at the most, let alone six weeks. This fact has been recognized in the determination of rations being given to the Bikinians at the present time, while their case for the future is being considered.

#### AN EVALUATION OF RONGERIK

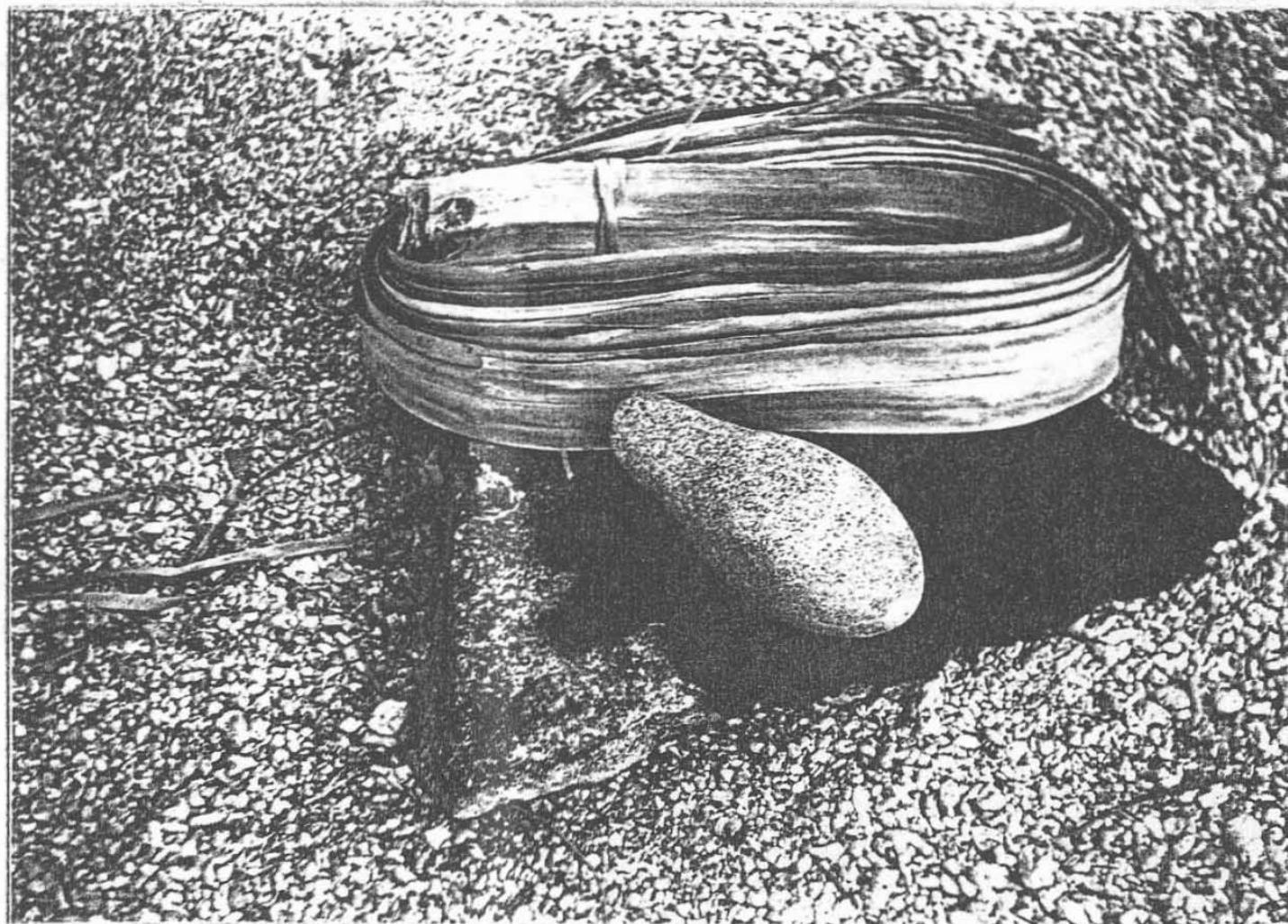
From the foregoing statements, it is obvious that, in the words of the Bikinians, "Rongerik cannot support 180 people now, and probably never could be made to do so without so much expense and labor that no purpose would be gained." As one native remarked, "Rongerik is really all right -- but there isn't any food here." James Milne, my interpreter and a resident of Ebon in the southern Marshalls, told me several days after our arrival, "A Marshallese from the south would die on this island within a week." The Bikinians were unanimous in their willingness to depart from Rongerik the next day, if presented with the opportunity. In such a way, the answer to our first question was obtained. If not Rongerik, where else then? Places proposed include Ujae and Wotho Atolls and Kili Island, an inspection of which was made by Civil Administration representatives and four alaps (Juda, Jibaj, Jajua, and Ejkel) from Rongerik late in 1947.

#### AN EVALUATION OF UJAE, WOTHO, AND OTHER MARSHALL ISLAND AREAS

The atolls of Ujae and Wotho, southwest of Rongerik, have previously been considered as possible relocation sites by the

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-192)



PANDANUS LEAF AND CORAL POUNDER.

Bikinians and by the Administration. Both atolls lie within the political jurisdiction of Jeimata, paramount chief of the Bikinians. Conferences in 1947 between Jeimata and the alaps of Ujae and Rongerik produced a proposal to set aside two islands (Ebeju and Enealamij Is.), at the far end of the lagoon from Ujae Island on which the bulk of the atoll's population is located. Each of these islands is smaller than Rongerik Island, and resettlement of the Bikinians on them would necessitate a division of the community into two groups which would be some 10 or 12 miles distant from each other; such a division is inadvisable in view of the integrated character of the Bikinian people. Furthermore, some 120 people are already settled at Ujae, and while food resources there are reported to be much more abundant than at Rongerik, a serious question is raised as to whether a combined population of 300 could be supported indefinitely on the atoll. The attitude of the Bikinians themselves is that Ujae "is a good place, with plenty of coconuts, pandanus, breadfruit, and even pigs, but perhaps after one year or five years there will not be enough for all." In August, 1947 the conclusion of Dr. Howard MacMillan, former USCC agricultural production specialist, regarding relocation of the Bikinians at Ujae, was: "To double the population on these few acres of mediocre land is a mere expedient which in the end would lead to a greater problem. Ujae cannot support a much greater population than it now has. The agriculture does not warrant a greater burden."

Much the same argument applies to Wotho Atoll, although the total land area is larger than either Ujae or Rongerik, and its present population is only 36. The location of Wotho in the northern dry belt, however, would eventually produce other problems if the Bikinians were settled there, for with the inevitable population increase resulting from an efficiently administered American health program, another migration of the Bikinians would be in order. The possibility of dividing the Rongerik population between Ujae and Wotho should not be seriously considered for reasons outlined above in connection with the community's integration.

In exploring other possibilities for relocation in the Marshall Islands, a useful device is the comparison of existing population densities, as computed from atoll population and total atoll land area. An index number may be assigned to each area, representing the number of individuals per square mile of land area. The single island of Mejit, according to such a computation, is the most densely inhabited area in the Marshalls with an index of 526; the other extreme is Wotho Atoll with an index of 21. While Mejit Island stands out alone, four atolls (also heavily populated) are found to fall within a second bracket -- Namorik (366), Majuro (350), Ebon (337), and Rongerik (292); of these, the first three all lie within the acknowledged rich southern belt, abounding in breadfruit, taro, papaya, and banana, while the fourth is dry, sterile Rongerik. Most of the Marshall areas fall within a density range of 186 to 100, representing areas in both Ralik and Ratak, both north and south.

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, 1948

(M-195)



RUTH, JOEL'S WIFE, AND DAUGHTER WASHING CLOTHES.

There are nine uninhabited areas in the Marshalls today: Ailinginæ, Bikar, Pokak, Erikub, Jabwot Island, Jemo Island, Kili Island, Knox, and Taka, of which only Kili Island presents possibilities for resettlement. If the Bikinians were settled on Jemo, Bikar, Jabwot, or Taka, the index numbers would leap to 818 to 3,000. If Knox Atoll, south of Mili, were chosen, its index would become 473 which, though quite high, is not an accurate representation because Knox is made up of 20 or 22 small islands, each too small to support more than a few individuals at most. Erikub and Ailinginæ would be indexed at 305 and 166 respectively, but each (like Knox) is composed of small islands and also is located in the arid northern belt of the Marshalls. Pokak (Taongi) is not only small but is located so far north of the Marshalls as to be often omitted from a listing of Marshall Island areas. Kili Island, the remaining uninhabited area, will be considered at length in the last section of this report.

If the Bikinians were resettled on other already populated atolls or single islands, the following fifteen areas would all be above the typical density pattern for the Marshalls, and even then would fail to take into account the fact that total land areas do not give an accurate picture of habitable areas, although totals of many small islands may be impressive.

Mejit Island	776	Ailuk	273
Lib Island	683	Aur	231
Namorik	534	Jaluit	218
Lae	505	Arno	211
Ujae	419	Likiep	200
Ebon	418	Namu	197
Majuro	400	Ailinglaplap	185
Utirik	340		

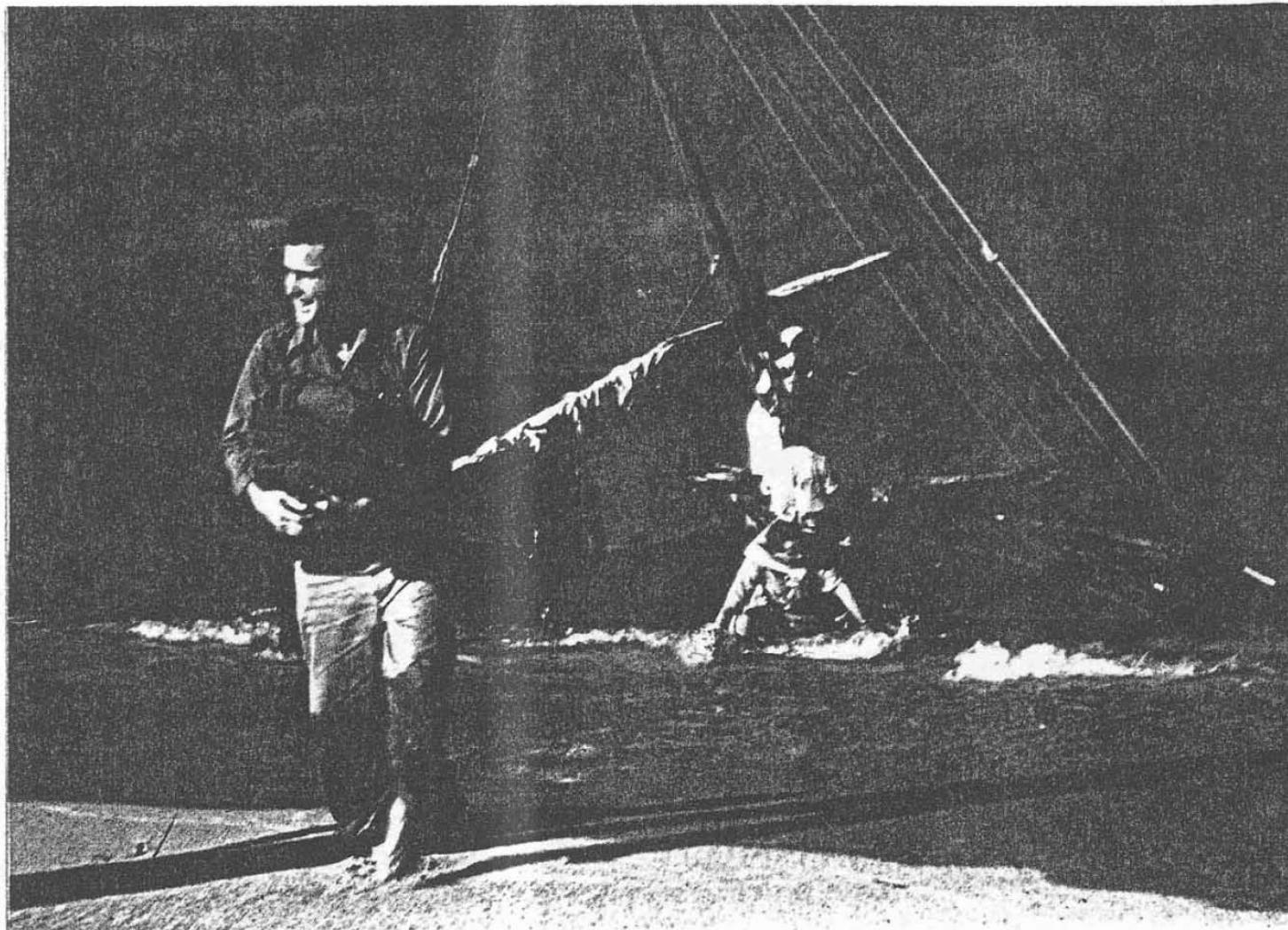
Wotje, Kwajalein, Maloelap, and Mili, if their populations were combined with that at Rongerik, would comprise the next lowest bracket of index numbers, but it will be noted that, in each case, the largest island of the group has been the target of American bombing and shell-fire, and is no longer available for human habitation; thus, these indices are actually deceptive and must be discarded as not representing potential absorption of additional populations. Wotho Atoll would be reclassified at 129, instead of 21, and Rongelap Atoll at 91, instead of its present index of 32, but both are atolls in northern Ralik, generally considered as undesirable or marginal at best.

#### AN EVALUATION OF KILI ISLAND

Since it is not my fortune to know Kili Island first-hand, I submit the following description from Dr. MacMillan's report of August, 1947: "Kili has an estimated area of 230 acres, most of them highly productive. The entire dry portion of the island has been planted to (coconut) palms of superior quality.

RONGERIK - FEB. 4, 1948

(M-207)



KUAS MILGOVT MEDICAL OFFICER ARRIVES.

In the center is a grove of breadfruit trees. On the west side are three low areas, two of which could be transformed into taro acreage, and a third into another taro swamp or opened to the sea for a boat refuge. The taro swamps when perfected would afford growing conditions for bananas. On the southwest sector is a planting of a newer, highly productive palm, not yet reaching maturity. There is a dense ground cover of germinating coconuts which could be cleared in a short time. It seems obvious that papaya, limes, pandanus, arrowroot and some other introductions would do well. With a little imagination and leadership, Kili could be transformed into an economically secure and productive place. There is no lagoon."

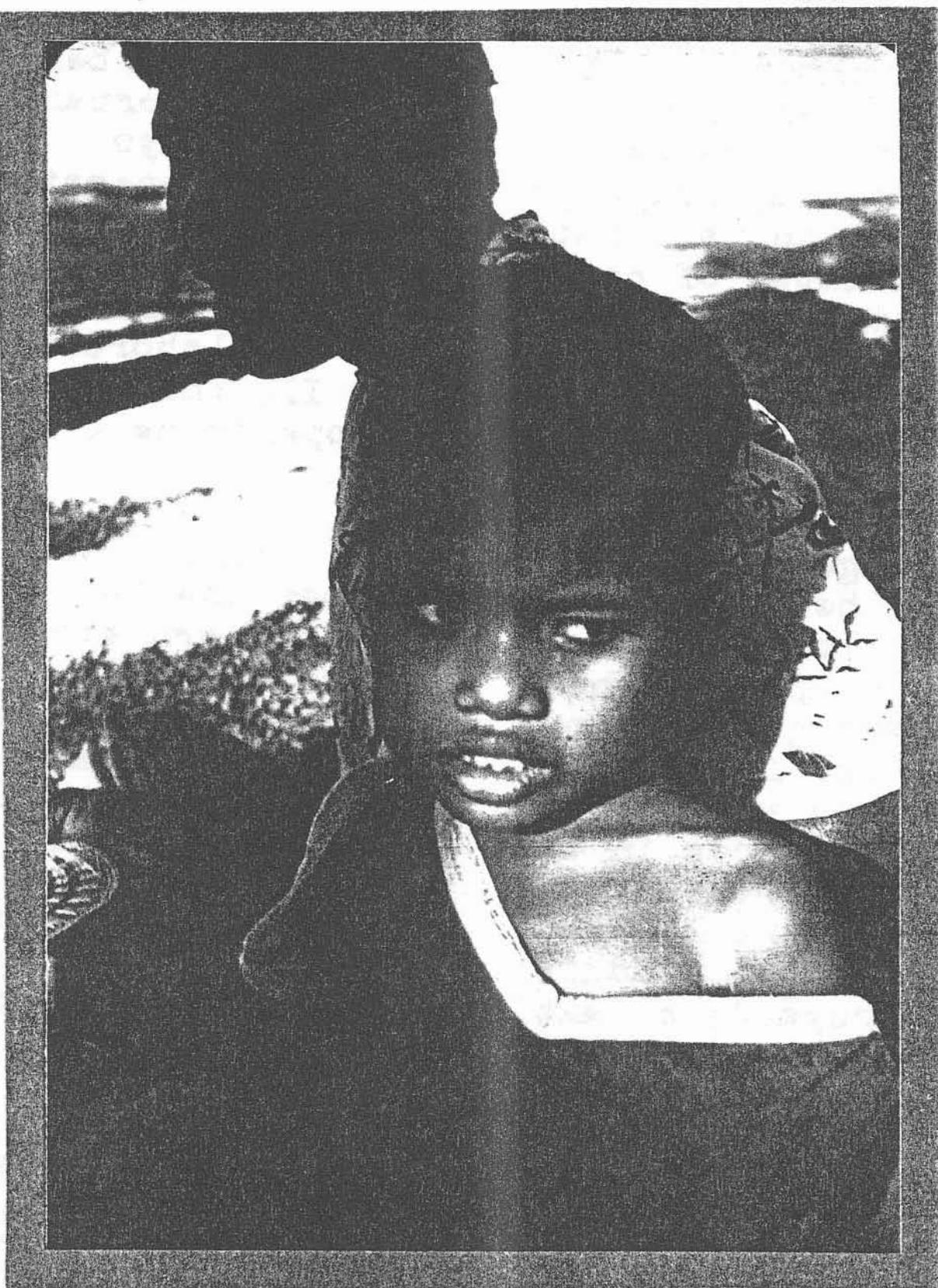
Kili Island, though lacking a lagoon and only 230 acres in extent, has in the past been a site of German and Japanese commercial operations. Kili once belonged to the chiefs of Ralik, but during the second half of the nineteenth century was purchased by Adolph Capelle, a German trader. With Marshallese labor imported from nearby atolls, Capelle's German foreman began to develop Kili as a coconut plantation for the production and export of copra. Some years later, when bankruptcy faced Capelle and Co., Kili was taken over by the powerful Jaluit Company. Before 1900, however, the island was leased, or sold on long-term basis, to Herr Bok, another German. Bok extended the plantings on Kili, and raised island production to the level of the best producing atolls in the southern Marshalls. After all German properties were confiscated by the Japanese in 1914, Nanyo Boki Kaisha (South Seas Trading Company) continued to operate Kili on a commercial basis with paid native labor imported from nearby atolls. Native estimates of copra production at 60 tons annually during Japanese times are reported to be less than the production achieved by Bok, whose relations with his laborers seem to have been much happier. Since World War II, the United States holds title to Kili, as captured enemy property held in trust for the United Nations.

Kili is twice as large as Rongerik Island. In terms of local resources, there can be no comparison between the two islands, for Kili must be classed with the rich southern atolls of Ebon, Jaluit, and Ailinglaplap. The advantages of Kili, both in the variety, quality, and quantity of food plants and in the potential income to be gained from the coconut reserves, cannot be overlooked. In comparison with Mejit Island, previously cited as the most densely populated area in the Marshalls, Kili is only half as large, but it is perfectly reasonable to suppose that its 230 acres could support 180 people, since Mejit supports a population of 380. Kili has the additional benefit of being located more favorably as regards climatic conditions suitable for intensive agriculture.

The only drawback in the case of Kili is the lack of a lagoon, or other sheltered area for canoeing and fishing. The weather at Kili is reported to be such that several months of each year are characterized by such high seas that no approach

RONGERIK - FEB. 3, (948)

(M-176)



JOEL AND BOY.

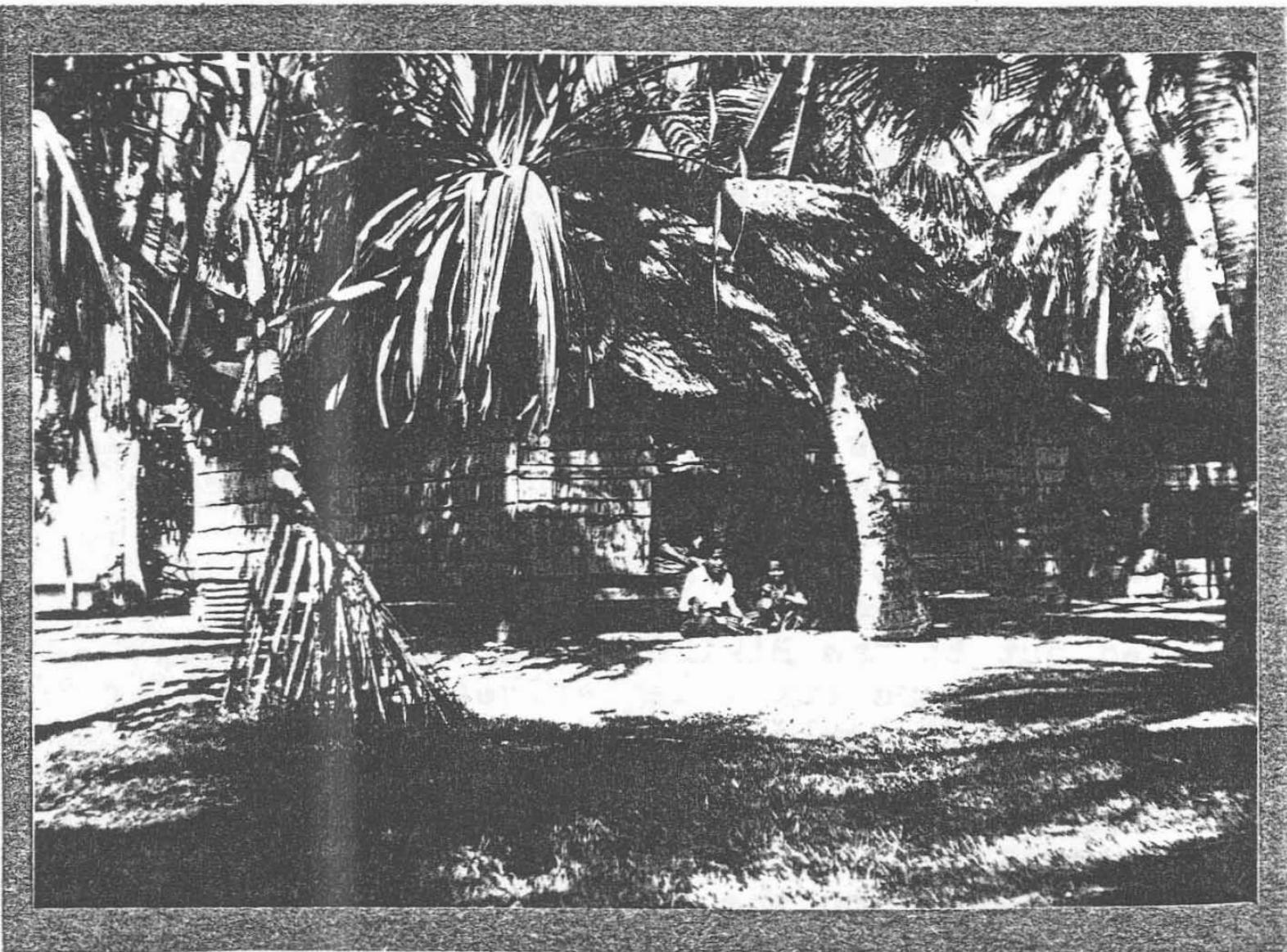
can be made to the island due to the treacherous reef; at other times, calmer weather permits comparatively free access to the shore by skilled boatmen. There is no harbor for large ships, which of necessity must lie offshore and keep underway, while cargo is transferred by means of small craft. However, the same problem exists in other Marshall and Pacific Islands, and has been successively solved by local boatmen who have learned to operate their craft in heavy surf. The Germans and the Japanese met this problem at Kili in exporting copra; the difficulty should not prove insurmountable today.

Regarding resettlement at Kili, the Bikinians were unanimous in the opinion that Kili is a rich area -- "the basket of the Marshalls," as some put it. Many men were concerned about the lack of a lagoon at Kili, and the consequent curtailment of canoeing; they said, "Sometimes we get tired and restless, and then we take our canoes and go sailing on the lagoon -- when we return a few hours later, we feel good again." Even though the chances for a restful sail would be fewer at Kili, every Bikinian who was interviewed concluded that it would be worth the loss to have the security afforded by an ample supply of food resources. The younger men, particularly, were enthusiastic about the opportunity to earn more money from copra production at Kili. With money in their pockets, they could travel about the Marshalls by ship, and could buy tinned salmon -- it didn't make too much difference in those circumstances if they could or couldn't use their outrigger canoes. The women at Rongerik appeared content to go wherever their menfolk decided to go, and were quite intrigued with the possible lightening of their own load when the men could earn money at copra and relieve the women from having to make handicraft.

One small group of Bikinians, largely alaps and older people, hesitated to express their opinions about Kili vs Ujae. This attitude was interpreted as reflecting a strong social pressure to follow the wishes of the paramount chieftain, Jeimata at Ailinglaplap, who prefers to have his people living on land within his jurisdiction; Kili does not belong to him, hence he could not properly demand and receive his customary percentage of the products from the land, as he does elsewhere in the Marshalls. A few of the alaps hesitantly suggested that they did not particularly desire to remain under Jeimata. The younger men, when interviewed alone, almost all declared that to move to Kili would "make them free men for once," and were obviously enthusiastic about the prospect. In this connection, it was pointed out to the Bikinians that should they be relocated on Kili, there were two alternatives for assigning title to the land: (1) Kili could be deeded to Jeimata, as paramount chief of the Bikinians, for sole use by the Bikini group, thus bringing it within the native political framework and preserving the traditional ties between Jeimata and the people, or (2) Kili could be deeded to the Bikinians themselves (in the names of Chief Juda and the alaps), with absolute title in the group and bearing no relationship to Jeimata. Between these two alternatives

RONGERIK - FEB. 5, 1948

(M-233)



FAMILY HOUSING.

there was divided opinion, a reflection of the conflict noted above. I recommend that title to Kili could be deferred until the group from Rongerik adjusted to their new environment, assessed its potentialities, and then decided among themselves, perhaps six months after they were resettled, how they wished the land to be recorded. Some opposition to any severance of the group from Jeimata's control might be expected from Jeimata himself, but it should be remembered that many traditions relating to the paramount chieftaincy are going by the board in the Marshalls today; in the present case, I feel strongly that the Bikinians themselves should make the decision as to their future relations with Jeimata.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Rongerik has been found wanting, and another site is needed on which to settle the Bikinians. It is my recommendation that Kili Island, being practically the only area in the Marshalls potentially able to absorb a population of 180, be further explored in the light of the Bikinians' requirements; if found satisfactory (every evidence to date points to this result), the Bikinians should be relocated on Kili as quickly as possible. Furthermore, the problem will not be solved when the group is landed at Kili, for there remains a very important period of adjustment and training in the use of many new products which, though common in the southern Marshalls, are virtually unknown in the north. Guidance should be provided for a period of six months, at least, if an effective adjustment is to be achieved.

As this report is being completed, I have been informed that already the Bikinians have been removed from Rongerik to a temporary camp erected for them at Kwajalein, where they will be cared for and work provided for them at the base until a final decision is made regarding their future home. This move was executed by Civil Administration after consultation with me at Rongerik, at Kwajalein, and at Pearl Harbor; I am in complete accord with the action as a temporary step. However, the Bikinians should not be held at Kwajalein any longer than absolutely necessary, because Kwajalein is a source of conflicting experiences for the Marshallse. For a complete community to be dropped suddenly onto Kwajalein from an isolated area like Rongerik or Bikini is to ask for trouble in the form of developments not at the moment foreseeable. If the necessary arrangements for final relocation of the Bikinians can be effected within two, or at the most three, months, I believe that no particular difficulties should be encountered.

In connection with the period of adjustment at Kili Island, the newcomers must learn to raise taro, bananas, papayas, limes, and new varieties of breadfruit, to manage a coconut plantation and to cut and dry copra in a moister climate, to utilize new fibers and other materials in handicrafts, and to operate small craft over the treacherous reefs in all kinds of weather. For

RONGERIK - FEB. 6, 1948

(M-264)



NOMAI (INSIDE) WITH CHILDREN.

boat-handling instruction, someone from Namorik (an atoll nearby which also has a bad reef) who is adept in meeting similar conditions should be imported for a few weeks during the season when the Kili reefs present the biggest problem. For the rest, my recommendation is that some Marshallese or half-caste who is skilled in Marshallese techniques be settled with the Bikinians at Kili for six months in order to guide and instruct them in the most effective way of living in their new environment. In this regard, I specifically recommend James Milne, Civil Administration interpreter at Kwajalein. This man is from Ebon, an area which is similar to Kili in its agricultural resources, and he knows well the techniques for getting the most out of the land; his wife is also from Ebon and in her way could contribute immensely in instruction of the women. The couple should be considered an instructional unit which would be most worthwhile in aiding the Bikinians. In addition, James Milne has the friendship and confidence of the people from Rongerik, due to the fact that since their removal from Bikini he has visited them frequently as interpreter for various official parties, that he served as guide and interpreter for me in my investigation of their condition and knows them as well and better than I do, that he understands the Administration point of view and has a personal interest in seeing that the Bikinians are finally settled (having shared with me the unforgettable experience of seeing a people on the brink of starvation).

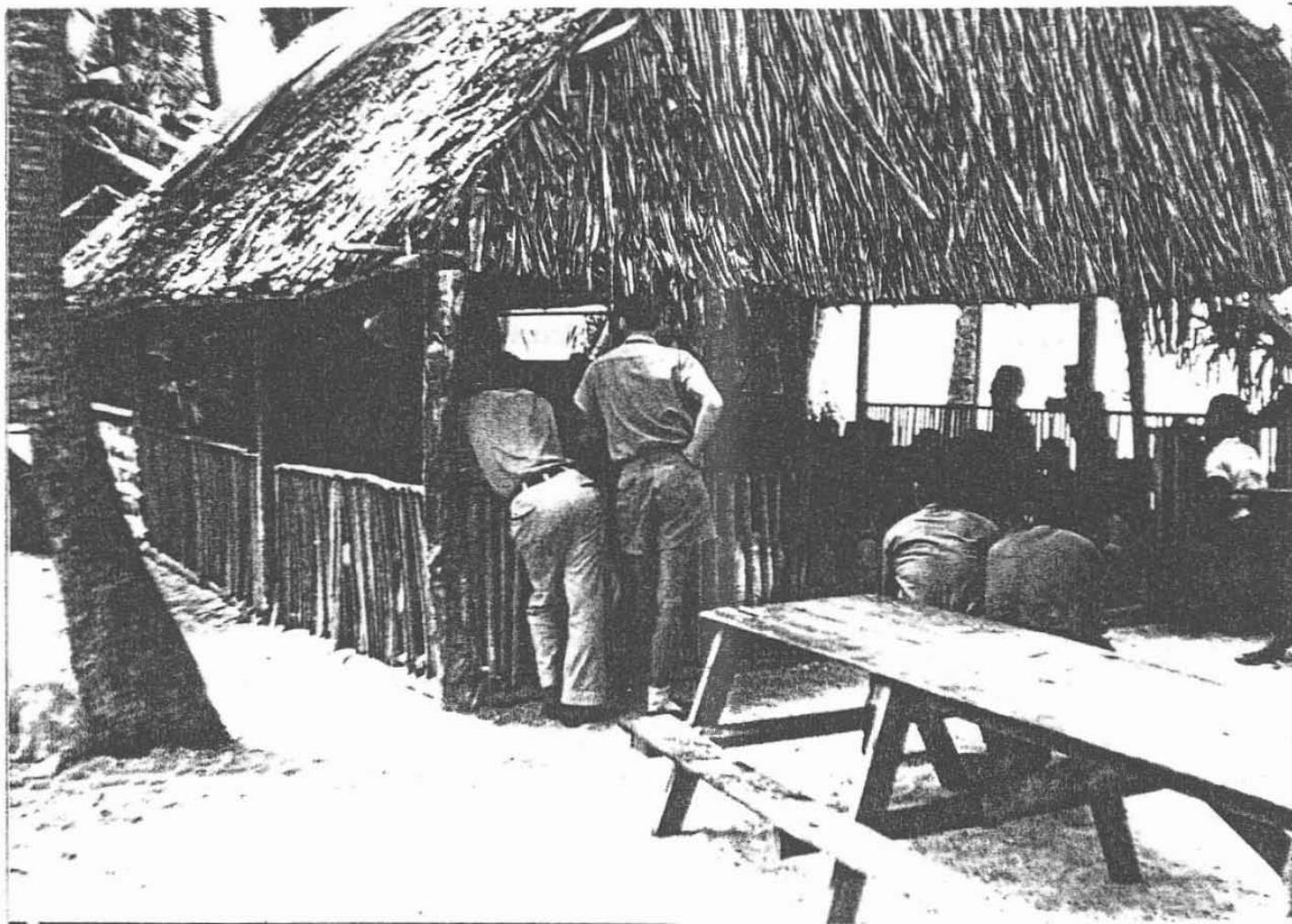
Befor the book is closed on the wanderings of the Bikinians, it would be in order to conduct another investigation, similar to the one just completed at Rongerik, to determine the success with which the group was adjusting itself to its new home, and to uncover any points of stress which might be developing and that could be eased before they became too great. Such a study should be made two or three months after their settlement at Kili and during their period of instruction and adjustment. If this recommendation is approved, I would be willing to contribute my background and experience toward a more successful settlement of the Bikini people.

Leonard Mason  
Associate Professor in Anthropology

University of Hawaii  
March, 1948

RONGERIK - FEB. 6, 1948

(M-269)



TOWN MEETING WITH KWAIJ MILITARY GOVERNOR.

THE BIKINIANS: A TRANSPLANTED POPULATION

by

Leonard Mason

An article written for HUMAN ORGANIZATION (Spring 1950)  
based on 1948 visit to Rongerik Atoll and August 1949  
visit to Kili Island.

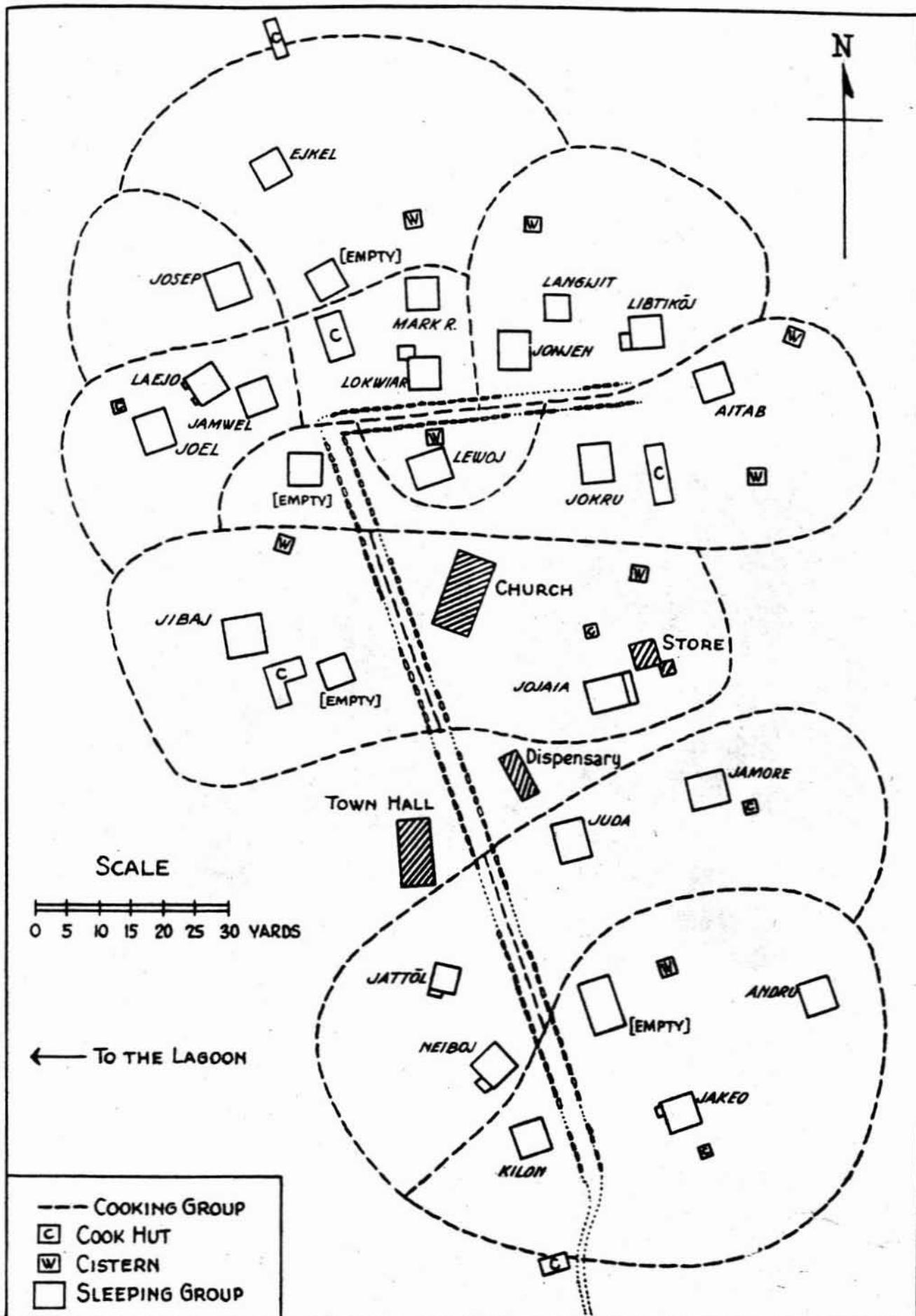


FIG. 27. MAP OF RONGERIK VILLAGE, 1948

# The Bikinians: A Transplanted Population

*Leonard Mason\**

The world at large first learned of Bikini on January 24, 1946, when the U.S. Navy Department announced that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had selected an atoll in the northern Marshall Islands as the site for an experimental explosion of two atomic bombs. Two weeks later the U.S.S. *Sumner* dropped anchor in Bikini lagoon and commenced charting shoal areas and blasting coral obstructions to make way for the target fleet to be assembled. One hundred and sixty-seven Marshallese inhabitants of Bikini began to comprehend the full import of this activity on February 10 when the military governor of the Marshalls and his staff arrived by air from Kwajalein to explain about Operation Crossroads and to secure the islanders' assent to their evacuation from Bikini in the interests of U.S. national security.

About the time that Americans were emerging from a war with the British in 1814, war cries of Marshallese fighting men frequently resounded across the calm waters of lagoons as ambitious chieftains attempted to wrest bits of precious land from weaker neighbors. In that atmosphere, an invitation to abandon Bikini was extended one day to a much smaller community which then occupied that island cluster. The challenge was issued by Larkelon, a chief from the Marshall atoll of Wotje, some 300 miles to the east. Obviously outnumbered, the erstwhile Bikinians packed their

\*Leonard Mason is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Hawaii. Professor Mason's contacts with the Bikinians are listed below:

May 11, 1946: Brief visit to Rongerik and to Bikini, as member of Economic Survey of Micronesia. Talked with Bikinians then, just about two months after their evacuation. (On this survey, I spent approximately five months in the Marshalls, living in islands all over the area.)

Jan. 31-Feb. 7, 1948: Investigation at Rongerik at request of High Commissioner of the Trust Territory.

August 3, 1948: Brief visit with Bikinians in tent camp during their temporary stay at Kwajalein. (Member of Advisory Committee on Education.)

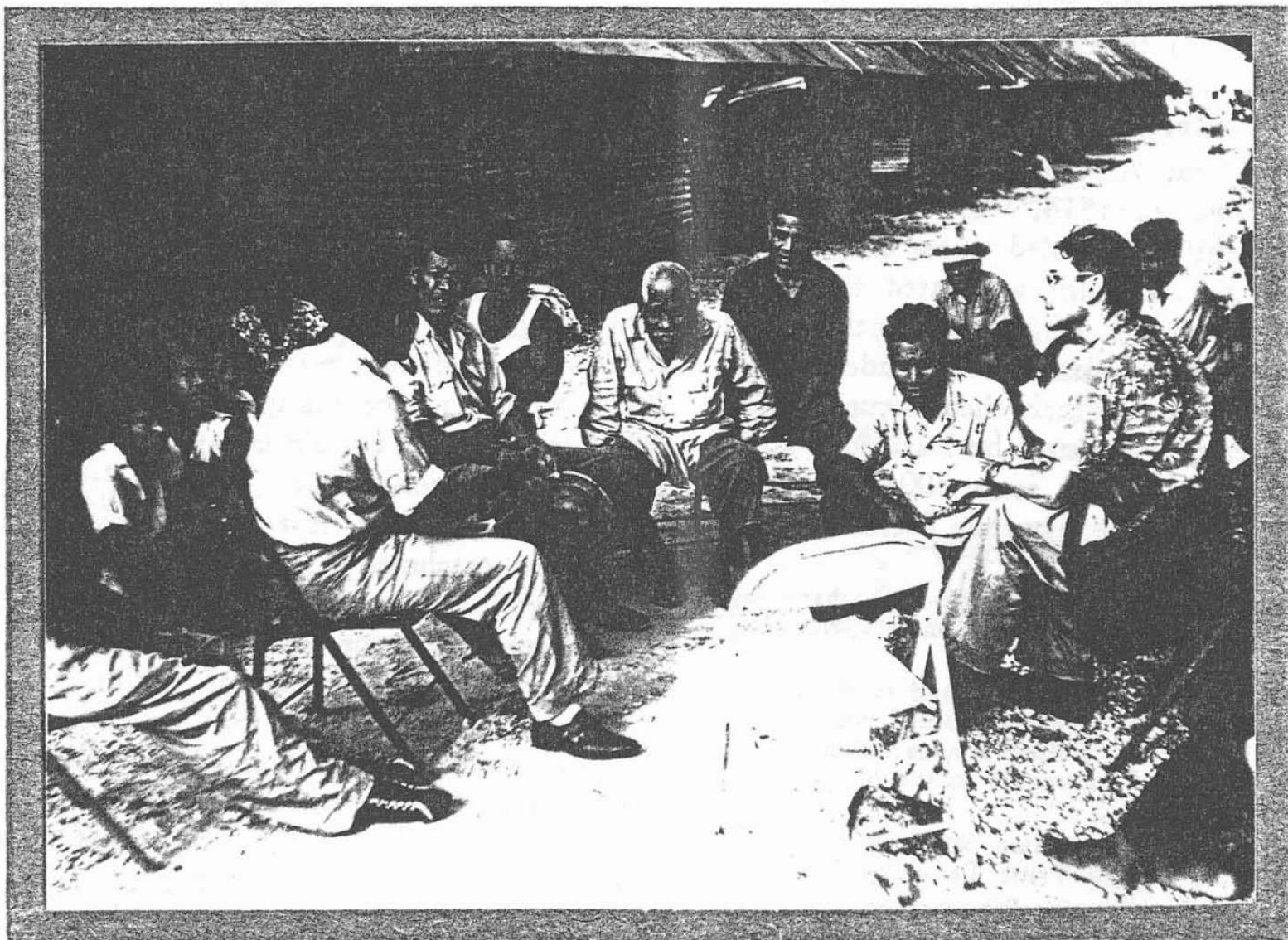
Aug. 13-16, 1949: Investigation of Bikinians' adjustment at Kili Island during my visit to the Marshalls as Member of Advisory Committee on Education for Guam and the Trust Territory.

meager possessions, launched their outrigger canoes, and meekly sailed away to another refuge. The Wotje expatriate and the 100 or so men and women who had come with him settled down at Bikini and became the ancestors of most present-day Bikinians. For nearly a century the small isolated community lived unmolested under the rule of Larkelon and his successors; chieftainship, membership in the clan, and the inheritance of real property were regularly transmitted from one generation to the next according to Marshallese rules of primogeniture and matrilineality.

Bikinians possess the same language, customs, and physical characteristics as do the remaining 10,000 inhabitants of 30-odd atolls which comprise the Marshall group, but Bikini's natural resources restrict its people to an extremely marginal subsistence as compared with the wetter and richer southern Marshalls. Twenty-seven small islands scattered along the reef which encircles broad Bikini lagoon amount to only 2.32 square miles of dry land, most of it covered with low scrubby bush and topped by ubiquitous coconut and pandanus trees. The northern Marshalls climate adds further to the marginal nature of Bikini, for although 75 to 80 inches of rain is expected in normal years, scarcely any precipitation occurs during February and March. Since fresh water in low coral islands must derive solely from rain catchment, Bikinians in winter commonly experience water shortages severe enough to constitute a health hazard. Any population of more than 100 would no doubt find permanent habitation of Bikini impossible were it not for the almost unlimited marine resources in the 230 square miles of protected lagoon and in the ocean which in all directions extends uninterrupted to the horizon. While Bikinians compare favorably with the finest Marshallese sailors and canoe builders, few have travelled extensively and most of the present population had never been away from Bikini prior to the American occupation. Local ties, therefore, have reinforced kin ties to produce an extremely well-integrated society of closely related individuals who find personal se-

KWAJALEIN - JULY 3, 1948

(M-295)



LOKWIAR AND JUDA MEET WITH DR. K. EMORY IN KWAS LABOR  
CAMP. JAMES MILNE, INTERPRETER.

curity in their highly developed sense of belonging. Each of the 11 extended families of Bikini is represented in community affairs by an *alab*, the hereditary headman of a matrilineage. The ranking *alab* is recognized as the *iroij*, or chief of the atoll community.

Germany established its protectorate in the Marshalls in 1885 and thus brought to an end the long period of civil war, but not before one Bikini *Iroij* was persuaded to accept the supreme authority of a powerful chieftain in Ailinglablab, another Marshall atoll over 300 miles to the south. This paramount chief, or *iroij-lab-lab*, was Kabua who by 1885 had managed to bring all of the western chain of islands under his control. Tradition relates that Launa, "prime minister" of Kabua, visited Bikini some time during the last quarter of the 19th century, successfully met all resistance, and informed the Bikinians that Kabua would be their *iroij-lab-lab*; thenceforth, they were expected to render to him tribute in the form of prepared foods, fiber mats, and money earned from the production of copra, the dried meat of coconuts which Western countries require for use in soap manufacture. The paramount chief, on his side, was prepared to reciprocate in terms of protection and representation in dealings with the Europeans, and advice and assistance in case of emergencies. The first Bikini *iroij* reported to have paid tribute to Kabua was Libertoe, the maternal uncle of the present *iroij* whose great-grandmother was Larkelon's younger sister.

As Western civilization advanced across the Pacific during the 19th century, its influence filtered gradually northward to Bikini through the acts of itinerant traders who anchored off the "big island" several times each year, of more formal government officials whose interest in the Bikinians seemed even less than that of the traders, and of mission-trained Marshallese pastors who convened frequent and regular Protestant services in a thatched hut which served them as a schoolroom on other occasions. Kabua's claim to Bikini received official approval when the German administration recognized him as "King" of all Ralik, the local designation for the Western Marshalls. However, Kabua's kingdom ceased to exist on the occasion of his death about 1910. His authority was divided among his sons and more distant relatives who, with varying degree of legitimacy, assumed control of different islands and island groups. Bikini, together with many atolls in the northern Marshalls, fell within the jurisdiction of Jeimata, the son of Kabua by his second marriage to a woman of noble birth from northern Ralik. Though contrary to Marshallese matrilineal practice, such manner of succession is a legitimate alternative when no customary heir is living. Thus, Jeimata has the status and authority of *iroij-lab-lab*, but is not of the royalty by birth. The same is true of other paramount chiefs in Ralik today. Just as Kabua had accepted tribute from Bikini during the German administration, so Jeimata continued to receive his due after Germany surrendered the Marshalls to Japan in the first year of World War I. When either government levied a tax on the Bikinians it was paid by their paramount chief from moneys collected by him from his subjects' copra earnings. Likewise

when Bikinians had need of medical care in the Japanese hospital at Jaluit, the *iroij-lab-lab* was required by government regulation to meet all expenses. However, the relationship between Bikini and the chief in the south was never very well developed because of the natural inadequacies of the atoll, its small population, and the great distance separating the two areas.

A short time before World War II exploded in the Pacific, Japanese troops arrived at Bikini to construct and to maintain a lookout station, one of a string being established for intelligence purposes around the northern and eastern periphery of the Marshalls. A direct food levy was imposed upon the Bikinians to assist the small garrison. Other disadvantages accompanied this military activity. When Bikinians protested, the Japanese commander harshly informed them that Bikini belonged to the Emperor of Japan and that Marshallese inhabitants must supply anything demanded by the Emperor's troops. In the minds of the people, Jeimata's prerogatives had been assumed by the Japanese military. All contact between Jeimata and his subjects in the north was discontinued during the ensuing war years. The Bikinians suffered, their resources ran short. They received no aid until the Americans invaded the Marshalls in early 1944. Food, medical attention, and trade goods were quickly supplied through services provided by American military government. It was in February, 1946, that Bikinians again saw their paramount chief when he was flown to the atoll by the Americans to confer on the proposed removal of the population to make Bikini available for Operation Crossroads.

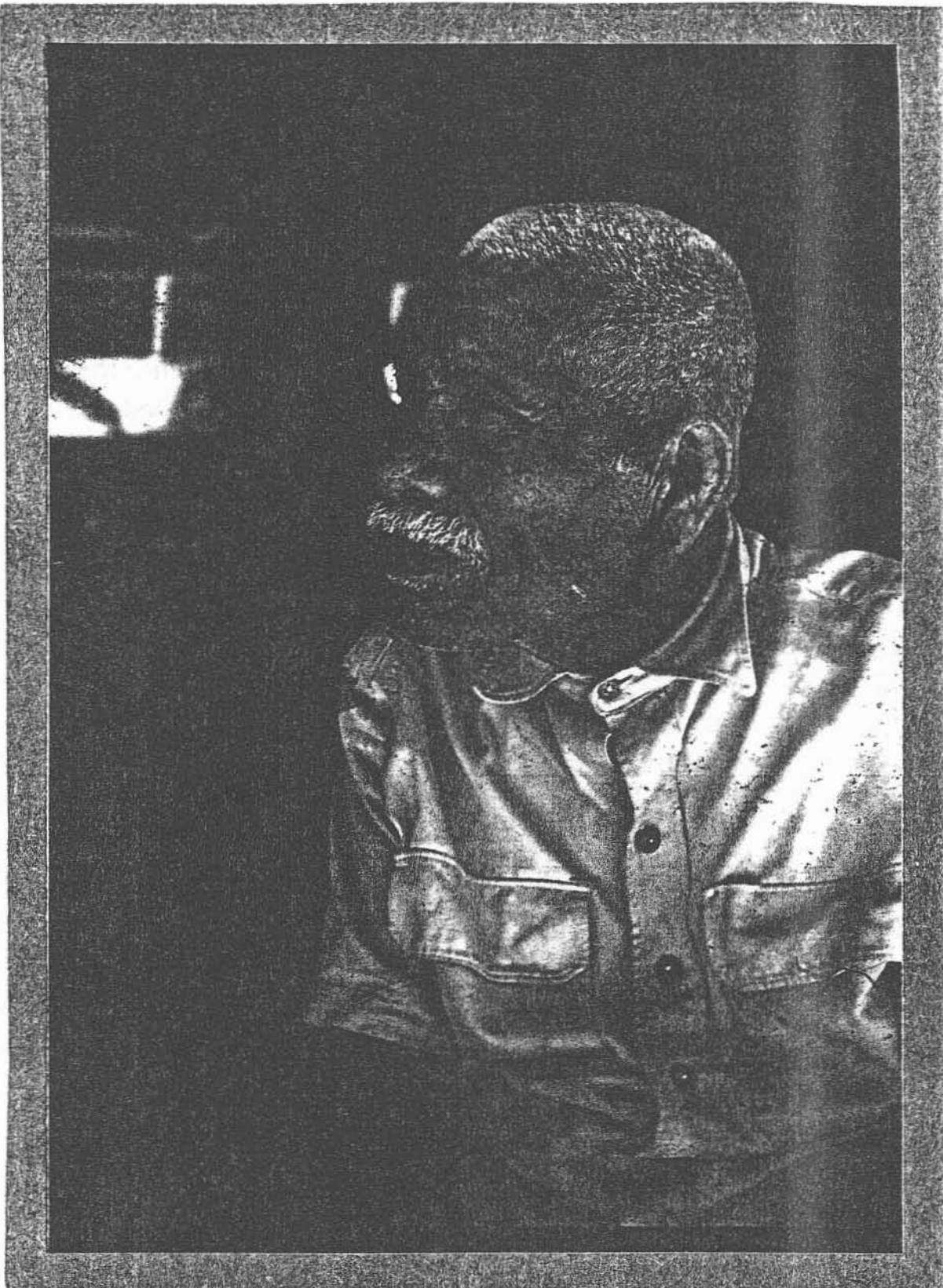
### Evacuation from Bikini

Initial plans of the Joint Chiefs of Staff called for a bombing site at least 500 miles from any extensively populated area, away from all sea and air routes, and with steady directional winds for better control of the anticipated atomic cloud. From a list of possibilities in the Pacific area, Bikini was finally selected as best fulfilling all requirements. That a small number of Marshallese had come to regard the atoll as home was unfortunate. The problem of their removal to a safe refuge was passed to the military government command in the Marshalls with orders that the project be completed by March 15, 1946. The military governor himself headed the official party which on February 10 conferred in council with Bikini family heads to ask their co-operation in this matter of national importance. "That was a tough job," he later told newsmen, "for if one man had replied, 'I will not leave Bikini,' it meant trouble and hard feelings." After some discussion the Bikinians gave their answer through Juda, the *iroij* and ranking *alab* of Bikini, that if the government required their atoll for scientific experimentation they were willing to surrender it. Since this was probably the first time that their opinion in such a critical matter had ever been sought, it is difficult to imagine any other reply: the government wants us to leave, therefore we have only to obey.

Further deliberation was necessary, however, in choosing a site for resettlement. Only a limited number of possibili-

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-500)



LOKWIAR.

ties could be suggested in these islands where land is in any case exceedingly scarce. For instance, there were Lae and Ujae, atolls immediately west of Kwajalein, both of which were already inhabited and, like Bikini, belonged to Jeimata. The military governor at this point called upon Jeimata for his opinion in this situation which involved his subjects. Naturally, Jeimata urged relocation at Lae or Ujae and brought with him an invitation to that effect from the councils of those two atolls. Lae was rejected finally as too small and too limited in natural resources to absorb 167 persons in permanent settlement. Ujae was later eliminated after aerial and surface reconnaissance revealed difficulties to be encountered by the evacuation ship in navigating the coral-strewn lagoon and beaching on the main island. Another alternative was Rongerik, an uninhabited atoll located about 150 miles east of Bikini and belonging to Lajore, another paramount chief resident at Ailinglablab. Preliminary investigation of Rongerik disclosed an area smaller than Bikini, but apparently suitable in terms of topsoil, rainfall, and food resources even though the potential yield of coconuts for production of copra was discouraging. Beaching facilities were judged satisfactory and few navigating hazards existed to impede any large-scale transfer from Bikini to Rongerik. The following table of comparative qualifications of each atoll may aid the reader in evaluating the alternative suggestions:

Atoll	All Islands	Main Island	Lagoon	Population (1946)
	(sq. mi.)	(sq. mi.)	(sq. mi.)	
Bikini	2.32	0.66	299.4	167
Ujae	0.72	0.19	71.8	122
Rongerik	0.65	0.17	55.4	—
Lae	0.56	0.24	6.8	103

Throughout the northern Marshalls, Rongerik possesses the reputation of being an undesirable place to live because of a supposed association in the mythical past with an evil female spirit named Libokra. Rongerik had not been regularly inhabited for many generations, although several families from nearby Rongelab occasionally spent a few months at a time augmenting their food stocks from the additional resources at Rongerik. While Bikinians shared this knowledge with other Marshallese, they neglected to mention it to military government representatives because, as one Bikini informant later expressed it, they all expected to remain at Rongerik only a short while, and to return to Bikini upon conclusion of the atomic bomb tests. They considered it too small a matter to bring up under those conditions. Available evidence seems to indicate that some hope was held out to Bikinians officially or otherwise for eventual return to Bikini.<sup>1</sup> In the light of what later transpired at Rongerik, some elaboration of the Libokra legend may be helpful in order more fully to understand the reaction of Bikinians to their prospective home.

According to them, Libokra formerly lived in the southern Marshalls where she passed much of her time experimenting

with poisons. Rongerik itself was once an atoll in the south, but Libokra stole it one day and hid it among the islands in the north. Eventually she attempted to establish residence at Bikini but was repulsed by the protective spirit Orjabto, who compelled her to seek refuge in turn at Wotho, Rongelab, Ujae, Kwajalein, and finally at Rongerik. Everywhere she tarried her presence contaminated many species of fish in the lagoon. She died on Rongerik and her body when cast into the waters was consumed by fishes, which thereby became even more tainted than before. (Some fish are declared to have been wise enough to refrain from any participation in this unholy feast, and as a consequence remain quite edible.) The obviously poorer quality of Rongerik coconuts is explained by Bikinians as also due to Libokra's presence in the area. One variety of pandanus (*wonjeiom*) is even considered harmful to eat because it was once a favorite food of the evil woman. (About 20 other varieties of pandanus growing on Rongerik are admitted to be quite palatable.) Similarly, well-water at Rongerik is never used; many years ago, the people say, one well had been dug in the sandy soil, but its water was so bad to taste that additional excavations were discontinued. These non-scientific explanations,<sup>2</sup> which certainly influenced the Bikinians during their occupation of Rongerik, cannot be underestimated as a factor in their failure to adjust satisfactorily to conditions encountered on that atoll.

However, Rongerik had no inhabitants and, probably for that very reason, nine of the 11 *alabs* voted for resettlement at Rongerik. The government, having gained the Bikinians' concurrence, proceeded without further delay to execute the transfer from Bikini. Lajore was consulted and gave his approval to the proposed resettlement of Jeimata's subjects on the former's land. The future relationship of the Bikinians to Jeimata or to Lajore as to rights and responsibilities was not explored further by the government. Officials charted and photographed each of 26 houses on Bikini Island, and registered ownership in anticipation of future claims against the United States. Each coconut, pandanus, and breadfruit tree were counted. Bikinians prepared hundreds of pandanus panels with which to thatch housing replacements at Rongerik. In order to salvage every possible material from facilities being abandoned they dismantled both church and town meeting-house, and removed the corrugated iron sheets which had been used to divert rainwater into the 13 cisterns. Fifteen outrigger canoes were also prepared for shipment.

On February 26, an advance work party, composed of 22 Bikini males employed on a native labor basis and supplemented by Navy Seabees from Kwajalein, departed from Bikini on the Navy LST (Landing Ship, Tank) assigned to the resettlement project. During the next week at Rongerik, they cleared a space for the new village near the northwest corner of Rongerik Island and adjacent to the lagoon beach. Twenty-six prefabricated tent frames with wooden

2. It may be interesting to note that these Marshallese judgments about the inedible character of some Rongerik foodstuffs appear to be well-founded in fact. The possibilities of varying chemical composition of soil and water would seem to warrant investigation by specialists in the field.

1. Authorities today emphatically deny the possibility of Marshallese ever returning to Bikini to live, because of the radioactivity which lingers in the lagoon waters.

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1198)



JUDA.

doors and canvas covers were set up in the clearing on much the same plan as the Bikini village. Wooden forms for new cisterns were constructed, and a number of latrines established at strategic locations. The LST returned to Bikini on March 6. That day and the next were fully occupied with final preparations for the evacuation. Personal belongings of all Bikinians had already been packed in wooden chests or wrapped in pandanus sleeping mats, and were now placed aboard the beached craft which loomed above the shoreline, its ramp lowered onto the sand. For the last time, villagers cleaned the island cemetery and decorated the graves afresh with flowers and palm fronds. The Marshallese pastor led Bikinians in a final memorial service in anticipation of the event which was about to separate them from their ancestors of many generations past.

With weeping and singing of farewells, Bikini was abandoned in the late afternoon of March 7. Representatives of several news agencies and newsreel companies witnessed, recorded, and frequently hampered the entire operation. On the LST's tank deck, space had been assigned to each matrilineage, and the name of its *alab* chalked on the bulkhead above. The overnight voyage to Rongerik was rough but the Bikinians, though restless, maintained good order as they bedded down after a moving picture and a meal of rice and stew. Rongerik was sighted shortly after dawn, but tide conditions delayed a beach landing until later in the day. During the trip the council of *alabs* under Juda's direction had assigned each household to one of the dwelling units at Rongerik, following in general the Bikini distribution. As the families streamed off the ramp onto the beach, bearing their sleeping mats and personal equipment, they quickly located their quarters and prepared to pass their first night within the atoll which was to be their home for the next two years.

An official report written by the officer in charge of resettlement, describes the Bikinians' initial reaction to Rongerik as "one of satisfaction without enthusiasm, in some quarters a feeling of dispiritedness, and this was not easily dissipated." Bikinians recall more vividly that first night ashore, "We warned our children to be careful not to eat fish or fruit until we could be sure the food was safe; we prayed before eating our first meal, and asked the good Lord to guide us in our use of coconut, pandanus, fish, and other things in this atoll which was once the home of evil Libokra." In the days that followed, all remaining cargo was discharged from the LST, including stores of K-rations, rice, flour, stew meat, et cetera, in sufficient quantity to feed the entire community for several weeks until they could become better adjusted to their new environment. Seabees poured concrete into cistern forms and, pending their completion, temporary canvas water tanks erected on the beach were filled with fresh water from the ship. Islanders extended their village area by additional brushing and sanded pathways and a street according to their custom. For their future use, they received all tools and surplus materials used in the resettlement project. A special contribution from the military governor consisted of radio receiver and public address system, powered with gasoline generator, a gift

which unfortunately was not fully appreciated by these people of another age. From the viewpoint of military government, March 24 saw completion of the resettlement operation, at which time the LST and all American personnel returned to base at Kwajalein.

### Experience at Rongerik

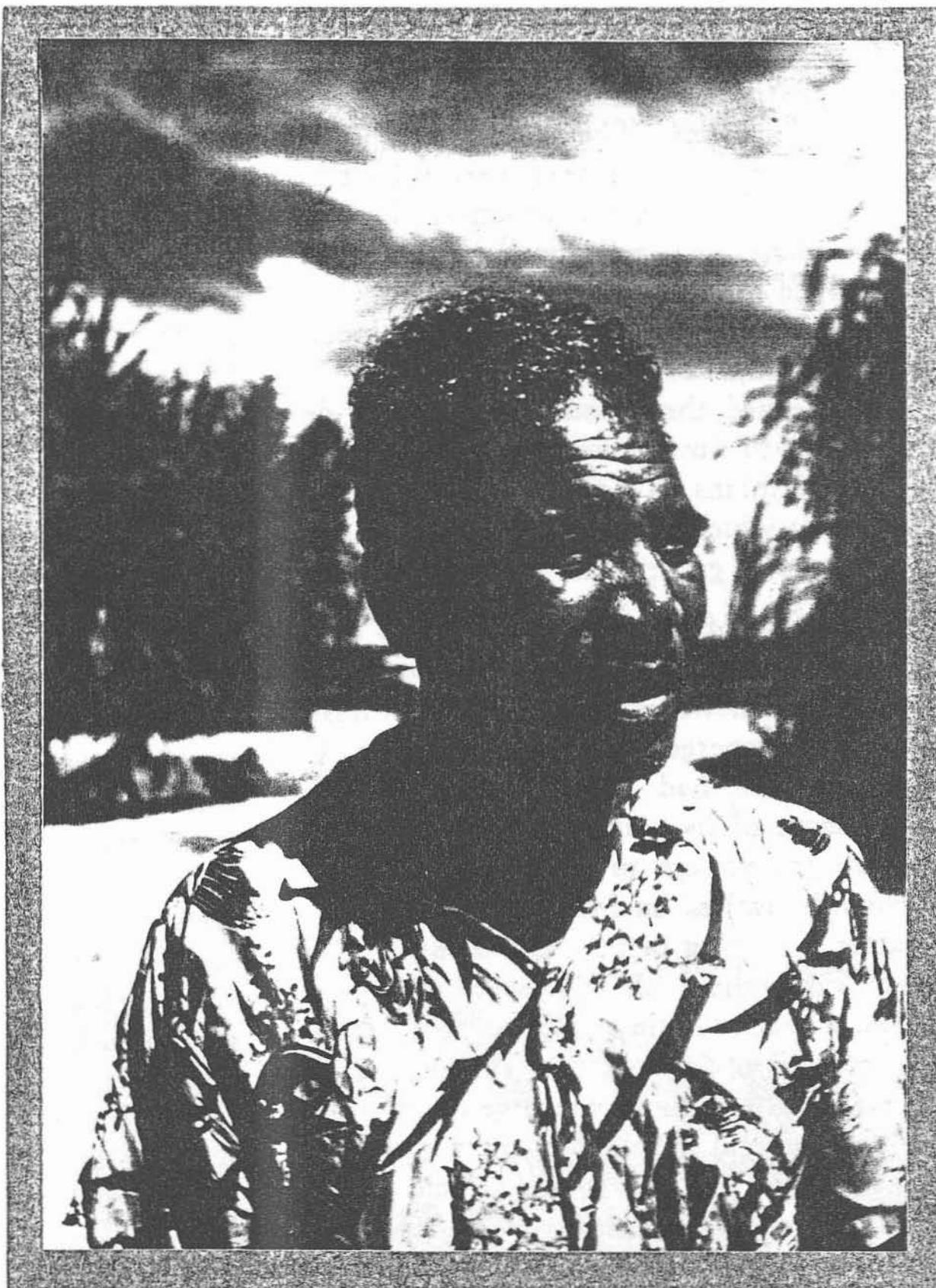
As Operation Crossroads entered the extremely technical and complex stages which preceded actual explosion of the first atomic bomb, the welfare of less than 200 Marshallese natives became a problem of distinctly minor proportions. Ferry planes operating daily between Kwajalein and Bikini landed occasionally on the lagoon at Rongerik for some sightseeing, and left food and cigarettes in exchange for handicraft produced for the tourist trade. Less than two months after Bikini had been evacuated, the military governor received the first intimation that all was not progressing smoothly at Rongerik when he visited the atoll and personally heard complaints about the small coconuts, the poisonous fishes, and the lack even of materials to make more sennit with which to finish lashing the thatch on Rongerik dwellings. Subsequent visitors brought back similar tales and noted the general lack of activity and enthusiasm such as one finds in typical Marshallese communities. Military government, weakened in personnel by the Navy's current demobilization program and unable to compete with Operation Crossroads for services and supplies, tended to blame the Bikinians, charging homesickness, laziness, poor organization, and the effect of too much publicity as the underlying causes of Rongerik's depressing atmosphere. Then, too, there was still the possibility that Bikinians could return to their former home after the bomb tests had been completed.

After the first bomb had been exploded in the air over the target fleet, Juda was flown from Rongerik to view the results. The bomb had actually caused little damage on land, the palms were still standing, and the islands were green with vegetation, although the islanders' thatched huts had been replaced by Quonset and other structures relating to the atomic project. Juda could not see the damage which had penetrated the lagoon in the form of radioactive substances. When he related his experience to the other *alabs* at Rongerik, their desire to return to Bikini grew stronger than ever, and their depression on Rongerik reached proportionately greater depths. Vice Admiral W. H. P. Blandy, chief in command of Operation Crossroads, travelled to Washington in September of that year to report the successful conclusion of the entire atomic operation. Regarding the Bikinians, however, he warned against their relocation on Bikini until all possibility of harm from the radioactivity had passed, adding that in his opinion the population would be quartered on Rongerik for some months yet. Following that pronouncement, the matter of the displaced Bikinians dropped from public view for more than a year although it continued to present a problem to the Marshalls administration.

The Marshalls, together with the rest of the former Japanese mandated area, became part of the Trust Terri-

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1201)



JIBAJ.

tory of the Pacific on July 18, 1947, and the United States assumed responsibility to the United Nations for the welfare of the indigenous peoples of the islands. During that same month, a junior medical officer in the Marshalls administration (no longer termed "military government" but still a Navy assignment) examined the Rongerik community in the course of his work and submitted to his superiors a report that the former Bikinians had declined in physical condition to an alarming degree, due in his opinion to inadequate food resources. A board of investigation was formed of administrative officials and one civilian, an agricultural production specialist with the U.S. Commercial Company which managed all economic activities for the Navy's civil administration. The board proceeded to Rongerik to evaluate the situation and to recommend measures to improve the people's condition. The civilian board member, Dr. Howard G. MacMillan,<sup>3</sup> in his report to the governor of the Marshalls on August 19, summarized the Rongerik situation as follows:

"The agriculture of the main island is in a very low state. The coconut palms . . . are old . . . (and) scantily productive. . . . The nuts are all required for food, and none are available for copra. A disastrous fire in May of this year damaged an estimated 30 percent of the productive trees. . . . A few small breadfruit trees appear to be non-productive. . . . There is no taro. The pandanus is of the poorest sort . . . , yielding very little fruit, and fibre of no quality. . . . The food supply has fallen so low that the natives are cutting palms to eat the heart, a progressively destructive and eliminative action. The natives report that they are poisoned by the fish which are caught in the lagoon. Except for the construction of water-catchment cisterns and lumber and help with houses to hasten their transfer at the time, nothing appears to have been done for the natives. It would appear that their departure from Rongerik has been too long delayed."

The board did not hesitate to propose that the Bikinians be moved once more, and explored three possible relocation sites: Ujae, Kili, and Ujelang. Already, it will be remembered, Ujae had been considered and now was eliminated a second time because of insufficient resources to support two populations. The Japanese before the war had developed both Kili and Ujelang as thriving copra plantations, but no one at present inhabited the islands and the land was listed as government property. Kili is an isolated island with no lagoon nor sheltered sea approach, a disadvantage which is largely offset by the fact that Kili lies in the rich southern zone of the Marshalls. However, the board doubted if the Bikinians in their weakened physical condition could effect the conversion of a densely overgrown island to an economically productive living area. Ujelang Atoll, the most western of the Marshalls and a smaller neighbor of Bikini, had many of Kili's good points and fewer handicaps. With little difficulty the board was able to recommend Ujelang as the next home of the Bikinians. On September 29, 1947,

former Secretary Harold L. Ickes in his syndicated news column made serious charges against the Navy administration for neglecting the Bikinians on Rongerik to the point of starvation. Four days later, a new governor of the Marshalls, who had replaced the "military governor" some months before, announced that the Navy stood ready to implement the Ujelang recommendation as soon as the Bikinians rendered their approval. The population on Rongerik, it seems, still had ideas about returning to Bikini; when they were informed that such a move would be impossible they concurred in the Ujelang decision, and their anxiety diminished at the prospect of terminating their Rongerik residence.

The Ujelang phase need not be discussed in detail here, since it happens to have been abortive as far as the Bikinians are concerned. A work party of 10 Bikini men and 20 Seabees from Kwajalein arrived at Ujelang on November 22 with sufficient materials to construct a complete village for the people from Rongerik. Work progressed rapidly and enthusiastically. Then, in Washington, 10 days later, the Atomic Energy Commission with the approval of State and Defense Departments announced that Eniwetok, an atoll west of Bikini, was the new location selected for a second series of atomic bomb experiments. One hundred and forty-five Marshallese inhabitants of Eniwetok had to be evacuated before December 18. Navy civil administration had no choice but to halt the movement from Rongerik and to divert the Eniwetok community to the village then being prepared on Ujelang. The Bikini workmen returned to Rongerik, construction at Ujelang continued, and on December 21, the people from Eniwetok arrived in time to celebrate Christmas in their new home. Theirs is another story which will not be elaborated further here.

Again the administration faced the question of what to do with the Bikinians. Since only those activities directly associated with the new atomic project had top priority, the status of the Bikini evacuees remained ambiguous until the latter part of January, 1948. At that point and because of my previous field acquaintance as an anthropologist with the Marshallese people and their culture, I was asked by the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory to proceed to Rongerik to seek information on a number of questions which had been troubling the Marshalls administration. How unanimous are the Bikinians in their desire to leave Rongerik? Are the Bikinians willing to work toward the rehabilitation of Rongerik's resources if such a program should prove feasible? Do they have confidence in their own leaders, their *irolj* and *alabs*? What is the quality of this leadership with relation to the Rongerik emergency? What are their attitudes, individually and collectively, about relocating at Kili Island, where there is no lagoon? At either Ujae or Wotho Atoll, both of which are already populated? At any other place in the Marshalls where the Bikinians might possibly be accommodated? I spent two weeks in the Marshalls, from January 24 to February 8, most of the time at Rongerik where I attempted to learn the reasons for the Bikinians' failure to adjust to their new environment and to ascertain their outlook on the future. Much of what I have already written in this paper was gained through my informants at Rongerik.

3. Dr. Howard MacMillan is at present serving as Member for Economic Development on the Research Council, South Pacific Commission.

KILI. SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1203)



JOJEB.

My arrival at Rongerik coincided with the most severe food shortage ever experienced by the Bikinians. Stormy weather during the previous week had prevented any fishing, even in the relatively sheltered lagoon. Diving parties working long hours on the reefs secured only 30 or 40 small clams. Children and old people derived some nourishment from the milk and "spoon" meat of green coconuts and even ate the softer parts of the shells. A few quarts of fresh coconut toddy were collected for infants, and babies nursed hungrily at their mothers' breasts. The only other food available for the 167 villagers that week was flour mixed with water, which provided everyone with a pint of gruel each day. The final sack of flour in the trading store was consumed the day I began my work at Rongerik. Further prospects for food were not immediately evident. In the two months during which this crisis had developed, the Bikinians had reconstituted their work organization and distribution system, subordinating both household and district to the village as a whole in a demonstration of genuine communal cooperation.

At Bikini, economic activities had been organized along lines of geographic contiguity of households and kinship of individuals. The village was divided into four districts, or *bukwons*, each administered by an hereditary *alab* from one of the two more important clans. A *bukwon* in turn comprised a number of households, each occupying a parcel of land the parallel boundaries of which ran across the island from lagoon to ocean. There were 26 households at Bikini. Every landholding was associated with one of the 11 *alabs* of Bikini. Coconut and pandanus trees planted near a house belonged to the people living there, to be used by them at any time for food or construction materials. The usual point of organization was the household or, in more extensive activities like householding, canoe-making, or thatching, the *bukwon*. Each *alab*, by reason of the one or more land parcels administered by him, had certain obligations to the *iroij*, usually channeled through one of the four *bukwon* leaders. These last-mentioned were at the same time *alabs* of specified lands and households, but held a slightly higher status than other *alabs*. At Bikini, the *iroij* had been Lokwiar, a direct matrilineal successor of Larkelon from a century past. As Lokwiar grew older and more feeble he found it increasingly difficult to maintain his office, so that just before Bikini was abandoned he passed on his responsibility to the next in line. His successor is Juda, his parallel-cousin, or "brother" in the Marshallese classificatory sense. Since Juda is the son of the younger of two sisters of Bikini royalty, he was rightfully preceded by Lokwiar who had inherited the position from his mother's brother, Libartoe. Bikinians are unanimous in their support of Juda as their *iroij*, a fact which administrative officials had questioned in their ignorance of Marshallese custom. Actually there is a considerable exchange of ideas between Juda and Lokwiar, just as there is between Juda and the other *alabs*. This tends to produce an organization which potentially could be autocratic, but in this instance is quite democratic because of the strong in-group feeling shared by the Bikinians.

As food resources at Rongerik diminished, all persons began to work together for the welfare of the community, and products of work were distributed equally. Supervising this organization was what the Bikinians referred to as the "Government," i.e., Juda and the 10 other *alabs* acting in council. Rongerik village they partitioned into four fairly equal sections, and for each an *alab* to superintend the distribution of food. Four cook-houses, or "galleys," constituted the geographic centers of these new *bukwons*. Throughout the emergency, all fish, coconuts, pandanus, arrowroot, and other food was divided into four equal parts, one for each "galley," where it was shared under the watchful eye of the "galley" leader. As an integral part of this reorientation, a new practice was instituted, the morning meeting of the "Government" in the town hall to plan each day's work for the entire village.

For example, on the morning of February 10, the local pastor opened such a meeting with a prayer that God on that day would give the "Government" knowledge to choose the best men for work to be done. Juda then announced that groups of men would be assigned to fish, to plant, and to clean up, and that women would continue their handicrafts in anticipation of the trader's next visit. Anyone physically unfit for work should so inform the "Government" if he wished to be excused. The local medical practitioner read the names of those for each detail. Those who were to fish would take the two canoes which remained in good condition, one to fish on the far side of the lagoon with drop-lines, the other to employ net and palm-leaf-surface off an adjacent island. In the interests of reforestation and of future generations, five coconut sprouts and five pandanus cuttings represented the assignment for each man who planted that day; when finished, these men were to help the women prepare fibers for handicraft. The sanitation detail had to spray all latrines with disinfectant and find bait for the numerous flytraps located throughout the village. When one *alab* reported that arrowroot procured from another island was the only food on hand that day, the "Government" decided that, should there be insufficient arrowroot for everyone after it had been divided among the four "galleys," it should be reserved for the aged and the children; others should await the return of the fishing party. Meanwhile, school for children would begin in the town hall as soon as the council had adjourned. The assigned tasks were executed as ordered; the arrowroot had to be restricted to young and old. In the late afternoon the fishing parties returned, one bearing only seven medium-sized fish, the other with 120 small fish of a slightly poisonous variety. All were cast upon the beach and, at a sign from Juda, one *alab* distributed them equally in four heaps, good fish and bad alike. It was argued that since each person would eat only a very small bit of the poisonous fish it would not inconvenience him greatly, and there was no other food. Each "galley" leader placed his share in a leaf basket and bore it away to divide further among his own group.

Under the new system, if anyone wished to pick a coconut or pandanus fruit from trees planted near his dwelling,

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1196)



LIBTIKOJ.

he had first to secure permission from the "Government." Threatened with an extended dry spell, the "Government" had assumed responsibility for rationing all fresh water. Only three of the cisterns contained water, about 3,000 gallons to serve the entire community through the month of March when the next rains were expected. Even at the rate of one bucket per day per household, as decreed by the "Government," the supply could not be expected to last through February. In the village trading store, managed by a local islander on salary from the Marshalls administration, all flour, rice, and sugar had been rationed. For instance, a bag of rice which sold for \$15 was paid for by the community through a levy of 10 cents per person. Under Juda's direction, each "galley" received a like quantity of the purchased food. Certainly no one could justifiably state that Bikinians had not attempted to cope with the emergency at Rongerik. The Bikinians, for their part, were unanimous and vociferous in their desire to desert Rongerik the next day, if presented with an opportunity.

Relief materialized sooner than anyone expected. A civil administration representative from Kwajalein joined me at Rongerik on the Tuesday of my second week. Immediately, I acquainted him with the critical condition of the people. He agreed to notify the governor by the returning plane in a dispatch in which he outlined the emergency and requested action as soon as possible. At dawn the next day, villagers were awakened by the roar of motors as the civil administrator and his medical officer arrived from headquarters with as much food as could be loaded into the plane on short notice: rice, canned meats and fruit juices, oranges, and evaporated milk. The doctor, after he had examined the people, pronounced them to be on the verge of starvation. The governor, we were informed, intended to place the Bikinians in an emergency status, supplying them with food and medicines until such time as their future disposition could be determined. The following day was Thursday, and before the islanders could quite comprehend the trend of events, a naval vessel appeared on the horizon bearing one week's rations to sustain the community until the regular visit of the field trip which had already left Kwajalein with more than a month's food supply for the Rongerik store. The climax came early on Saturday, the day of my scheduled departure, when a plane appeared with the governor of the Marshalls. After a brief conference with him, in which I summarized my own observations, he asked the villagers to assemble in the town hall. There, he proposed that Rongerik be abandoned as soon as a tent village could be established at Kwajalein, probably within the month. While further investigations were being conducted to discover a place for final settlement, the Bikinians would receive complete subsistence and have ample opportunity to replenish their cash savings by employment as native labor at the naval air base. His suggestions met with excited approval by grinning Bikinians who for the first time in many weeks had more food than they could eat. Within a month of my return to Honolulu I submitted to the High Commissioner a 30-page report containing further details on the composition, condition, and attitudes of the Bikini Islanders.

### Interlude at Kwajalein

March 14, 1948, will be a date long remembered by Bikinians, for it marks the end of their frustration at Rongerik. An official from Kwajalein had come the day before, advising them to make ready for departure on the morrow at noon. In the interim, they hastily assembled personal belongings and household effects, and dismantled seven of their largest outrigger canoes. A final service in the little thatched church memorialized their day of farewell. The evacuation vessel arrived on schedule and, as the sun dropped below the horizon, moved noisily out of the lagoon, laden with the lighthearted Bikinians. Overnight the island nomads made a landfall at Kwajalein, and at noon on March 15 received a warm welcome at the Navy Pier from the governor, civil administrator, and scores of other interested military occupants of the island base. A new tent village which had already been prepared soon resounded with the ceaseless chatter of the new arrivals before another night had fallen.

Kwajalein Island, the largest in the atoll of that name, was the scene of fierce fighting in February, 1944, when American invading forces won a decisive victory over its Japanese defenders. Not a tree remained on that occasion, although by now a few had grown in favored locations to rid the island of its wartime nickname, "the Rock." Ocean-side of the long airstrip was a camp of 300 Marshallese laborers recruited from all over the islands to work for American agencies on the base. Near this camp ran the single street of the Bikini encampment, bordered on either side by 15 dwellings with raised wooden floors, corrugated iron siding, canvas covers, and electric lighting. All Bikinians, except the aged and feeble, shared a common mess-hall with the labor camp, but in other matters they maintained their group identity. Civil administration had reserved for their exclusive use, as school, council hall, and church, a portion of an old warehouse. Those men and women who desired to earn money found ample opportunity in domestic service, boat building, laundry, garbage disposal, and clerical tasks. Bikinians' morale soared to new heights as the respite at Kwajalein gave them a chance to regain emotional security and rebuild their health under the watchful eyes of Navy medical specialists. They formed new friendships with other Marshallese in the labor camp, and together they viewed American movies, drank cokes, and ate candybars and ice cream. Bikinians were profoundly impressed during this period with the cultural accomplishments of Americans, as they learned about skyscraper cities and public schools, about elections and the rights of individuals, and about the technological might of the United States in a world of nations. They compared these things with their own customs, and the younger people especially began to wonder and, as have other Marshallese in recent years, to doubt the efficacy of their own culture.

Meanwhile, civil administration pressed its search for relocation possibilities. Opinions on the matter were solicited from several paramount chiefs, among them Jeimata and his son and heir, Lejolang. Juda and some of the Bikini

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-496)



ELIJABOT, PROCESSING PANDANUS LEAVES.

*alabs* accompanied officials to Ujae, Lae, Wotho, and Kili to view at first hand the advantages and disadvantages of each, returning to Kwajalein to share their observations with other Bikinians. For long hours at night in their darkened tents, the perplexed evacuees debated the arguments for and against each of the suggested sites. They, as well as the administration, fully comprehended the seriousness of the impending move. This choice had to be the right choice. Everyone realized that the administration was fast running out of uninhabited islands for surplus populations. The scheduled two months at Kwajalein doubled. Bikinians grew restless as the novelty of the military base faded; their restricted activity became irksome. They longed to enjoy the peaceful quiet of a Marshallese village, to go fishing in an outrigger, and to sit in shade under waving palm trees. Thoughts of Bikini came to mind more often to disturb their judgment on the respective merits of Kili Island and Wotho Atoll, the two suggestions which finally emerged as feasible and acceptable to the administration. Wotho Atoll is like Ujae and Lae in that all belong to Jeimata, and all are populated. The total land area of Wotho is 1.67 square miles, most of which is the main island (0.98 square miles). Wotho lagoon is small (36.6 square miles), and its population in 1948 was only 31. Kili Island, just 230 acres in extent (0.36 square miles), isolated, and with no lagoon, would definitely be second choice except for the differential in climate and resources: Kili in the wetter, richer south, and Wotho in the drier, more limited north. Although pandanus and arrowroot are less abundant than in the north, Kili possesses large groves of excellent breadfruit trees, bananas, and papayas, and several low swampy areas ideally suited to cultivation of taro. The island had already been planted to coconut palms of superior quality, and exported over 60 tons of copra annually under prewar Japanese management. No one had lived on Kili since the war. It belongs to the United States as former Japanese property, and is subject to control by no paramount chief.

In the American manner a plebiscite was conducted in the Bikini camp to clarify for the administration the people's choice. On June 1, 1948, every adult Bikinian, one by one, entered a room which contained two boxes: one labelled "Kili" with photographs and texts in Marshallese outlining the benefits and handicaps of the area, and the other, "Wotho," similarly represented. Into one of the two boxes, according to each person's mind, a chip was dropped. A decided majority (54 to 22) favored Kili, thereby indicating their preference for a place of their own. To Bikinians, Kili had come to mean an area abundant in food and other resources, and wet enough for thirst never again to be a menace. Their final choice was well-reasoned, one in which the administration concurred, although serious difficulties would be presented in the actual resettlement operation and in future servicing due to the absence of adequate anchorage. Other Marshallese have informed me that Bikinians chose wisely, many of them envying the wanderers the opportunity to build at Kili a more prosperous life, and one which could be the equal of any in the Marshalls.

Preparation of Kili for occupancy commenced Septem-

ber 25, 1948, over six months after the Bikinians had stepped ashore at Kwajalein. Twenty-five of them aided naval personnel in unloading construction materials from a naval cargo vessel by rubber raft over the treacherous reef that surrounds Kili. Work progressed slowly and equipment was lost in the heavy surf. Along the beach on the western side of Kili the Marshallese brushed out an area for 33 tent shelters. Inland from the beach, others constructed the more permanent council house, dispensary, trade store, copra warehouse, cisterns, and latrines. Two naval vessels appeared offshore on November 2, carrying the entire Bikini population, which by now had swelled to 184, including relatives who had sought security elsewhere during the war, and those acquired since by birth or marriage. Wet and windy was the weather and the sea was rough, threatening to prevent a landing of the people by ship's boats across the reef. Further discharge of Bikinians' personal gear and food supplies proved impossible, and both ships made anchorage at Jaluit Atoll, some 30 miles away. When a break in the weather occurred on November 5, one of the vessels returned. The next two days saw completion of the first phase of Operation Kili. All American personnel returned to Kwajalein on November 11, except one navy carpenter's mate who remained at Kili to supervise permanent construction of housing.

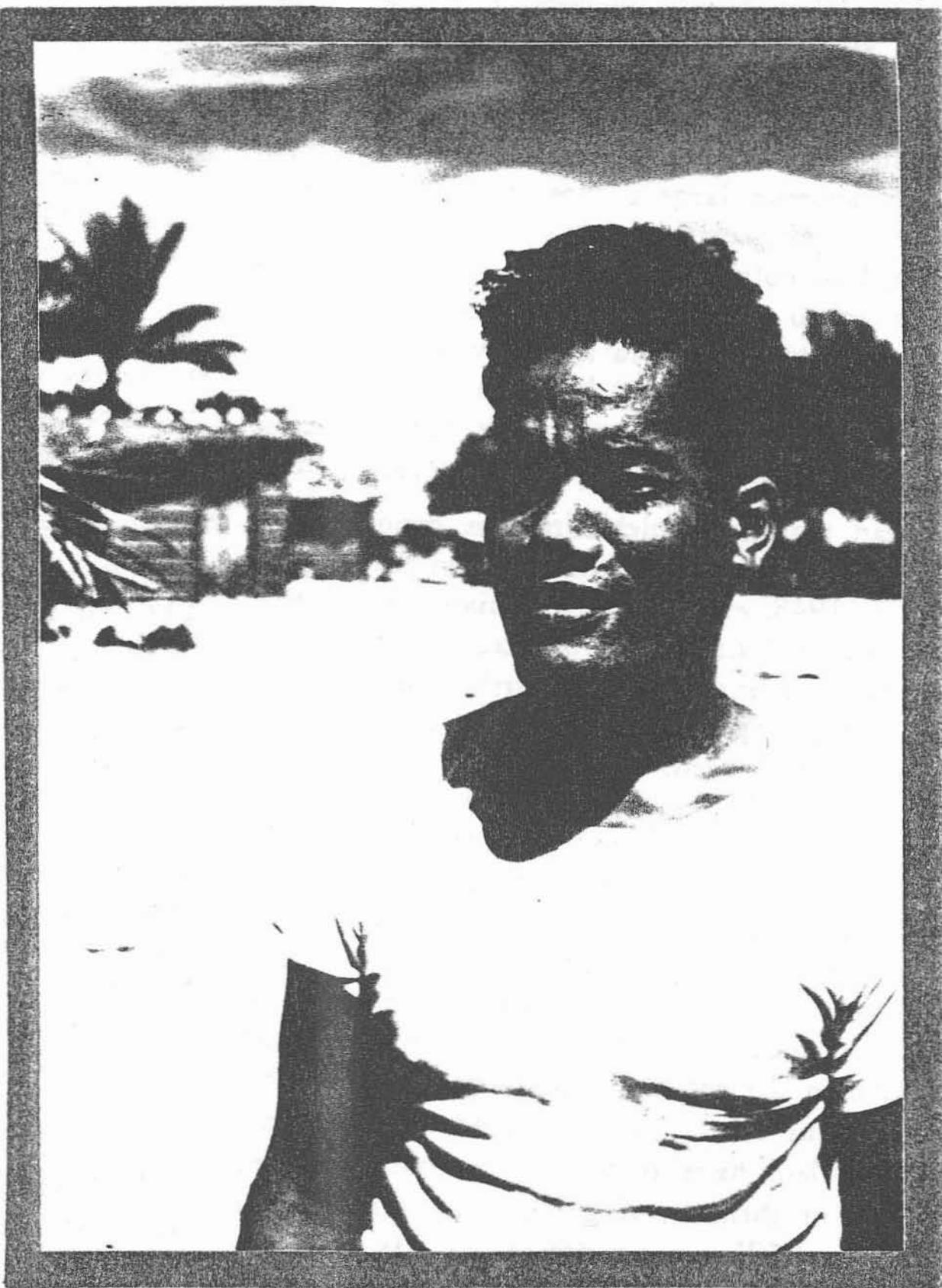
### Settlement at Kili

The first six months at Kili passed quickly for Bikinians, as they concentrated upon establishing their permanent residence amidst the overgrown tangle of forest and ground cover which had accumulated since the Japanese abandoned the island. Gradually, under the supervision of the navy carpenter, Bikinians erected 36 new dwellings, solid frame structures with high screened openings under the eaves of tarpaper roofs. Upon completion of each new house, a family took possession and vacated one of the tents on the beach. Quarters were assigned by Juda and the *alabs* after considering previous disposition at Rongerik and Bikini, as well as subsequent change in the relative size of families. The last structure to be built was the beautiful, thatched church situated on a rise of ground just back of the village and facing the sea. In May, 1949, the naval representative took his leave, his responsibility discharged, and the Bikinians faced the future on their own.

Although the administration originally had offloaded at Kili sufficient food supplies to tide them over the initial period of adjustment, Bikinians began immediately to use island resources. Coconuts were everywhere, sprouting where they had fallen, ready for cutting copra, or still green on the trees in the plantation area. Fish were caught with little difficulty once the stormy season had passed, and the islanders had constructed small paddle canoes to fish offshore. Only two of their sailing canoes had been shipped from Kwajalein, but these had been sidetracked to Jaluit when weather conditions prevented unloading them at Kili. As fast as the people cleared ground farther inland for planting bananas, papayas, sweet potatoes, and taro, they harvested the mature coconuts where they lay and in wet

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1205)



RUBAN.

weather dried them over slow-burning fires. From January through July about 20 tons of this copra was cut and sacked, ready for sale to government traders at \$80 per ton. About 50 percent of this accumulation had been exported before August, and when the remainder was sold the Bikinians got off to a good start financially, with cash for their regular orders of trade goods. They rejoiced when Lajore, the paramount chief who controls Rongerik, sent them four pigs and 10 chickens from Ailinglablab in order to provide them with breeding stock for festival food to be consumed later in celebration of their good fortune. On the material side of their existence, Bikinians have made a good beginning at Kili, but a planned program of education is needed to aid the newcomers in adjusting themselves to their new environment, such as learning to handle small craft in rough surf, to cure copra by artificial heat during the frequently rainy weather, and to cultivate and process the strange foods to which they have been introduced.

An administration representative on a recent visit to Kili suggested to Bikinians that they divide their island into land parcels and assign *alab* and residents to each, in accordance with Marshallese custom. The people have been tardy in complying with this request for a number of reasons. First, they wish to clear considerably more land on the island in order to know better what they have to divide. Second, a difference of opinion exists within the community as to which principle of land rights distribution should be applied. Certain elders prefer to apportion landholdings on a plan similar to that followed at Bikini, where areas had been allotted to *alabs*, who in turn made household assignments. Younger people contrarily urge what they believe to be a more equitable procedure which will take into consideration the altered size and need of many families since Bikini was evacuated. The third and possibly strongest reason for delay is directly related to the question of the Bikinians' future relationship to Lejolang, son of Jeimata and acting paramount chief in recent years. If Lejolang continues as *iroij-lab-lab* of Bikinians at Kili Island, where he has not the official standing that he enjoyed at Bikini, his participation will be essential in defining land boundaries at Kili. However, Bikinians have no desire to retain Lejolang as their paramount chief, as they have informed the administration repeatedly during 1949. They prefer to manage their own affairs more democratically, a consequence of certain advantages emphasized in their discussions with Americans and other Marshallese at Kwajalein. In this connection the following quotation from an official report by the Marshalls' civil administrator in April, 1948, is significant: "It is hoped that they (Bikinians) may become more familiar with the rights and responsibilities of a municipality and the individual as a result of their stay on Kwajalein." They learned their lesson well. Bikinians further point out that Kili Island is government property and that if the administration requires them to recognize an *iroij-lab-lab* they beg leave to substitute the United States for Lejolang.

Many Marshallese sympathize with the Bikinians in this last statement, although it ignores Marshallese tradition. In the days of Kabua, the *iroij-lab-lab* exacted tribute from

his subjects but he also guarded their interests and cared for them in times of adversity. The relationship was a reciprocal one which functioned well, neither party questioning the basis of its existence. The Japanese, while they restricted the power of the *iroij-lab-lab*, continued to utilize the feudalistic system as they required the paramount chief to pay his subjects' taxes, hospital fees, and similar expenses. On the other hand, the paramount chief was officially supported in his claim for 50 percent of the copra money earned by producers occupying his land. When the Americans entered upon the scene, their more direct methods of dealing with the population usually by-passed the paramount chief except on state occasions. Medical, dental, and hospital services are available today to all Marshallese at little or no cost to anyone but the government. In conformance with administrative regulation, atoll communities function as municipalities, the councils of *alabs* levying taxes directly on the people for support of local magistrates, schoolteachers, policemen, and other public officials. Americans have preferred to establish no policy with regard to copra shares, except to give the producer complete freedom to share his earnings with the paramount chief according to his own inclination. The *iroij-lab-lab* may not participate in the democratic councils except as another *alab*. The Marshallese are encouraged to assert themselves as individuals in council meetings and to speak up for their rights. Regardless of the motives underlying the American approach, Marshallese tend to interpret it as disapproval of their feudalistic practices. The Bikinians are strong in their judgment that now is the time to break with their own paramount chief. They hasten to recall numerous instances of alleged ill-treatment by Lejolang in support of their contention.

Lejolang visited Bikini only once after the war, on which occasion the Bikinians rendered to him the tribute due a paramount chief, including quantities of arrowroot meal, coconut oil, sennit, preserved pandanus, and money, in return for which Lejolang left a token gift of one sack of flour for the women. When the military government officer in charge of that field trip questioned the wisdom of accepting these materials from a population in need of material assistance to recover from the lean war years, Lejolang assured him that this was only following established Marshallese custom. In 1948, at the Kwajalein encampment, Lejolang frequently visited the Bikinians to re-establish his contact with his subjects, but they describe his manner as overbearing and they resented his demands for personal service without compensation. Today, Bikinians at Kili Island orate at length about the injustice to them in the case of their two outrigger canoes which had to be off-loaded at Jaluit and placed in Lejolang's charge. They claim that he uses them in his own interest, renting the canoes at \$5 each trip to Jaluit Marshallese who need bottoms to transport copra. The Bikinians request that either the canoes be returned to them at Kili, or that they be paid at least a part of the money which the canoes are earning at Jaluit. They are reminded of similar instances during Japanese times when Lejolang failed to uphold his end of the contract. For instance, one Bikinian had sustained an injury to his leg and required hospitalization and treatment at

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1206)



JALOME.

Jaluit. According to regulations, Lejolang should have paid the bill, but Bikinians state that he refused, and that the necessary amount was eventually contributed by two paramount chiefs of Ailinglablab who had no responsibility in the matter.

Lejolang, in his own defense, insists that he is acting only within the limits of his customary rights as a paramount chief, which entitle him to anything he may require from his subjects. He reminds the administration of its publicly stated policy to observe Marshallese custom and to refrain from effecting changes in that custom. He requests administrative support in perpetuating Marshallese traditions which in recent years have declined (especially under the influence of Americans in the islands), despite official policy to the contrary. When he is charged with failing to execute his responsibilities as a paramount chief, he answers that the present system of government allows him no opportunity, as did that of the Japanese, but that he is willing to carry out his part of the bargain in the event of change in administrative practice.

The administration at present faces the problem of how to serve the best interests of all concerned in disposing of the property title to Kili Island. It is here assumed that the United States owes a debt to the Bikinians and their paramount chief for their combined loss of Bikini. Three alternative courses are presented:

1. If title to Kili is conferred upon Lejolang and the Bikinians as his subjects, Kili will simply be substituted for Bikini atoll. Lejolang favors this plan because he stands to gain an income from the copra earnings of his subjects at Kili far in excess of what he received at Bikini. At the prewar rate of production, the Kili copra industry will bring to Marshallese at least \$4,000 annually at current copra prices. Since paramount chiefs in the Marshalls today hope to receive from their subjects a maximum of one-fourth of what the trader pays the producer, Lejolang's potential yearly income from Kili is \$1,000. The remaining \$3,000 will be apportioned among the nearly 200 Bikinians who do the work. The latter consider this payment to Lejolang unjustified in the existing state of affairs, and present it as one of their strongest reasons for wishing to sever their connection with Lejolang.

2. Alternatively, the island may be deeded directly to the Bikinians, for them to divide among themselves according to whatever system they agree upon. In that event, the United States' debt to Lejolang, as paramount chief, might be settled by compensation in money, just as the Japanese did when they appropriated Marshallese lands for military purposes. It is believed that Lejolang would accept such a proposition in lieu of title to Kili, if the price for Bikini were right. To provide some basis for evaluating the worth of Bikini Atoll, the following case of Wotje Island is presented. About 1937, the Japanese required the large island of Wotje Atoll for development as a key air base in the southern Marshalls. Marshallese say that the Japanese paid the paramount chief of Wotje for the land at the rate of 10 yen per *tsubo* (one *tsubo* is equivalent to 32.61 square feet), a total sum of approximately 50,000 yen, or \$15,000 (at that time

the Japanese yen was worth about 25 cents). If the land value of Bikini were computed on a similar basis, compensation to Lejolang would amount to \$50,000. Even that would represent a purely nominal sum as compared with the total cost of Operation Crossroads.

3. The administration might wish to adopt a laissez-faire attitude toward the whole situation by retaining title to Kili in the United States government, by permitting the Bikinians an indefinite usufruct right to the island, and by ignoring Lejolang as just another casualty of the clash between Marshallese and American cultures. This approach would conflict with American *policy* about respect for indigenous customs. It would be more consistent with the American *practice* of encouraging democratic process in Marshallese society.

It has been suggested that should the administration choose alternative (1) as the easiest to execute, the Bikinians could achieve their aim subsequently by repudiating their paramount chief as other communities in the Marshalls are doing. From the Bikinians' point of view, however, any official grant of Kili to Lejolang would be the equivalent of administrative support of his position. In their respect for the United States and for what they consider this country has done for them, they would hesitate to take any action against Lejolang, since he would be regarded as a protégé of the government. It is certain that implementation of the first alternative at this time in the Bikinians' adjustment to their new environment at Kili would constitute a severe psychological blow to their security.

### Conclusions

In reviewing the wanderings of Bikinians since 1946, it must be obvious how little we Americans understand the Marshallese culture and its basic values. Even now, when a few anthropologists have worked in the islands for limited periods to increase our fund of knowledge, any real appreciation of the Marshallese people cannot be fully realized. Before our background for comprehending this group can be adequate to achieve a truly commendable administration of the Marshall Islands as a United Nations trust, there must be further field investigation and study by anthropologists, geographers, psychologists, and other students of man, all working together to attain a fuller picture of the Marshall Islander's relationship to his total environment.

Difficulties encountered in the Bikinians' relocation were not made any less difficult by the phenomenon of population increase, as we became aware of it in the Marshalls. As American medical personnel continue their very efficient work among Marshallese, the population checks of former years are removed, and land for settlement by expanding communities becomes increasingly scarce. It is essential that Americans in their administration of these islands anticipate the problems involved in overpopulation and devote more attention to possible solutions. Having been forewarned in this instance, we should not in the future have to resort to expediency, as we have done with the Bikinians.

The property aspect of the Bikinian settlement at Kili is difficult to deal with, regardless of our knowledge about

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-491)



SHAPING A CANOE HULL, "LAGOON" SHORE.

Marshallese land tenure and political organization. Individual personalities which are involved exert considerable influence on the speed and direction of cultural change. Where culture is changing rapidly in some islands, it remains stable in others. Since American policy has been not to press for change, those modifications of culture, which are bound to occur in any case, should be allowed to develop in whatever manner is consistent with the local situation. The Bikinians and their land problem at Kili are local in sense.

The speed and effectiveness of the Bikini resettlement during any particular phase was closely correlated with the type of individual in charge and with the amount of pressure applied from higher levels or by criticism from outside the government. Some administrators were both sympathetic and energetic in their efforts to aid the Bikinians in their adjustment, while others were negligent and lacking judgment. Quite apparent throughout the operation was the administration's overwhelming concern that Bikinians be adequately supplied with food, shelter, and sanitation. Relatively little assistance has been offered in terms of education and other long-range media of adjustment in the new

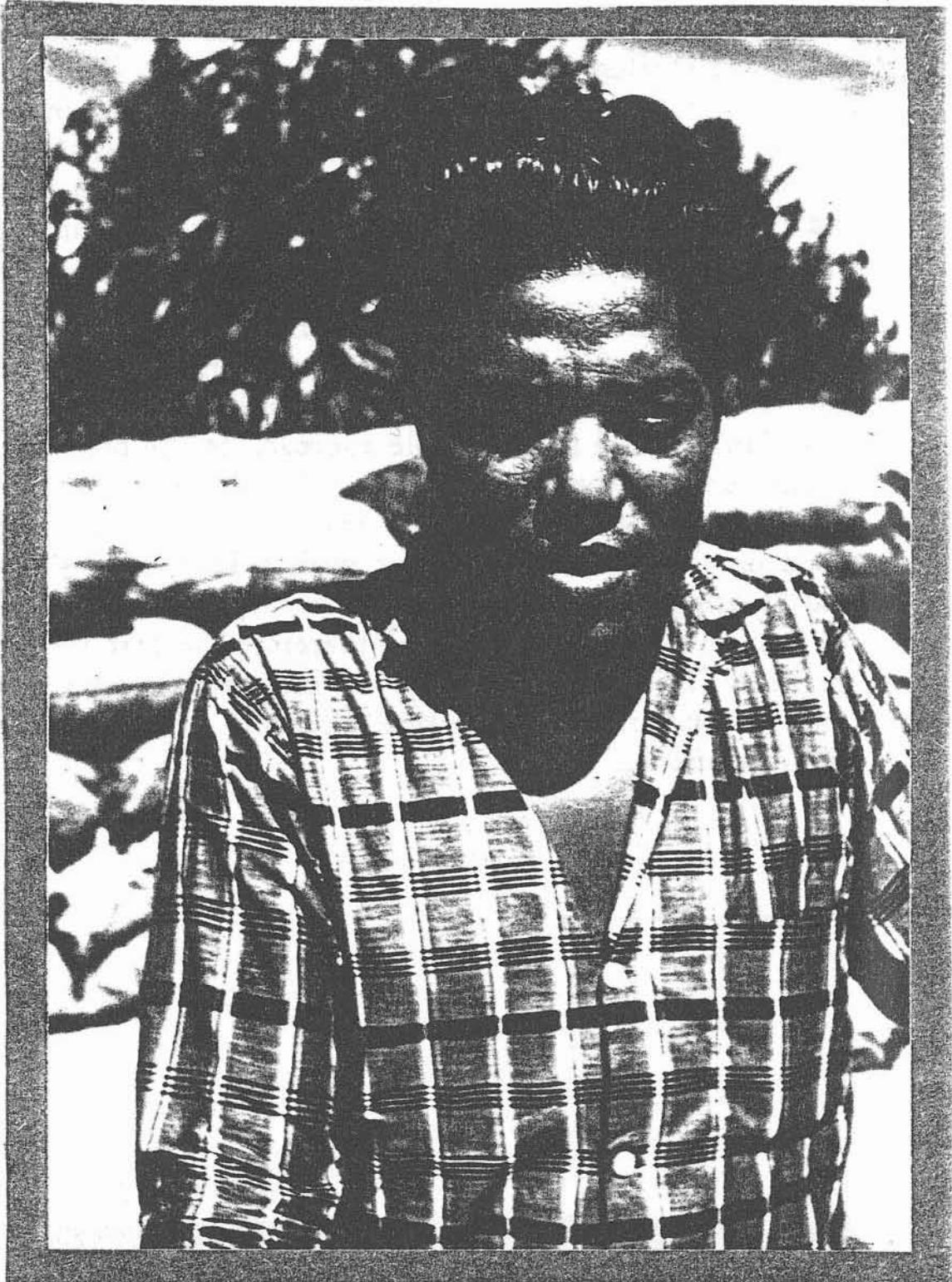
situation. It has been observed on a number of occasions that administrative personnel in general tend to regard the Marshallese as children who can be easily satisfied with promises, and to bring charges of laziness and inefficiency when Marshallese do not respond as expected. This is related to another common tendency of Americans in their relations with people of another culture, and that is to interpret what they see and hear in terms of American culture and its values, with a corresponding failure to comprehend what is really taking place.

Fundamental to the total situation is the evident inconsistency which exists between American administrative policy and its actual implementation in the field. There appears to be an ambivalence in our whole approach to the problems of administering dependent peoples. On the one hand, we profess to respect and to preserve tradition and custom, while on the other, we attempt with a kind of missionary zeal to bring to the Marshallese that which we judge to be the best in our own culture and therefore the best for Marshallese. This frequently leads us into embarrassing situations, particularly in the political aspects of Marshall Islands administration.

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KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1195)



URATA.

KILI COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION

by

Leonard Mason

An article written for SPC (South Pacific Commission) Quarterly Bulletin (April 1958) based on 1948 visit to Rongerik Atoll, 1949 visit to Kili Island, and 1957 field trip to Kili Island.

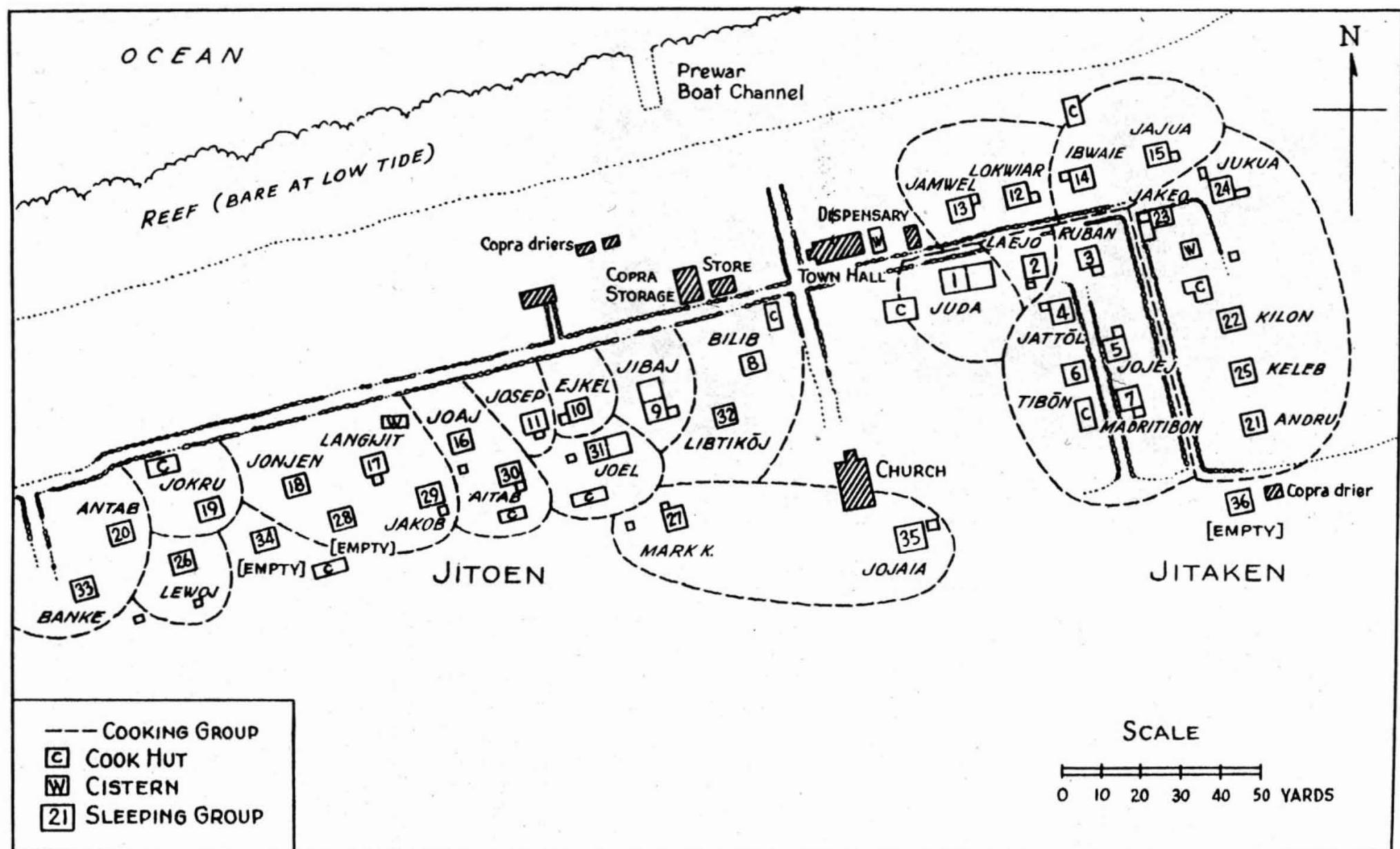
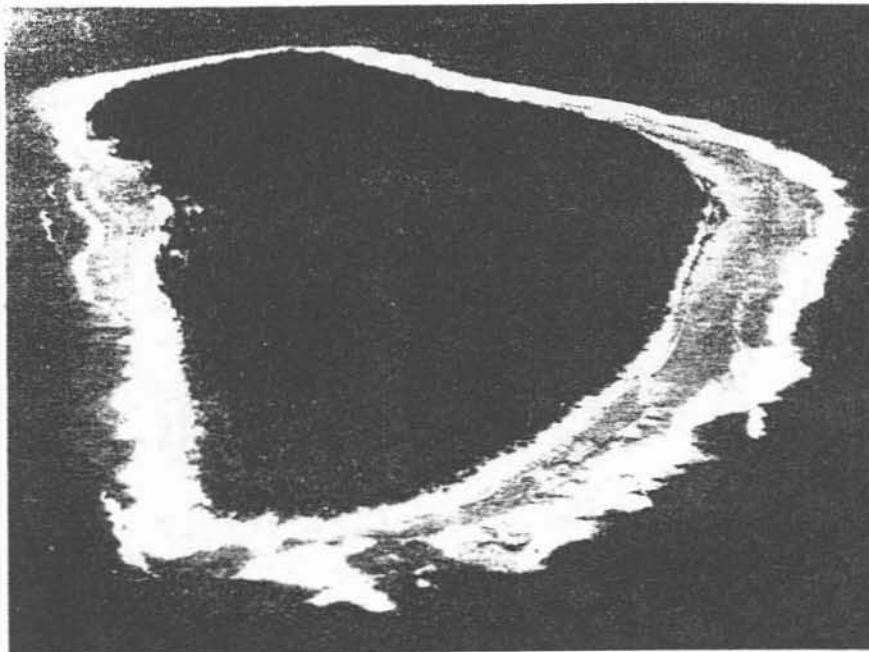


FIG. 28. MAP OF KILI VILLAGE, 1949



Above: Kili Island's two hundred acres, viewed from the south-west at 1,000 feet altitude, are ringed by unbroken reef. The village is located near the shore at left centre. Cleared area inland is planted with taro. Right: Juda, 54-year-old head of the ranking kin group on Kili, serves as elected magistrate (mayor). His quiet leadership and innovative genius have speeded the islanders' adaptation to a new life on Kili.



## Kili Community In Transition

IN 1948 the reef-ringed island of Kili lay abandoned, its thirty years' development as a copra plantation in the southern Marshalls ended by the misfortune of war, its contract labour population returned to island homes, its groves of carefully-spaced trees urgently requiring care. Now, ten years later, Kili's resources support a community of 250 Marshallese who combine copra export and importation of rice, flour, sugar, and tinned meats with the more direct use of abundant coconut reserves, newly-planted stocks of pandanus, banana, taro, and breadfruit, and a limited sea-food supply.

The present population derives from Bikini expatriates who in 1946 were evacuated from that northern Marshalls atoll to make way for nuclear weapons testing by United States agencies. When, after two unfortunate years of residence on inadequate Rongerik Atoll, these displaced people were permanently resettled on Kili Island, they brought with them a way of living that was well adapted to the drier, less productive habitat of their Bikini origin.

Plant food on the northern atoll had been limited to coconut, arrowroot, and pandanus, supplemented by negligible husbandry of pigs and poultry and by trapping of wild birds. The islanders had avoided extreme want only by turning to the more abundant resources of Bikini's reef and lagoon. This subsistence economy, only slightly modified by visits

*In 1948, a small community of two hundred and fifty people from the northern Marshalls was settled on the island of Kili, in the southern Marshall Group. This study of the resulting social and economic changes that have occurred was contributed by...*

LEONARD MASON\*

from itinerant traders, was tied to a system of land tenure in which matrilineage membership determined each person's rights in use and inheritance. Each matrilineage was composed of persons closely related through the female line. Male heads of these ranked kin groups acted in concert to provide the socio-political leadership needed for stable community organization. Under American administration after 1944 this leadership was formalized as a council with an elected magistrate as its head.

The isolated island of Kili (thirty miles of open water separate it from the nearest atoll, Jaluit) lacks the finny treasure of Bikini's lagoon. Kili's 200 acres of land equal less than one-sixth the area of Bikini's twenty-five islets. Such shortcomings have been surmounted to some degree by the community's experiments with the wider variety of food plants that commonly thrive in the rain-drenched and fertile soils of the southern Marshalls. In this respect the United States Trust Territory Administration has rendered aid through its Kili Development Project, initiated in 1953 with

project manager James Milne, a native of Ebon Atoll, and continued in 1955 by his successor Konto Sandbergen of Jaluit Atoll. Both men had been prepared for their assignment by special training at the University of Hawaii.

Eight years of trial and error have led ex-Bikinians and their Kili-born descendants to a generally successful adaptation to the land. Remarkable changes have occurred in economic and family organization as well as in technology. The individual is emerging more prominently in community affairs though he continues to be identified primarily with his kin group. Some features of the old matrilineal organization seem to be yielding to structural and functional traits more reminiscent of the Euro-American family system.

### Land Division

Kili's land and trees are now owned and managed by some twenty of these kin-groups-in-transition. Allocation of real property was conceived and executed in 1954 by the community's own leader.

\* Professor of Anthropology, University of Hawaii.

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-485)



JIBA AND JAKURA.



Above: At the village limits begin extensive coconut plantings of pre-war years, when Kili was managed commercially by Japanese Nanya Boeki Kaisha. When ex-Bikinians arrived in 1948 the groves needed much thinning. Right: Women of Kili process pandanus leaf for floor and sleeping mats and for saleable handicraft. Pandanus supplies were scarce on Kili in 1948, but intensive planting has since remedied this lack.

For several months the project manager had urged the island Council to tackle the problem of land division before extending rehabilitation work into uncleared areas beyond the village limits. But the Council had postponed action principally because of unresolved issues relating to inequities in tenure on Bikini, where some lineages had controlled far more land than size of membership now seemed to merit.

Finally Juda, elected magistrate of the community as well as hereditary leader, devised a plan for assigning Kili's land according to the number of individuals in each of twenty households, the kin-groups-in-transition. This he presented informally to several lineage heads whose holdings on Bikini had been disproportionately large. When these men agreed to support his proposal he took the matter before the Council. Discussion resulted in unanimous approval of Juda's plan.

The well-ordered rows of coconut trees that cover most of the island provided a convenient measure of acreage, and were tallied against the actual number of residents in each household group, beginning at the west end of the village. Absentee members were counted as present, and the scribe (Council secretary) recorded the names of those assigned to each of twenty parcels of land. The village area, where all dwellings are located, was reserved as communal property.

#### Family Relationships

The composition of the new landholding groups is no longer entirely consistent with the rule of matrilineality (in which a man's wife and children are not part of his linear kin group), but neither does it accord completely with any other rule.

For example, kin group "X" (Kilians refer to the presently ambiguous social unit as a *bamle*, this being their rendition of the English word "family") comprises three sisters and their children (also the sisters' husbands!) and two brothers; the younger of whom found a wife on a nearby atoll where he lives with her and their children (but only he is included in the Kili *bamle*), while the older brother, accompanied by his wife and children, resides with the rest of the *bamle* and all of them share in the group's land. Here the brother and sister bond is still strong but operates in combination with the factor of common residence (this household is made up of four dwelling groups living side by side in one corner of the village). In every *bamle* the Kili residents commonly cook and eat together and co-operate in production of copra and in other activities.

Then, too, there is *bamle* "Y" which appears to abandon the rule of matrilineality though retaining a sense of lineality in combination with a recognition of residence: thus, a man, his wife, an unwed daughter with two children, a married son with wife and children, and a widowed brother and his son. Although land allocation on Kili was decided in terms of residential affiliation on a certain date, the existing residence had been determined previously by a combination of linear and bilateral relationships, the precise arrangement within any *bamle* having resulted from personal considerations of necessity and convenience.

#### Council Representation

Each kin group on Kili, following the Bikinian tradition, has its male head, the *alab*. *Bamle* members respect the right of their headman to one-quarter of the money income from every bag of copra produced on the group's land and

sold to the Kili store. This *alab* share is set aside as a reserve to be drawn upon as needed for emergency by individual or group if the *alab* approves. Periodic contributions required of each *bamle* by the Kili Council for community projects are ordinarily paid from this fund. No instance was observed by the writer in which the headman employed the *alab* share to personal advantage.

Not all *bamle* headmen are represented on the Council at Kili, membership in the governing body having been held to the ten lineage heads who served on Bikini. The same men (except two who died and were replaced) continue in office, although the groups they represent have changed in composition.

Nine new headships have been created in the present socio-economic organization (one additional position is associated with land reserved for the use of the native pastor who sometimes comes from another island in the Marshalls and is appointed for a two-year term). Most of these new positions are filled by younger brothers of Bikini *alabs*. This fractionation of kin groups in the course of the 1954 land allocation without some alteration of the Council membership leaves segments of the Kili population without direct voice in community affairs, a situation that is fraught with potential unrest, some of which is beginning to be realized. Land ownership in the Marshalls has traditionally been associated with the privilege of political participation.

The blurred nature of changing social patterns on Kili is further evidenced by the manner in which the two deceased councillors were succeeded by their own sons rather than by younger brothers or by sons of their sisters, as would have been the case on Bikini. Still another matter on which Kilians re-

KILI - JULY 4, 1957

(M-1180)



FIRST BIKINI INTEREST PAYMENT. BOYD MCKENZIE, URAIA,  
LEE, JUDA.



Above: When ex-Bikinians came to Kili in 1948 they built a new village under supervision, mainly using materials supplied by the Administration. This dwelling is one of thirty on Kili re-built from salvaged lumber and thatched with local pandanus. Street in foreground is sanded, rest of living area is covered with coral pebbles. Right: The Protestant church on Kili is supported by the entire island population, whose ancestors on Bikini Atoll in 1908 were the last Marshallese to be converted by American mission workers from New England.

main undecided is the basis for recognizing new members of a *bamile*, whether these should be own children or sisters' children or some combination of these and still other relatives—another point of potential conflict of interest within the community.

#### Compensation For Rights in Bikini

In 1956 the Trust Territory Administration reached an agreement with the Kili Council whereby those persons with land rights in Bikini would be compensated for indefinite use of that atoll by United States agencies. In November 1956 an initial payment of \$25,000 in cash was distributed by the Kili Council among some 330 men, women, and children who were regarded as legitimate participants in the settlement.

The councillors, with assistance from younger men who possessed more experience in arithmetical calculation, quickly arrived at a classification of individuals for the purpose of computing the amount to be paid to each kin group. It was decided that every person on Kili in November was to receive \$79; each member of the Kili community who was temporarily absent was allotted \$75; and each individual who was matrilineally related to a Bikinian lineage but who had made permanent residence elsewhere in the Marshalls was limited to \$50, as was also his or her spouse and each of their children.

All payments were made to headmen or their representatives, further distribution among members of the landholding kin groups on Kili being left to the headmen. No *alab* is known to have tried to withhold funds from his group, although shares of children under fifteen

years or thereabouts were retained by their parents.

An additional \$300,000 was established by the Trust Territory Administration as a trust fund with semi-annual interest payments. The first of these, nearly \$5,000, was made at Kili on July 4 1957, when the Council again accepted responsibility for distribution. Past experience, however, had suggested to councillors that another basis of classification might be more desirable. The distinguishing categories were reduced from three to two—(i) each person present on that date on the island was to get \$16.75, and (ii), any of the 330 November recipients who was absent from Kili on July 4 would be given \$10.25.

It should be noted that in November, and again in July, the Council first computed payments in terms of the individual, but then handed the money over to the headman of the kin group to which the individual belonged. This was the same approach adopted by the Council in its 1954 allocation of Kili land. Recent comments on Kili about alternative ways to classify individuals and what amount each should receive suggest that further modification of Council procedures may be expected when the next interest payment is received on Kili. In other words, although every landholding kin group on the island is not directly represented on the Council (kinship ties resulting from considerable inbreeding tend to provide some indirect representation), the local governing body is not entirely deaf to criticism levelled at it by dissenting groups and individuals in the community.

#### Council Store

At the project manager's suggestion a Council-sponsored store was inaugurated on Kili in 1954 to meet the need for a central receiving and distributing facility. With no capital but a small building, Council and manager embarked on a programme to produce coconut syrup, sennit, and handicrafts from Kili's surplus coconut materials. A ready market for their sale was found among other Marshallese and at the naval air base on Kwajalein.

All profits stayed with the store after each producer had been compensated. Later, all island copra was handled by the store as broker, with sales to various buyers who visited Kili from time to time. Before long the store could buy trade goods for re-sale at a reasonable mark-up to island consumers.

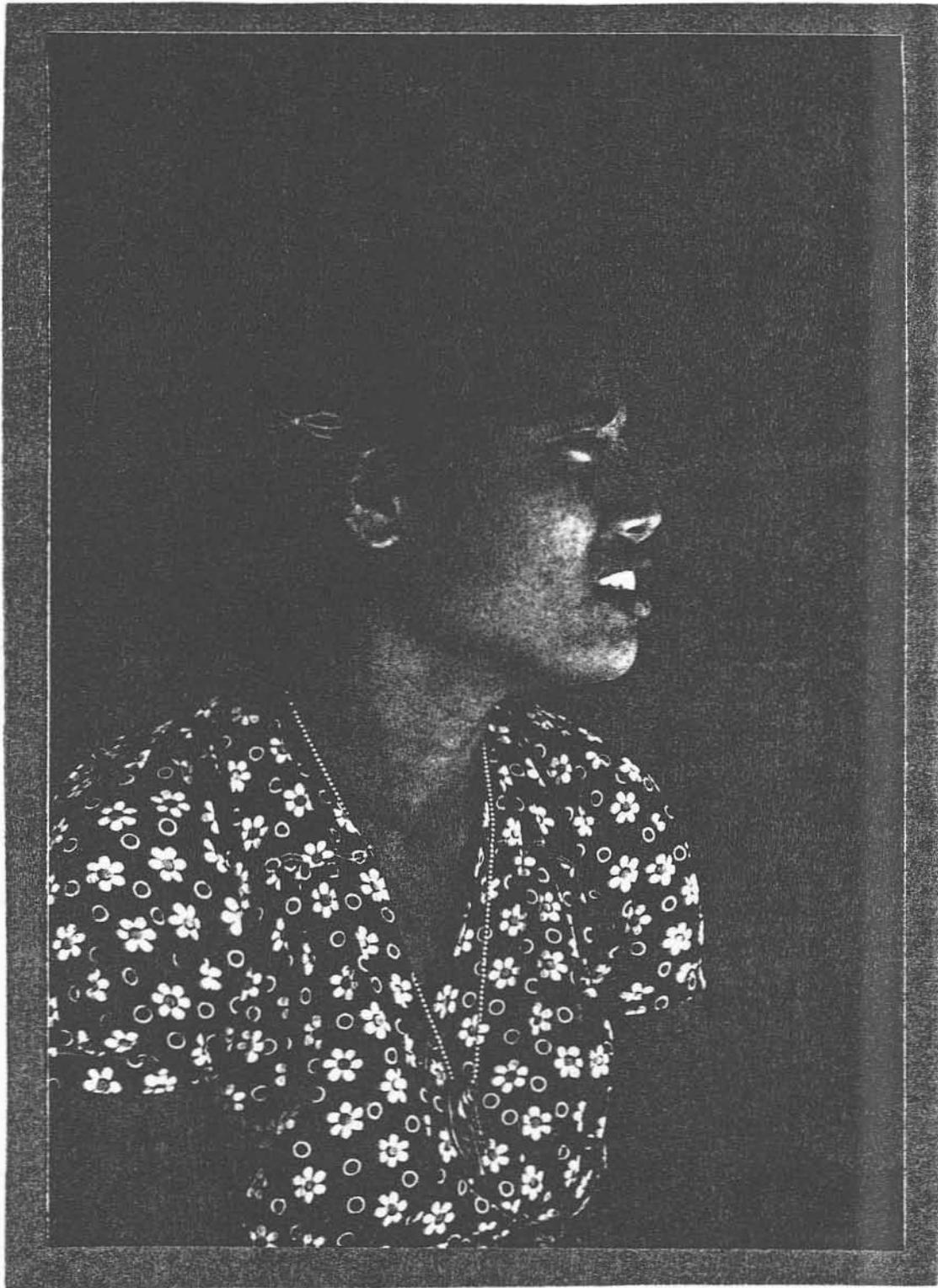
Within less than two years the project manager reported the store's worth at approximately \$5,000. More recently the store has entered the wholesale field, and supplies goods to eight or nine modest outlets on Kili.

Kilians assert that the store belongs to the Council, by which they mean the community. Although in this sense the people are all shareholders, no dividends have ever been paid—all profits continue to remain with the store. One man did present to the Council a strong demand for payment of his "share", but met with a firm refusal.

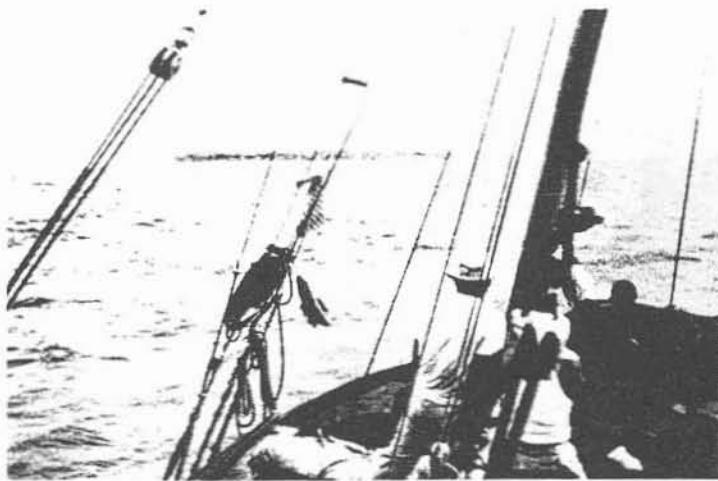
Some years back the Kili Council had been keenly embarrassed in a like situation: islanders who had at that time contributed cash to establish a Kili co-operative under Council management later asked for return of their money and

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-502)



BIKTOK.



Above: At end of five hours' sailing to cover the thirty miles from Jaluit Atoll, the schooner "Libra" makes her landfall at the north-east end of Kili. "Libra" serves as a lifeline for Kilians, bringing supplies and taking away copra. Right: Kili's single street today is lined with thriving banana, pandanus, and coconut. On the right in the distance are island's dispensary, council house, and store.

all profits, leaving the store without capital for further operation.

Another reason for the Council's present hesitancy to define a share system is that some members wish to limit all benefits to those Kilians who took part in the store's development but others refuse to exclude their absentee kinsmen, many of whom have never set foot upon Kili's rugged shores.

Although Council expression on the matter is yet lacking, it is conceivable that procedures already adopted for land allocation and for distribution of recent settlement funds may suggest a way to solve the problem of the store's ownership, i.e., issuance of shares to kin groups in proportion to size of membership, delegating to each *bamle* the determination of individuals' rights in the store (it is not likely that an entire *bamle* will now withdraw its support from the venture which has proven so vital to the island's economy).

Question has recently been raised by Trust Territory officials about the legal right of the Council to incur debts in its importing of trade goods: while the Council is popularly viewed as synonymous with community it does not truly represent the existing island population insofar as some *bamle* heads are not councillors. Neither is the concept of community well defined with respect to the status of off-island members.

#### Inter-Island Communication

Communications between Kili and the rest of the Marshalls are hampered by the coral reef that marches unbroken around the little island. From November to May only occasional breaks in the blustery weather permit boat landings from a ship, or canoe launchings through the rough surf, without considerable danger to life and property. This was well realized as a serious problem when ex-Bikinians first settled on Kili, but

other favourable features associated with the site tended to obscure the presence of this handicap.

Trust Territory officials have since taken measures to reduce this disadvantage of the reef. Properties on thirty-mile-distant Jaluit Atoll were reserved from Japanese pre-war holdings to provide a lagoon-sheltered site for a small colony of Kilians, and a fifty-foot schooner with auxiliary engine was reconditioned for inclusion in the Kili Development Project with intent that Kilians will eventually take over its operation.

Although weather conditions during winter months are such that wind and sea abate enough at intervals to permit safe anchorage off the Kili reef, commercial vessels originating at Majuro or Kwajalein and following carefully scheduled runs throughout the southwestern Marshalls frequently arrive off Kili in adverse weather, and must perforce continue on to the next stop. Difficulty in serving Kili has been a constant threat to the island's economy; local food production, when not supplemented by trade imports, is still insufficient to meet the community's entire needs.

As part of its development project the Administration has constructed six living units on the Jaluit property and has employed three families from Kili to clear and plant the area.

During the past eighteen months the project ship *Libra*, based at Jaluit and manned by Kilian trainees, has been a welcome innovation in the islanders' view. Radio contact between Kili and Jaluit permits relay of weather data and notice of projected sailings. When conditions are favourable the *Libra* undertakes a quick round trip, delivering trade supplies from a depot on Jaluit and returning with Kili copra.

Some doubt has arisen regarding the feasibility of independent operation of

the vessel by the Kili Council unless government subsidy is continued. If the *Libra* or its equivalent is restricted to the Jaluit-Kili trade, as administrative policy now decrees, the island's economy is not broad enough to support the venture unaided. It has been considered to enter the ship into commerce within the southern Marshalls in order to expand the basis of potential revenue, since the *Libra* has not been in uninterrupted operation between Jaluit and Kili. Such procedure, however, would tend to restrict the immediate availability of the vessel for use during the unpredictable breaks in the rougher winter weather. Recent reports of the *Libra*'s loss off Kili in a tropical storm may render this an academic question, but in any case no completely satisfactory answer to the Kili reef has yet been proposed.

#### Integration Within Marshall Islands Society

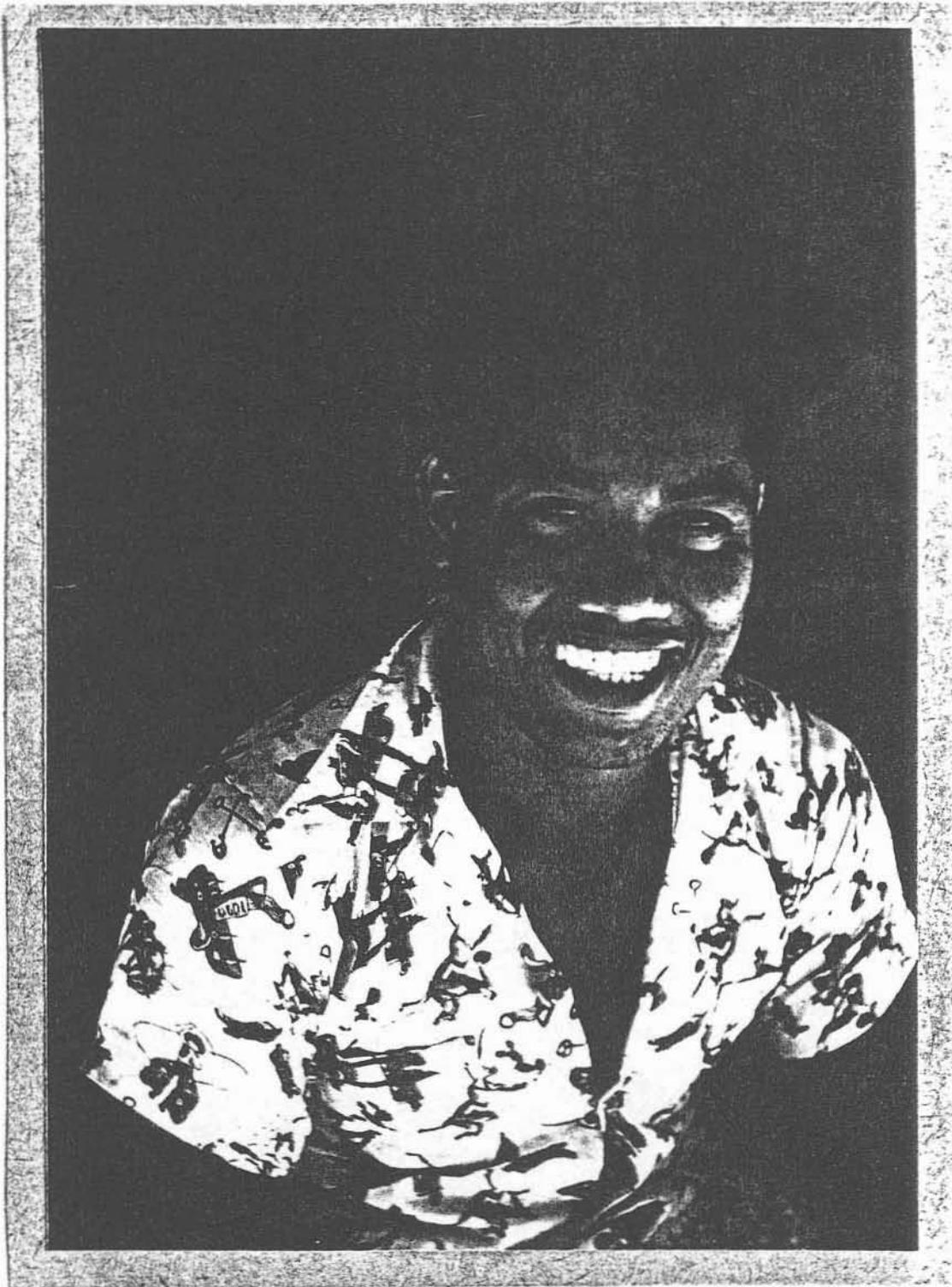
In the overall view, possibly the most significant aspect of Kili in transition is the progress Kilians are making toward integration within the larger Marshall Islands society. For generations prior to their removal from Bikini, these people as a community experienced more social isolation than other Marshallese because of their marginal geographic location and a traditional preference for marriage within the local group. Even now many Marshallese perceive the ex-Bikinians as different in dialect and other mannerisms.

Kilians, for their part, are reluctant to engage in social intercourse with other Marshallese and timidly admit a cultural inferiority with which they are often charged.

Nonetheless, this socio-cultural insularity has been breached in the last few years. Channels exist by means of which Kilians may in time achieve a more (Contd. on p. 46)

KILI - AUG. 15, 1949

(M-503)



ANTIBAJ.

KILI - SEP. 2, 1957

(M-1207)



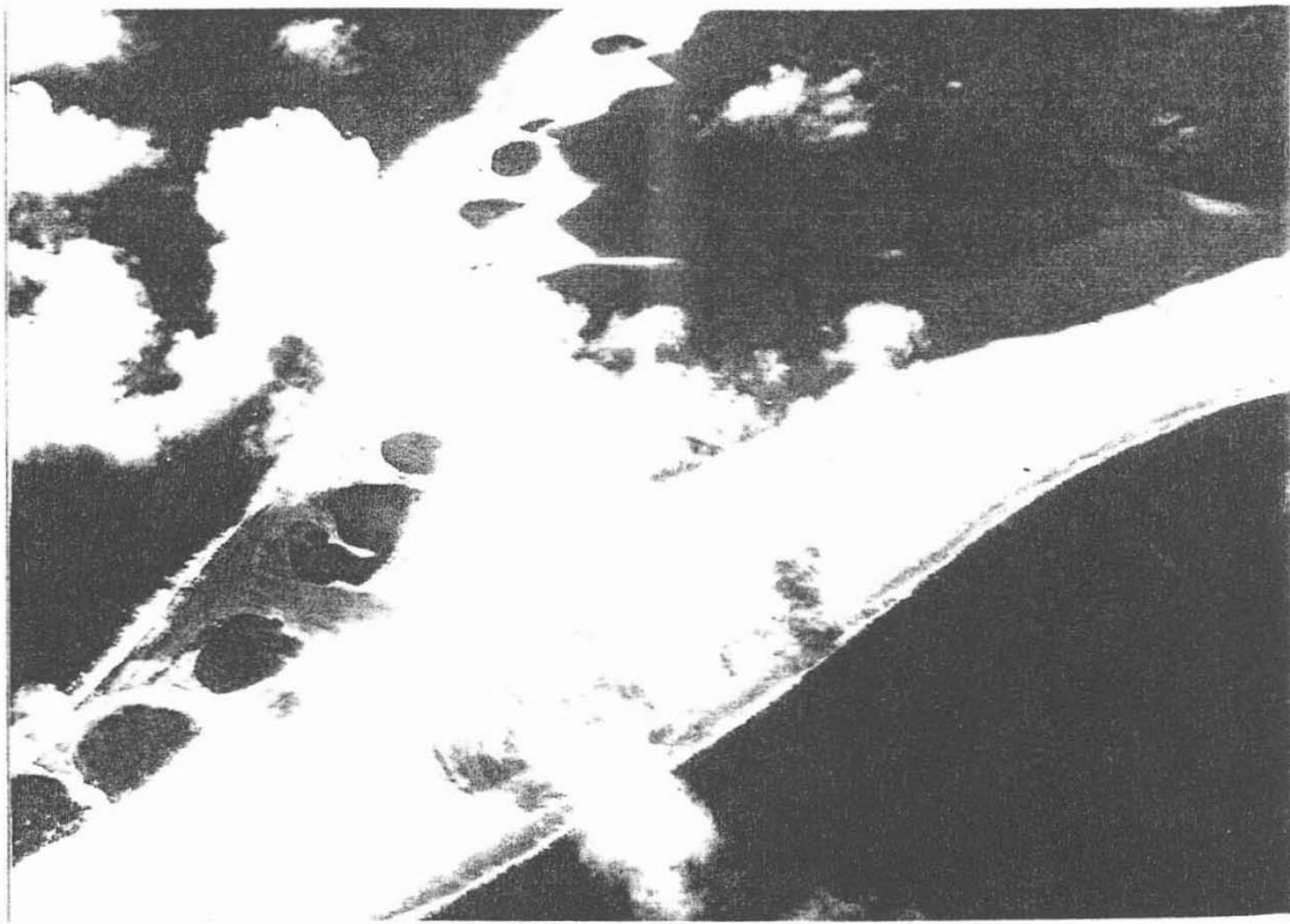
NEITA.

BIKINI DAY 1988

News stories by Giff Johnson and photographs by Shimada Kousei, during a visit to Kili Island on 10 March 1988, and printed in the MARSHALL ISLANDS JOURNAL (18 March 1988, Majuro).

ARNO (BIKAREJ IS) - MAR. 9, 1988

(1-19, MAR.)



BIKAREJ ISLAND (ARNO ATOLL), FROM AIRMIKE FLIGHT TO  
MASURO.

# BIKINI DAY PROGRAM

MARCH 10, 1988

## " 42 LONG YEARS OF EXILE- BUT THIS YEAR WITH HOPE "

### KILI ISLAND

1. Raising of Flags..... Bikini/Kili/Ejit Local Gov  
National Anthem Honor Guard
2. Invocation..... Rev. Harry Rakin  
Pastor, Kili United Church
3. Introductory Speech..... Mr. Jack Niedenthal  
Bikini/Kili/Ejit Liaison
4. Welcoming Remarks..... Honorable Henchi Balos  
Senator, Bikini/Kili/Ejit
5. Message from the President..... H.E. Amata Kabua  
President, Republic of  
the Marshall Islands
6. Remarks..... Honorable Kunar Abner  
Minister, IOIA
7. Remarks..... Honorable Kessai Note  
Speaker, Marshall Islands  
Nitijela
8. Remarks..... Iroij Kotak Loeak  
Chairman, Council of Iroij
9. Remarks..... Honorable Sam Thompsen  
US Ambassador to RMI
10. Remarks..... Honorable Oscar deBrum  
Chief Secretary
11. Remarks..... Dr. Leonard Mason  
Special Guest
12. Closing Remarks..... Honorable Tomaki Juda  
Mayor, Bikini/Kili/Ejit  
Local Government

MAJURO - MAR. 9, 1988

(1-22, MAR)



D-U-D, AIR VIEW, FROM WEST.

# BIKINI DAY 1988

Majuro Mar. 11 — Bikini 1988 was a festive event on Kili this week, with a police honor guard, flag raising, speeches, music and dancing, sports and mountains of food.

Eight airplanes loaded with people and food converged on Kili for the weekend of activities.

Visitors from Majuro were greeted with the Kili police honor guard and a pickup truck bearing the sign, "This Year With Great Hope".

As Minister Henchi Balos, Bikini/Kili representative, observed, the people are more optimistic than ever about returning home because funding for the first phase of the nuclear clean up — a base camp on Eneu Island — has been approved.

And if the rain that fell during the ceremonies is any indication, the Bikini people have more than their share of luck in store for the year.

A parade preceded the formal part of the program — students had taken the day off to decorate floats with coconut leaves and

M.I.Journal, 18 Mar. 1988

many signs: "There are miles to go and promises to keep", read one. "There is no place better than home: Bikini paradise", read another.

Balos spoke to the assembled crowd: "Today's motto is '42 long years of exile, but this year with hope'. The U.S. government has given its promise to cleanup Bikini and the Compact of Free Association confirms that promise.

"We hope that in the not too distant future our dream of returning home to Bikini will happen."

Minister of Interior and Outer Island Affairs Kunar Abner spoke on behalf of President Amata Kabua.

The government shares the hope along with the Bikinians that they will be able to return home soon, he said.

The great friendship that the Marshalls has made with the U.S. will help the Bikinians in their return, he said.

Nitijela Speaker Kessai Note thanked all the Bikini leaders who for many years have pushed forward to make life better on Kili.

"The advances of the Bikini people have come from the people themselves," he said.

Iroij Kotak Loeak said he shared the Bikinians' sorrow at having to stay on Kili. "There's no place better than home," he said.

U.S. Representative Sam Thomsen told the people that his government would help as much as possible in the rehabilitation of Bikini.

Dr. Leonard Mason, an anthropologist whose report in 1948 that the Bikinians were starving on Rongerik activated the Navy to evacuate the people to Kwajalein and later Kili, presented Mayor Tamaki Juda with a special 'memory book' with stories and photographs of Bikinians dating back to the 40's and 50's.

Mayor Juda concluded the program with thanks to the visitors, and then the police contingent, under the direction of Lt. Tenki Emmius and Kili police chief Moshi Lewis, performed a 15 minute series of marching drills. Despite the pouring rain, the police carried on, not missing a step.

After the ceremony, the visitors and island residents alike moved inside the gymnasium/community center for music and dancing performed by Majuro singers, Ejit dancers, Kili male youth, and a group from Lae Atoll.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-1, MAR.)



AIR MIKE ARRIVAL, GUESTS DEPLANING.



M.I. Journal, 18 Mar. 1968

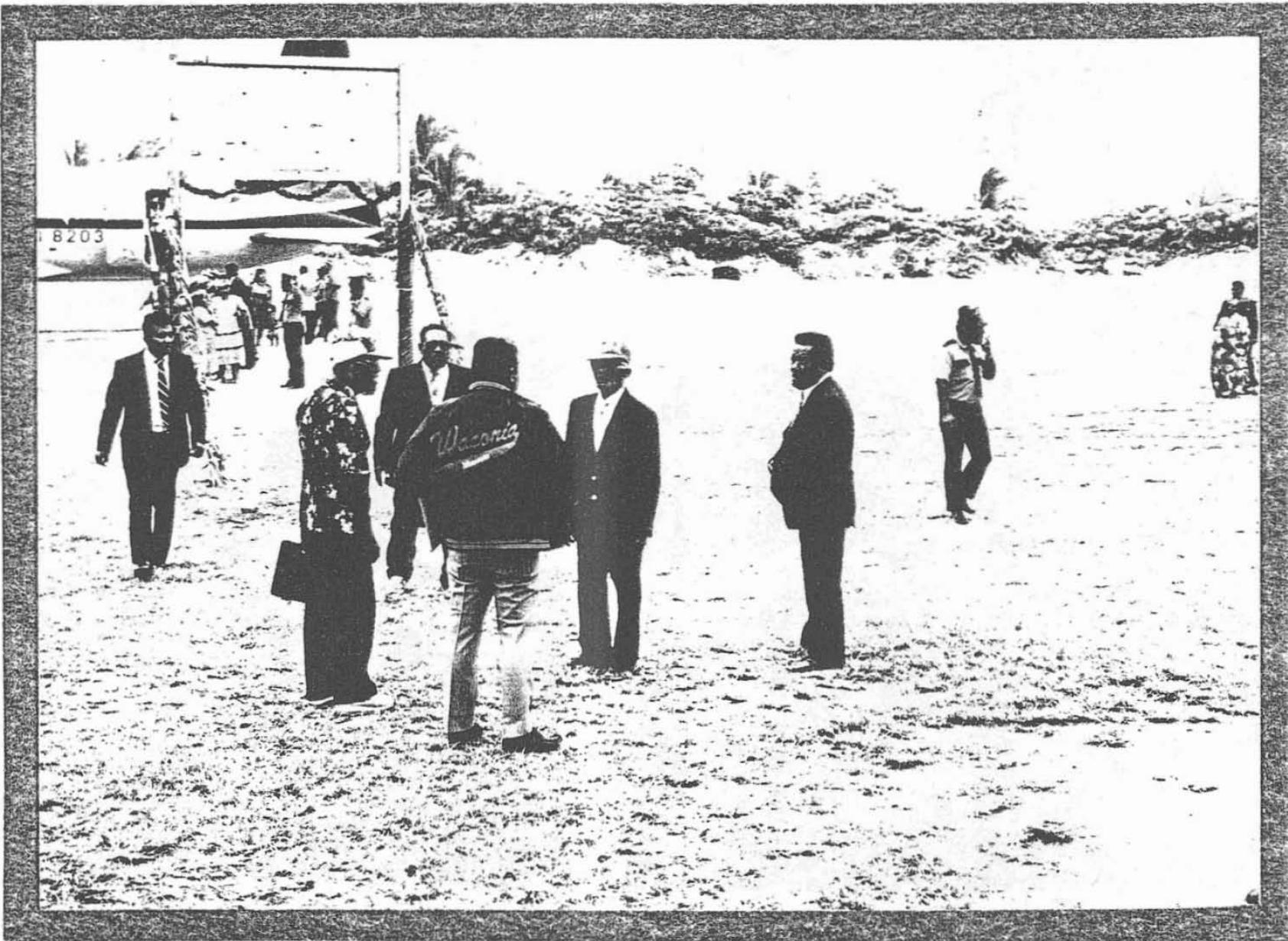
HONORING BIKINI DAY — The Bikini/Kili/Ejit police force was ready for Bikini Day, performing its parade ground drills for the gathering.



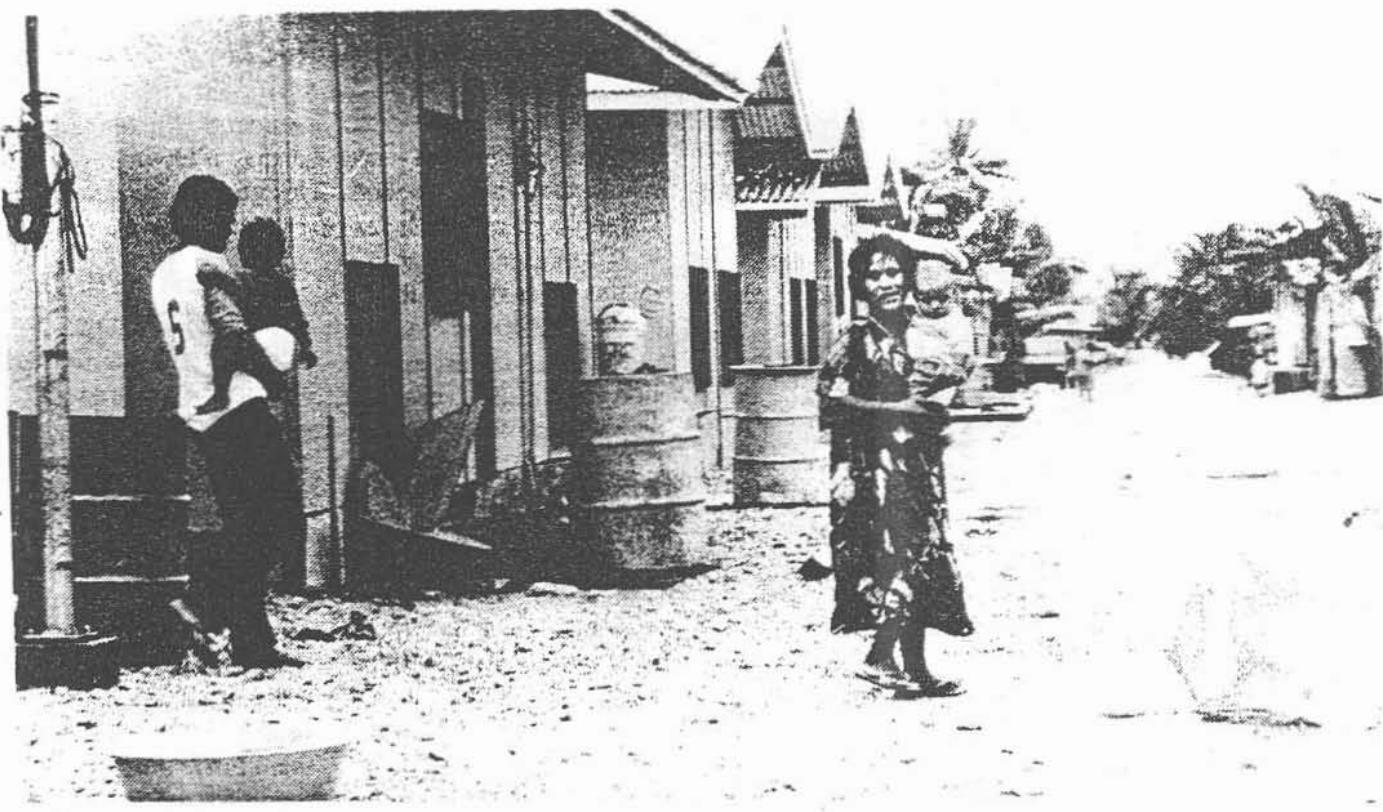
KILI CROWD — There are miles to go and promises to keep' reads the sign, but Bikinian expressd optimism at this year's Bikini Day that the cleanup is finally on the move. Minister Henchi Balos said the first installment of funds for the base camp at Eneu was given and work will begin there next month. Photo Shimada Kousei.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-2, MAR.)



MAYOR TOMAKI GREETES BIKINI GUESTS FROM MAJURO.



**LIFE ON KILI** — Main street on Kili island was not very busy last week with all the activity at the community center. Most of Kili's housing was built in the early 1960's, and then was renovated by Holmes and Narver in 1979. About 500 of the Bikinians now live on Kili, with smaller communities on Majuro, Ejit and Ebeye. Electricity is provided by small generators. Photos by Shimada Kousei.

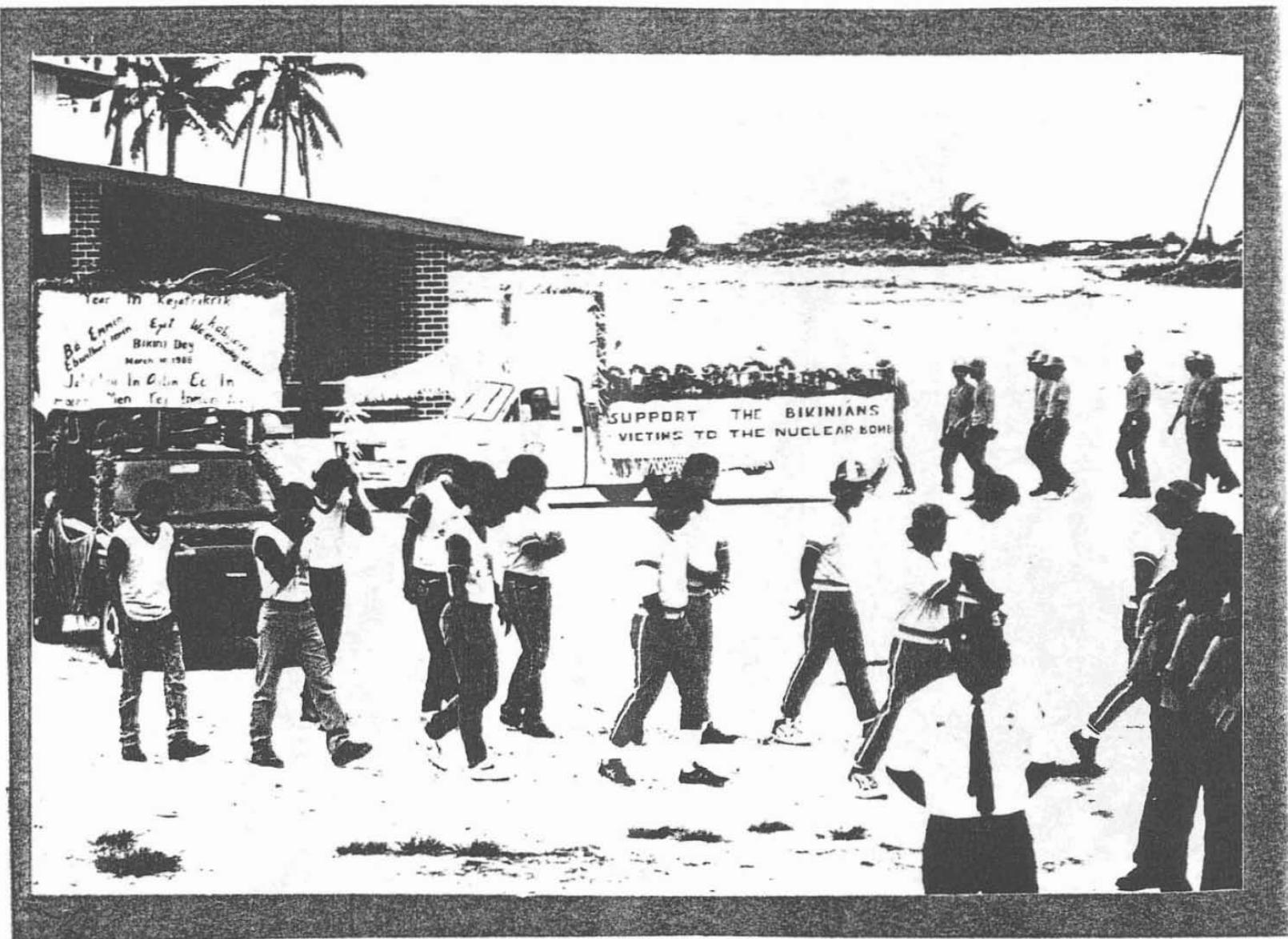
M.I. Journal, (8 Mar. 1988)



**BREADFRUIT CUTTERS** — Kili/Bikini Mayor Tamaki Juda gives Francis Reimers a hand slicing up freshly cooked breadfruit for the feast that followed last week's Bikini Day ceremony on Kili Island. Photo by Shimada Kousei.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-9, MAR.)



MARCHERS, TREC RESTAURANT IN REAR.



**CROWD PLEASER** — Musicians from the famous Laura Settlers and Skate em Lâ bands performed on Kili last week, captivating the youthful audience. Photo S. Kousei.

M.I. Journal, 18 Mar. 1988

their 'jurbak' style during the program.

Kili youth (below) showed off



KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-4, MAR.)



CAR FLOAT, BIKINI DAY 88.

# Bikinians Have Turned Kili Into A Pleasant, Though Temporary, Home

by Giff Johnson

A first visit to Kili last week — for all of six hours — left me with a lot of fleeting impressions.

Stepping off the plane into the rain of Kili, I was struck immediately by the lushness of the island. All the coconut, pandanus and banana trees are a healthy dark green, a striking contrast to the burnt looking trees and grass on Majuro.

## Organized

The Bikini Day ceremony was the third on Kili, and the local council showed that it has its act together. The events, from the parade, speeches, lunch and music program, moved right along with little delay.

Minister Kunar Abner observed that compared to other outer islands Kili is the most organized and developed. He noted that many on the Kili police force had received training from the Honolulu police department.

As the three flags (Marshalls, U.S. and

Bikini/Ejit/Kili) were being raised, Jack Niedenthal, the Bikinians' liaison officer, told me the story behind the Bikini flag.

Twenty three stars in the upper left hand corner are set against the background of stripes, copied from the American flag. The 23 stars represent the 23 islands in Bikini Atoll. In the upper right are three black stars, marking the islands vaporized by the Bravo test in 1954. And in the lower right are two islands, representing Kili and Ejit, far away from the 23 stars of Bikini Atoll. In Marshallese, it says 'Everything is in the hands of God'.

## Media Minded

The Bikinians have learned to make the most of media coverage — it is what has given them leverage in their efforts to get the U.S. to pay attention to them on Kili, and get action on the nuclear cleanup.

Last week, Kili residents crafted stylish signs for the occasion.

One huge sign ticked off the various anniversaries: '42 years since evacuation; 40 years since leaving Rongerik; 40 years on Kili; 20 years since President Johnson said Bikini was safe; 10 years since the second exodus from Bikini'.

There were many more.

Media people like the signs because they are an expressive way of telling their story in a photo.

## Wet Beats Heat Anyday

About 400 people, from grade schoolers to Bikini elders in suits, braved the pouring rain to listen to the speeches. A Bikini Day regular assured me that standing in pouring rain beat standing out in the broiling sun anyday. And indeed, almost nobody ran for cover. The speech makers shortened their remarks in light of the weather which was undoubtedly appreciated by all.

While RRE has a corner on the restaurant and wholesale trade on Kili, Gibson's was nevertheless well represented that day in the form of about 100 huge umbrellas which were passed out as the storm hit full force midway through the program.

Francis Reimers was busy that day when we dropped in to get a cup of coffee at the new RRE restaurant. The facility is a large, high ceilinged affair with big screened windows that keep the trade winds blowing through. Francis was pouring cups of coffee and ringing up the cash register.

When I asked him about that he explained that all the waitresses/cashiers had wanted to join in the Bikini day activities, so he gave them the day off. Nice boss. Anyway, the restaurant, by all accounts, is doing a hot business.

## Island Tour

Later, Jack gave Shimada Kousei and me a tour around the small community. One thing that stands out is that virtually all of the homes are the

same. While some are in better or worse condition (several are undergoing renovation work now), they all have water sealed toilets with septic tanks, catchments attached to shower houses and a generator for every three homes.

Jack said that the reason Kili is a stable and cohesive community is because the money they have received has been distributed on a nearly equal basis among the people there. Everyone is receiving the same benefits as the next resident. I imagine this is a major factor in helping to prevent disputes over compensation payments.

## First Visit in 25 Years

Len Mason visited Kili for the first time in 25 years. He is known by many Marshalls oldtimers, and has been involved with the Bikinians since immediately after the war.

The Kili council invited him because it was the 40th anniversary of their move from Rongerik — a move many Bikinians thankfully attribute to a report Mason made at that time.

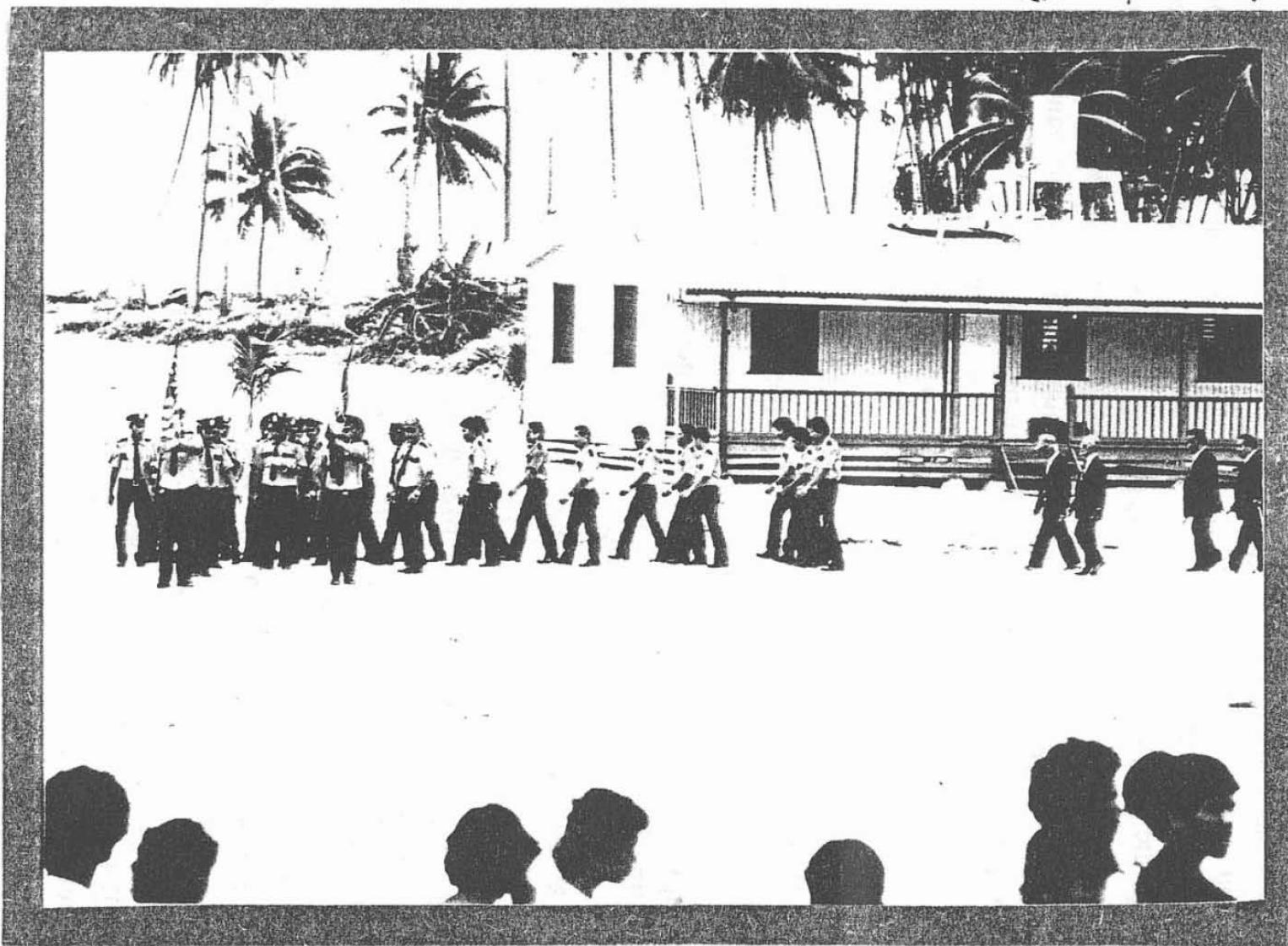
It was heartwarming to watch the faces of the older Bikinians light up as they recognized Mason, vigorously shaking his hand to welcome him to the island. He didn't remember too many names at first, although he immediately recognized faces. But with Jack Niedenthal's help was able to put names to faces very quickly.

Times have certainly changed. Back in 1963, there was no runway on the island: the community was a small jumble of patchwork houses. The community frequently suffered through food shortages when rough surf prevented the off-loading of supplies during the winter months. Those days are fortunately gone for good.

The Bikinians have good reason to be optimistic. As the cleanup begins to move along, they have been able to make Kili island a pleasant — even though temporary — home.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-5, MAR.)



KILI POLICE MARCHING.

# Big Rains On Kili

Kili Mar. 11 — Rain swept down on this tiny island last week, over-flowing catchment tanks and roads.

While Majuro, just 140 miles northeast, remained virtually bone dry, Kili was in the midst of a rainstorm typical of the mid-summer wet season.

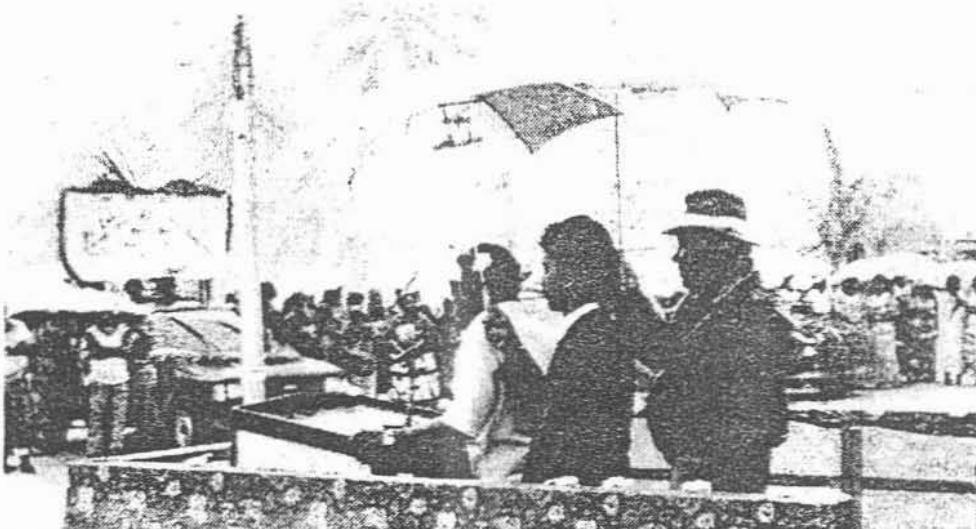
The rains started last Wednesday evening, continuing into the Thursday Bikini Day ceremonies. The Bikinians used their indoor gymnasium/community center for most of the program, while the rain cascaded down and the thunder burst nearby for several hours.

Meanwhile, the Weather Station reported that last month was one of the driest Februaries on record for Majuro. Only 1.52 inches fell during February, the lowest total since the 'El Nino' drought year of 1983 when less than an inch fell in February.

Majuro is not doing much better for March. In the first 13 days, less than one inch of rain has fallen, again a several year low.

Last year—February, Majuro received 10.38 inches of rain, while in March, 4.9 inches fell.

Strict water rationing remains in effect for the capital.



**WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS** — Kili Mayor Tamaki Juda (wearing fedora hat) and Lantino Rakin keep Iroij Kotak Loeak dry as he speaks to the crowd at Bikini Day ceremonies on Kili Island last week. Photo Shimada Kousei.

M.I. Journal, 18 Mar. 1988

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-8, MAR.)



BIKINI/KIL/VEJIT LOCAL GOVT. COUNCIL.

# Kejramman Eo An Dri Bikini Ilo Yiō In 1988

Majuro Mar. 11 — Kejerman eo an dri Bikini ilo year in 1988, ear juōn eo im ear kamōnōnō kin eloñ policeman eo im rar honor guard, flag ko rar ejobālbāl, speech ko kajojo, al ko im lep ko jen kumi in ikkure ko im mōñā ko ear lap wōt air ellōp.

Rualitōk trip in palun rar kanni kin armij ekoba mōñā ñan najidrik armij ro im rar bed ilo makitkit ko.

M.I. Journal, 18 Mar. 1988

Dri lolok ro jen Majuro kar karuineneik lok ir jen policeman ro im ear wōr juōn pickup truck eo im ear wōr juōn sign ie eo im ej walok nan kein ie, "Year in ilo elap kejatdrik-drik".

Ilo an Minister Henchi Balos/representative jen Kili/Bikini lale lok, ej kwalok ke elap lok an armij rein kōnan rol ñan kabijuknen eo air einwōt ke phase eo kein kajuōn ñan karreoir im julok baijin ko im ñan kōmane base camp eo ion Eniu Island, emōj an weppen jen Kien en an Amerka.

Balos ear kwalok ñan armij ro: "Unin tel eo an rainin ej '42 year ko raitok in ad jako, ak year in ewōr ad kejatdrik-drik". Kien en an Amerka emōj an kōman an kalimur ke enaj karreoir Bikini im iloan Compact eo ej kamol kalimur in.

"Jej kejatdrik-drik bwe ilo ien ko rej itok im rejjab ettolok, etōnak in

rol eo air fian Bikini, enaj oktak ñan mol."

Minister eo jen Interior im Outer Islands Affairs Kunar Abner ear kwalok ilo etan President Amata Kabua.

Kein eo ej koba waj ibami kin kejatdrik-drik in ke, ejjab etto jen kiō im kom naj rol ñan kabijuknen eo ami, ear ba.

Kin jemjera eo elap im Marshall ear kōmane ibben Amerka, enaj jibañ kom rol ñan kabijuknen eo ami, ear ba.

Nitijela Speaker Kessai Note ear kamolol aolepen dri tel ro an Bikini kin kate ko air fian kōman bwe mour eo ilo Kili en juōn eo eman.

"Jeraman ko an armij in Bikini ro, ear walok jen ir make, ear ba.

Iroj Kotak Loeak ear koba lok ibben dri Bikini rein im kwalok an buromōj kin an to air bed ion Kili. "Ejelok jikin en eman lok jen kabijuknen ko ad."

U.S. Representative Sam Thomsen ear jiroñ lok armij ro ke, Kien en an Amerka enaj kate joñan wōt an maroñ ñan kōkāl im kōmane Bikini

Dr. Leonard Mason, juōn anthropologist eo im report eo an ilo kar 1948 kin dri Bikini ro ilo ien eo ke rar bed im kole ilo Rongrik ear kanuij kajor ear kōman bwe dri tarinae ro ren kōmakit armij rein ñan Kwajalein im tok elik Kili, ear lelok ñan Mayor Tamaki Juda juōn 'book in kakememej' eo im elōñ bwebwenato ko ie im bija in Bikini jen 40 eo mantak ñan 50 eo.

Mayor Juda ear kejem-lok program eo im kamolol dri lolok ro rar bed ilo ien eo, elkin policeman ro rar wōnmanlok wōt im kōmane march ko air iumin tel jen Lt. Tenki Emmius im Kili police chief Molshi Lewis iumin 15 minute.

## Eluukun Lap An Wōt Kili

Kili Mar. 11 — Ear wōt leplep ilo Kili week eo lok im kōman bwe en lutōklok nien dren ko im loan ial ko rar barainwōt ibwijleplep.

Majuro eo im ej 140 mile tu-eōñ-tu-rear in Kili, ej bed wōt im ejañin wōt wōt en enañin jelete, joñan lap in wōt eo im ear wōtlok ilo Kili ekōman bwe en einwōt lukōn lok summer ñe ej ien wōt.

Wōt ko rar ijino jen jote-nin lok Wednesday eo, wōnmanlok wōt im kūj ran in Thursday eo ak ran

eo im rar kōmane kejerman eo an Bikini.

Armij ro rar kejerbal mōn ikkure eo air ñan air kar wōnmanlok wōt ilo ien kejerman eo air ilo ien eo ke ear kajor lok an wotlok wōt ko ekoba jourur im jarom ko.

Ekkar ñan report ko jen jikin kautu eo, ej kwalok ke, alliñ eo lok eoktak jen alliñ in February ko lok kin joñan dren eo im ear wōtlok. Ekar 1.52 inch in dren ear wōtlok ilo alliñ in February eo, ej make wōt im drik jen kar ien eo ear

walok 'El Nino' ilo kar 1983 eo ke ear drik jen 1 inch in dren ear wōtlok ilo kar alliñ in February eo.

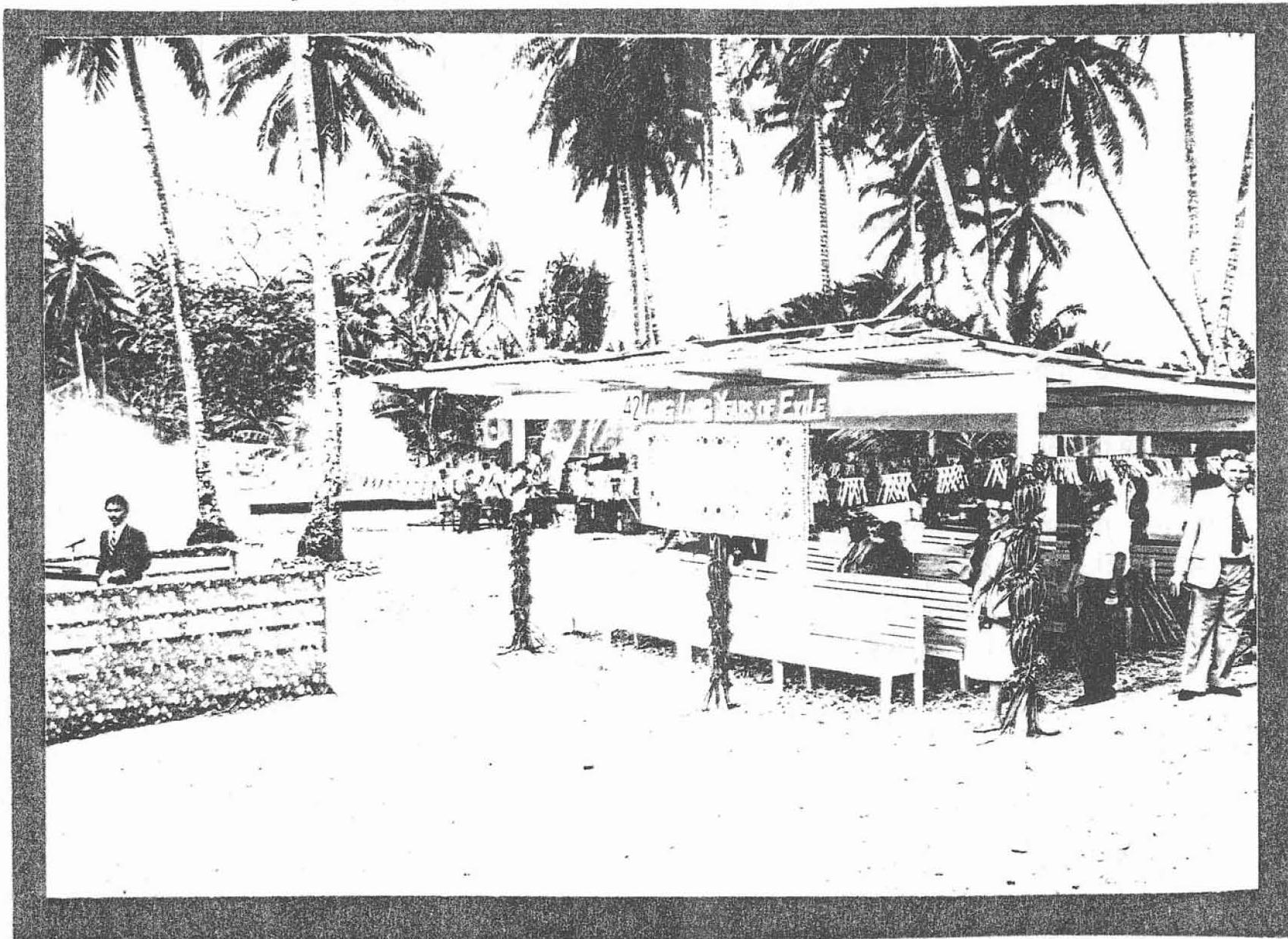
Ilo alliñ in March in ejjab alikar ke enañin wōr men enañin eman lok ilo Majuro in. Iumin ran ko 13 iman, edrik lok jen 1 inch in dren ear wōtlok.

February in year eo lok, joñan dren eo im ear wōtlok ilo Majuro in ear 10.38 inch, im ilo kar March eo ear 4.9 inch.

Jerbal in ajej dren ilo Majuro in ej wōnmanlok wōt ñan tōre in.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-11, MAR.)



SPEAKERS' STAND AND GUEST LOUNGE.

NOTES ON A VISIT TO KILI ISLAND

by

Leonard Mason

Narrative written from field notes during the visit  
to Kili Island as special guest for the Bikini Day  
Program (10 March 1988), from Honolulu to Majuro to  
Kili and return to Majuro, 8 - 14 March 1988.

(NOTE: Not to be quoted or reproduced without permission  
of the author.)

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-13, MAR.)



HONOR GUARD RAISES U.S., BIKINI, AND MARSHALL FLAGS.

BIKINI DAY 88

Notes on a Visit to Kili Island

(March 8 to 14, 1988)

March 8 (Tuesday) -- Honolulu

Awoke at 6:00 a.m. with alarm clock. Checked forgotten items for luggage. Read Hon Advertiser. Had breakfast with Hazel (Papaya and English muffin). Took Contac pill for sneeze prevention on plane ride. Weight 180 lbs. Shaved. Packed last of gear -- suitcase, briefcase, camera bag, and two Federal Express packages from Jon Weisgall for Tomaki Juda.

Left in car with Hazel at 7:25, to Honolulu Airport by 8:00 (some heavy traffic on H-1). Goodbye to Hazel, who returned home in car. Checked in at Air Micronesia/Continental. Only suitcase checked, to Majuro. Got seat assignment (15A) from counter nearby. Walked to Gate 14, told I could carry on only two items (I had four with the Weisgall packages). Let's see what happens. Lots of construction going on in terminal area. Write up LOG to 9:00. Met Bill Jackson and Pohnpeian wife who came to see him off on this flight, also to Majuro to meet Dept. of Energy ship from Kwajalein tonight, then by sea to Utrik, Kwajalein/Mejatto, returning to Honolulu on March 18. He will be staying at Ajidrik Hotel where I'll be tonight.

Passengers began coming into the boarding area for a 9:30 call (departure scheduled for 10:00 a.m.). Announcement that all luggage must be under the seat, or it would be tagged, or held until the next flight. I asked the attendant for tags for the Federal Express packages in case I couldn't get them under the seat with my briefcase and camera bag. Boarding call finally

KILI-MAR.10,1988

(2-14, MAR)



B(K)E FLAG RAISING.

at 9:45. Walked down a ramp and boarded the plane from the rear. We had two flight attendants, one male from Guam (?) and Yvette from FSM (?). His name was Oliver, I think. I was able to get all my gear stowed under the seat. My seat (15A) was second from the front, window seat on left side. Two men from Dept. of the Army sat next to me, one a Chinese/planner who spoke loudly to the other all through the flight.

We left the terminal at 10:00, taxied to the Reef runway. Took off in bright sunlight at 10:15. Plane is a 727-100. We fly at 31,000 feet, will arrive Johnston Island in one hour, 47 minutes. I wrote in my LOG till 10:25. Attendants are preparing breakfast trays, serving orange juice, muffin, grapes, pineapple and papaya slices, coffee and mints. All through eating by 11:00 a.m. Trays removed. My seat companions continue talking, something to do with Army testing, Huntsville, etc.

Read paperback, napped till 11:45. Warm now, sunlight in my window. Occasional clouds, below us, blue ocean. Begin descent to Johnston Island (took some PIX through window with telephoto lens on approach from southeast). Landed at Johnston at 12:00 noon, restricted to plane. Some passengers off, some more on. At 12:25 p.m. PIX of ramp stairs ("Johnston, Welcome") with wide angle lens. At 12:30 (local time, one hour different from Honolulu), taxi to southern end of runway. Take-off to the north at 12:35, swing around, with reef islands to the east, then off over the sea to Majuro, next stop.

Yvette distributes Marshall Island Immigration forms (fill one out). Read paperback. At 1:00 (Honolulu time yet), flight announced at 35,000 feet; 2 hours, 52 minutes to Majuro (from

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-17, MAR.)



JACK NIEDENTHAL, B/K/E LIAISON.

Johnston I.). Time of arrival, 1:42 (Majuro time)

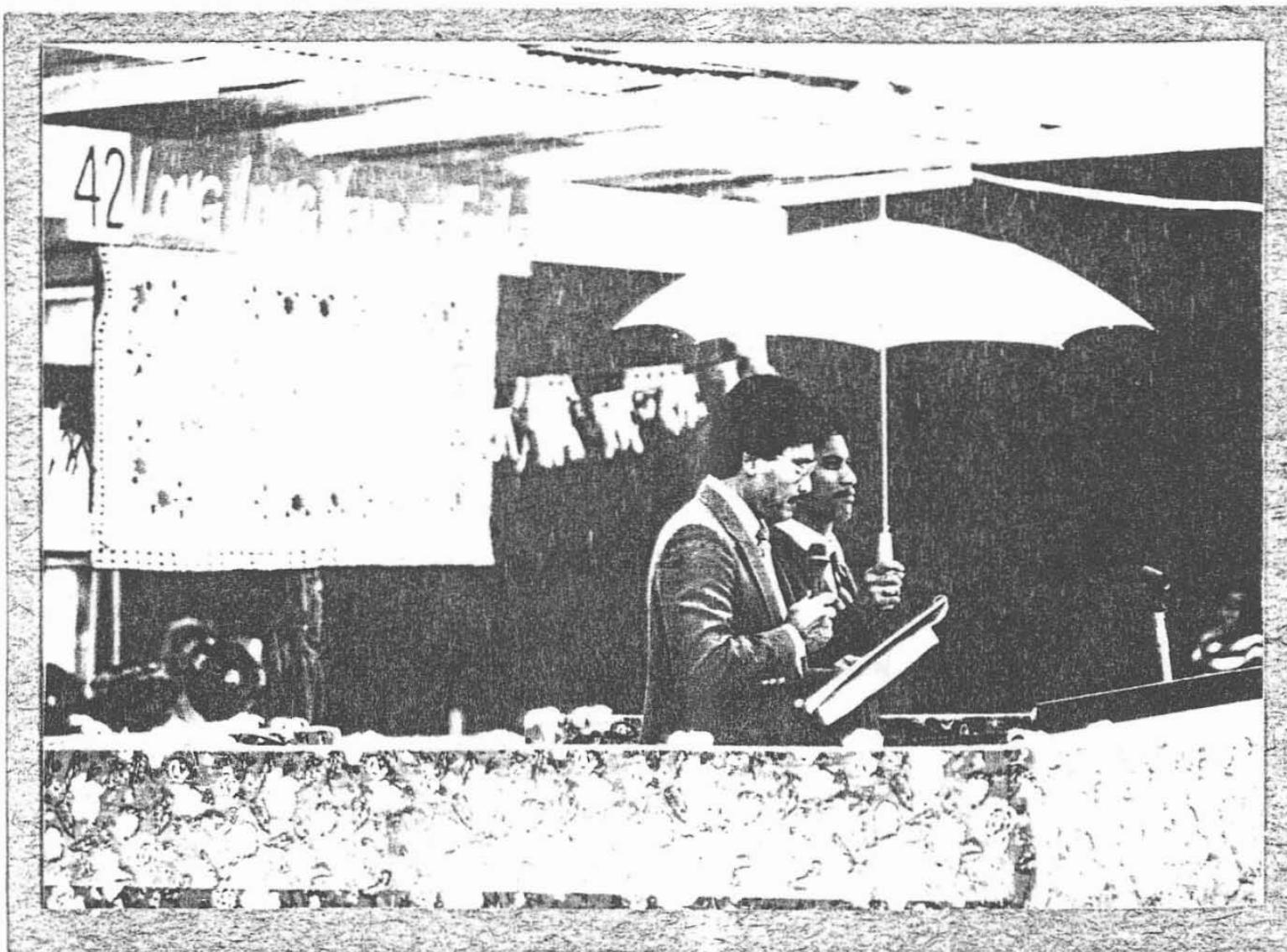
-- International Date Line --

March 9 (Wednesday) -- Majuro

Majuro time, one hour behind Johnston, one day ahead. Continue reading. Change watch to Majuro time. Lunch served (hot potato, meat, etc.) at 12:00 noon. I skipped it, as not that hungry. Continued reading till 12:45. Begin descent to Majuro. Watch out window for atolls east of Majuro. Lines of clouds (east-west) below. About 1:05, crossed northern part of Arno Atoll, after using the lavatory and talking with the Huntsville official. This is his first time here; his companion is Charlie Chan (?), with Army Corps of Engineers on the mainland. Took PIX of Arno (Longar - lagoon - Pass) with telephoto, then change to 50 mm. over Bikarej Island. Missed a good view in the changing of lenses. Then, passed over east end of Majuro Atoll. PIX of D-U-D from the west. Crossed the lagoon to south. Landed at airstrip at 1:20 p.m. (local time). Everyone deplaned. Ended film with shots of planes on airplane tarmac. Met a Marshallese at Immigration, Langinmo Jacob, who took my passport (and Bill Jackson's) to ease our passage through the line. Got my suitcase OK, lined up for Customs check, had to open suitcase and briefcase, explained the Federal Express packages (no problem). Inside terminal lobby, I met Jack Niedenthal, first time. He is young, long hair, liaison for the Bikini community, replacing Ralph Waltz. I gave him the two packages from Jon Weisgall -- he passed them on to a Bikini man. I met a couple of Bikinians, didn't know them. Jack reported a good visit with the two Australians on Kili Island (comparing the Bikini experience with that of the Maralinga in South Australia).

KIL - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-18, MAR.)



HENCHI BALOS, B/K/E SENATOR.

Especially was this true with Archie Barton, the Aboriginal from Maralinga, who talked with the Bikini elders, and recalled forgotten memories of his own people. The two Australians stayed on Majuro after and leave tomorrow night for Honolulu and the mainland. They spent only a short time on Bikini, a few hours, owing to delay in the flight to Enewetak by Airline of the Marshalls. Jack had stayed with them on Kili and the Bikini flight, also Kent Hiner of Holmes and Narver.

Rode back to town with Jack. He told me he was on Namu for three years (PCV) and then went to Kili. He speaks Marshallese well. We shared assessments of Bikinians' recall versus the Maralinga identity. On language only a few use English, though they may know it. I checked in at Hotel Ajidrik (Amos and Kati both in the office), Room 6 in the old part. They said, next week when I return from Kili I can have my old room in the new part. Signed the register. Room 6 has twin beds, air conditioning, bath, closet, table, no frig. Put my shaver on charge in bathroom. Changed to white pants, orange shirt, zoris. Got out receipted air fare bill, also books for Graham Knill. Wrote LOG to 2:30.

Leave hotel, walk to Robert Reimers hotel, meet Giff Johnson coming down stairs from second floor. He is going to Kili tomorrow also, as media rep. He asked if any word yet from Ron Crocombe on the Politics in Micronesia book he contributed to. Darlene is now head of Family Planning at the Hospital, he said. I went on to Room 1, off the main lobby, on second floor, to meet Graham Knill and Archie Barton (who joined us from another room down the hall next to Rick Smith, who as Australian Consul-General from Honolulu is here for four days, on to Pohnpei today's flight --I had seen him at the airport as I came in on Air Mike). Knill

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-21, MAR.)



U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO REPMAR SAM THOMSEN AND HIS  
WIFE JUDY.

reported good consultations with President, etc. here. I gave him copies of the Truk suicide study by Don Rubenstein (CPIS Working Paper) and my article on "Our Parents . . ." (Justice in Micronesia). We three talked at length about their week stay on Kili in transient quarters there, ate at new Robert Reimers restaurant with Jack Niedenthal as their interpreter in the community. They walked about, talked with elders, younger people; Tomaki Juda was very helpful, good info on community organization. Info on police surveillance, curfew, lots of autos on Kili, people healthy. Good exchange on Maralinga (as exploited by the British in nuclear testing), then their visit to Bikini (too fast), Enewetak, and Kwajalein. They did not stop at Ebeye or the Rongelab community on Mejatto. They did talk with Senator Anjain of Rongelab. On Majuro, they attended a Peace Corps meeting, church services, Kitco restaurant as a meeting place with informants. Tomorrow they have an appointment with Alfred Capelle and the Minister of Arts (?). They fly out to Honolulu tomorrow night, will take pictures tomorrow of D-U-D facilities. I told them of my picture album for the Bikinians tomorrow, will show it to them tonight at dinner with Bill Jackson at 7:00 p.m.

I left the Australians at 3:30, went to see Jack Niedenthal but he was busy in his office with someone. I said I'd be back in half-hour. Went to the Post Office with the Australians. Met Jabememej (from Laura Project, 1967); he is still working at the Hospital, looks thin, says he is diabetic. I went on to Reimers Store, checked out their stock, saw little change from 1985. Then to the Women's Handicraft Shop by the Protestant church, saw Mary Lanwi, white-haired. She told me reluctantly that the canoe I had ordered was stolen just last Thursday by break-ins. She said

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-23, MAR.)



PANDANUS MAT, BIKINI DAY 1988, IN GUEST LOUNGE.

my "spirit" was present, youths probably stole the canoe to sell to Japanese or some others on fishing boats. She reported the break-in to the police. The canoe had been on a shelf, marked as "Sold" and she had lost my check for \$100 that I had sent to her last year to pay for the canoe for Nancy's friend. She will ask the Marshallese who made the canoe to make a new one, if he can get the needed wood material from Arno. She will let me know next week when I return from Kili. Problem then is still how to ship to me in Honolulu.

Returned to the Alele Museum, met Carol Curtis and Kwini inside, talked about my Fiji illness. Jerry Knight is on the mainland for a month -- his father died last summer. Jerry's wife had a new baby right afterward, here in Majuro, and Jerry came home then. Alfred Capelle has an office here, is talking with someone just now.

. Back to Reimers hotel, met with Jack Niedenthal, gave him receipted bill for air fare, round-trip, Honolulu/Majuro, and was given a check for \$517.00 (Bank of Guam) signed by Jack and his Bikinian aide in the office. We talked about the schedule for tomorrow on Kili. He will pick me up at 7:30 a.m., depart from airport at 9:00 with other guests on Air Marshalls 748. A smaller plane will return with them late tomorrow afternoon. There have been (or will be) eight flights to Kili this week by Air Marshalls! The Bikini community will host festivities, third annual Big Deal, 1988, with parade of floats, speeches by dignitaries. He said I have air reservation back to Majuro about noon on Monday next. I asked about dress code for tomorrow. He said to skip a tie, OK to wear my batik shirt.

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-26, MAR.)



UMBRELLAS SHIELD B/K/E COUNCILLORS FROM RAIN.

We talked about Bikinian relationship with Iroij Imada Kabua who wants to restore the control and take one-third of Bikini income from U. S. government payments. I gave Jack the background on my involvement with the Kabua suit, back to the 1920 supposed division of control within the family. Netan Note, who was on Ailiñlablab during my stays with Bikinians on Kili and was magistrate there, is now working with Amata and Imada Kabua with perhaps 10 percent of Bikinians supporting this return, a new division of a formerly tight knit community.

Before I left Jack's office, Knill had dropped in to say goodby to Jack, invited him to have dinner with us this evening but Jack can't join us. At 4:40, I stopped at the hotel desk to buy a copy of the Marshall Islands Guidebook for \$6.00. Then, to Reimers' store, looking for snack food. I had already checked out the store just east of the Hotel Ajidrik but they had very little on the shelves now as compared with my visits in 1985. In Reimers' store, I ran into Lailan Kabua, son of Kabua Kabua, who was on Ebeye in 1985 running Reimers' store there. He is married to Reimers' daughter, and is now working here in Majuro at the main office of RRE, across the store. (For a bit, I had him mixed up in my mind as RR's son!) He said his father was leaving tomorrow night for Honolulu, so I will just miss him here. Just afterward, I met Robert Reimers in the store. He is to be here for the next few months, he said, so we can get together on my return from Kili next week. I bought a root beer (\$0.55) and some cream biscuits (\$1.26) to snack on in the hotel. Then, walked back to Hotel Ajidrik by 5:00 p.m.

Shed my clothes to lavalava, wrote in LOG, drank root beer

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(2-28, MAR.)



JACK NIEDENTHAL, GIFF JOHNSON, AND SHIMADA KOUSEI.

and ate biscuits till 5:45. Felt like a nap by then, so lay down - but didn't really sleep any. It was cool with the air conditioning on, so I turned that off for awhile. I had left a note on Bill Jackson's door (Rm 13) to meet me at 7:00 for dinner. He came to the door of my room about 6:00, OK to meet later. I lay down some more, with my recorder of KHPR symphony music to enjoy, used a plug-in on the wall. Got up at 6:45, dressed, got out the gift-book I had prepared to give the Bikinians, to show to the Australians.

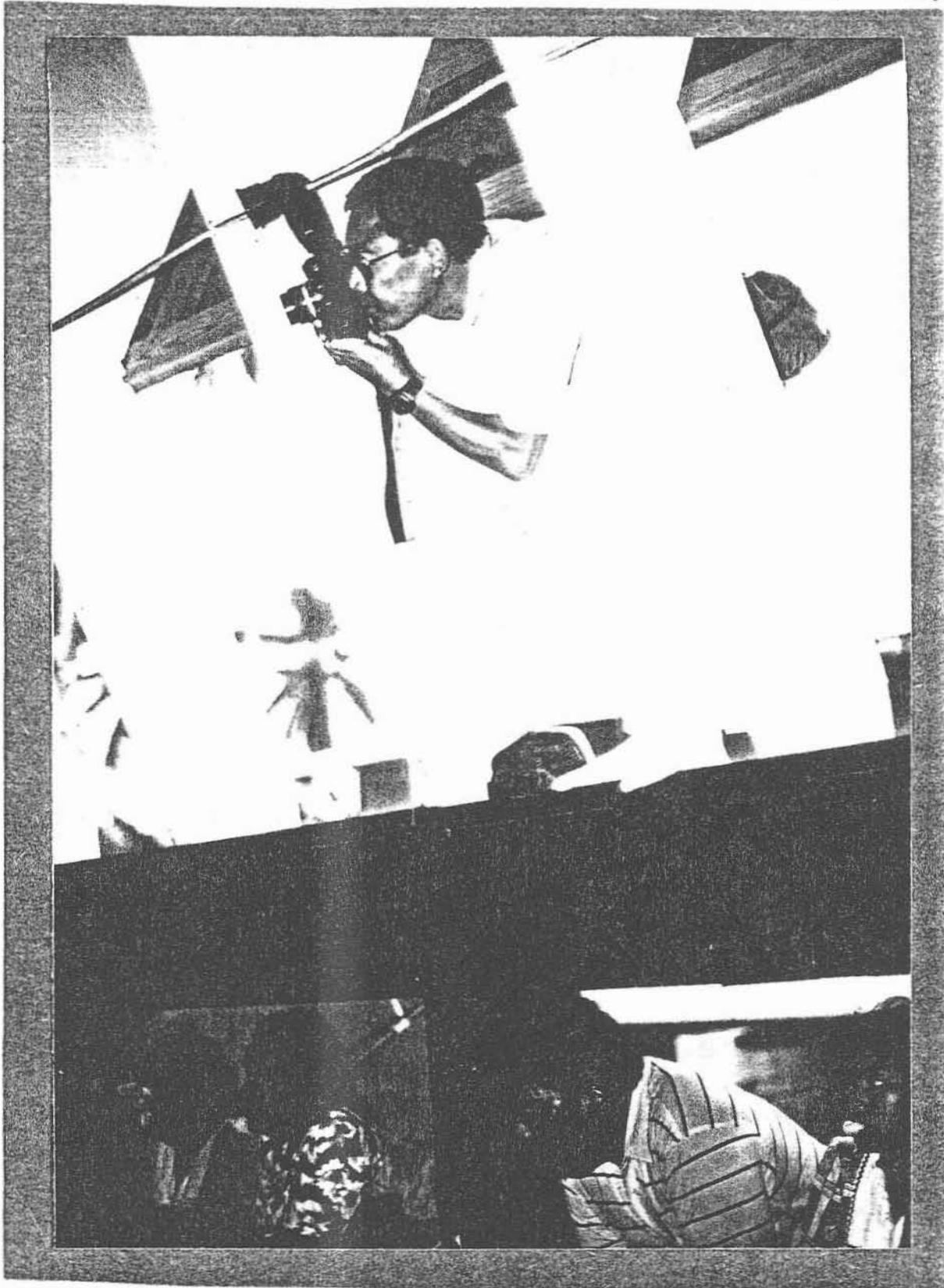
Bill Jackson came by at 6:55, and we rode in his rental car to Reimers' hotel to pick up the two Australians, who were waiting outside with another Aussie named Chris \_\_\_\_? the four of us went to the Skyline restaurant, site of the former Formosa, which is now located near the Hotel Majuro. We ordered sashimi with soup, rice, salad (potato), and hot tea. Talked about their Kili experience with the Australians for Bill's information. Comparison with the Maralinga relocation. Bill told us the Energy Dept's ship schedule, a medical survey of Utrik, Ronglab people. Some talk of Eiti's problems maritally at the time of Ralph Waltz' death last year. She married again.

The total food bill was only \$14.00 or so. I offered to pay but Bill put down a \$20 bill first, which the waitress took. I had showed them the Bikini gift book. We drove back to Reimers' hotel where the Australians planned to show their copy of a Kili video tape of old Bikini to Bill. I said I thought I had already seen it, so I walked back to Hotel Ajidrik by 8:40.

In my lavalava again, with the air conditioning on (and the recorder music), I worked on my LOG till 9:00, to date. I tried

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-3, MAR.)



SHIMADA KOUSEI, MAJURO PHOTOGRAPHER.

my radio, found two FM and one AM station, the latter with Marshallese chants, and a newscast in Marshallese, including word about Bikini Day 88 and Kiribati/Tuvalu relations with RepMar, Bill Allen, undersecretary for foreign affairs, negotiating them. This was followed by an English translation. Went to bed at 9:10, set my alarm for 6:00 a.m. (it is now 11:00 p.m. Honolulu time). Left the radio on for automatic half-hour turnoff, and went to sleep with the sheet on.

March 10 (Thursday) -- Majuro

Woke twice in the night to toilet, had good dreams, last one at 4:40 a.m. Thought about my talk today at Kili -- names of old timers at Rongerik, James Milne, Konto Sandbergen, and Ejbil on Kili. Got up at 6:00 with clock alarm. Washed, began to sort out gear for repacking by 6:30. LOG. Last of root beer and some biscuits. Packed rest of gear. Changed film (24-exposure), last shots were taken at Majuro airport on arrival yesterday and of planes parked near the Terminal. Reloaded with 36-exposure film (no. 1). Checked recorder with new batteries for possible use in talks today in the formal program. Replaced 2 AA batteries, checked voice recording, all set. Shaved with cord plugged in, so as not to waste energy if charge not possible on Kili -- it should go on battery now till Tuesday (?). It's 7:00 now. Pack gear and dress after shower (no soap used, though I took a bar with me for use in Kili). All pau in room at 7:15. Left key with Kati. Agreed to pay hotel room charge on return Monday or when I leave for Honolulu on Thursday.

Wait downstairs by the new Cafe Bonanza (open now). Weather is windy, clouds moving fast from the east -- rain today? Jack

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-4, MAR.)



DANCE GROUP FROM LAE ATOLL.

Niedenthal arrived in his pickup at 7:25. We drove slowly to the airport, talking about his job as liaison with the Bikini people, his relations earlier with Ralph Waltz (they were close), with Mayor Tomaki Juda (a good leader), Netan Note (favors Imada as Iroij lablab for Bikini), Henchi Balos (Senator from Bikini/Kili/Ejit; Minister of Finance now with RepMar cabinet; was nearly defeated several years ago by Johnny Johnson, son of Jonjen, elder of Ri-namu clan, and close to Tomaki); Jonathan Weisgall. Jack is not married, though he had a Bikini girl-friend. His father died on the mainland in 1985, and Jack took her with him to the funeral. He was then just out of the Peace Corps, had spent two years on Namu. He is now courting another Bikini girl, on Kili, hopes to marry her and maybe live on Ejit Island in Majuro. On Ejit, he said that Andru is one of the leaders, was with the group recalled from Bikini several years ago. Ejit community was then mostly that group, but is mixed now, with Bikinians who work in D-U-D, about 300 population maybe.

We arrived at the airport about 8:00, checked in with my suitcase tagged, got boarding pass on Airline of the Marshalls flight to Kili (a 748). We waited for the plane to depart on schedule at 9:00 a.m. I met Mike Case, a supplier in business here, was formerly with RRE in the office, is married locally; also \_\_\_\_\_ Holley (?), a scuba diving instructor; Sam Thomsen, U. S. rep to Marshalls now, and his pretty wife; Henchi Balos; Giff Johnson and a photographer, Shimada Kousei (we exchanged business cards, Japanese-fashion). I also met several Bikinians some of whose names I was uncertain about after being away 25 years from kili. But I recognized Philip and a few others. We

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-5, MAR.)



CARS PARKED OUTSIDE RECREATION HALL.

had a delay in plane departure due to rain storm on Kili Island, had some rain here earlier. Then, it seems that we were waiting for some RepMar officials invited as guests to speak at Bikini Day 88 -- Kunar Abner, Kessai Note, etc. Finally, at 10:00, we boarded the 748. I sat with Jack behind Giff and Shimada, back end, left side. It was cloudy now, some rain, so no PIX possible.

We arrived on Kili Island, no rain now, at 11:05 (a 55-minute trip). The airfield is on the south side of the island, reminded me of the field at Ta'u in Manu'a/Samoa, as quite short. Jack had a van to take some of us (Thomsens, etc.), picked up my suitcase from offloaded gear so as not to lose it, and drove around the island road clockwise through the village from the new school classroom buildings at the southwest end of the island, to "Chinatown" at the northeast end (where Filipino construction workers are based, like segregated Nauru "Chinatown"). We ended up at the large recreation field (the old swamp area) where landfill had permitted a more usable area with a large recreation hall on the church side. On the other side (south) was the Dispensary (where Jeremaiia is in charge as Health Aid) and a new (open three months) RR restaurant built at the request of the B/K/E Council for use of guests, etc.

Floats and paraders were lined up for start of the Bikini Day 88 ceremonies. Programs were handed out to us with speakers named. A speakers' stand faced the field, near three flagpoles, where the US, Bikini, and Marshalls flags would be flown. After drinking coconuts were handed to us, the ceremonies started with raising of the flags by a uniformed (police) color guard and singing of the national anthem at 11:50, once all the paraders and car-

KILI-MAR. 10, 1988

(3-7, MAR.)



CHILDREN FROLIC IN RECREATION HALL.

floats (with remembrance slogans spelled out) were in place. I took some PIX here. The paraders had circled the field and lined up finally facing the speakers' stand and the covered seating area behind it for the guests.

Invocation was made by Rev. Harry Rakin (from Maloelab, here for 4 years now as Kili minister). Then a short introduction in English by Jack Niedenthal about the history of the Bikini relocation since 1946, for the benefit of the guests. A Public Address system was in use. Just then it started to rain, rather heavily at times. Umbrellas were passed around to the guests as needed. Henchi Balos made welcoming remarks. Then Kunar Abner, Minister of Island Affairs, spoke for President Amata Kabua who was unable to attend. Kessai Note, new Speaker of the Nitijela, spoke next (he is nephew of Netan Note). Then a talk by Iroij Kotak Loeak, new head of the Council of Iroij, after Michael Kabua resigned to take up his Senator post from Ebon after the last election. Sam Thomsen spoke briefly, but in very heavy rain, with umbrellas in use to shield him and the master of ceremonies. I took PIX of these speakers. Finally I was called on to speak, but the rain by now was coming down so heavily that I kept my remarks brief. Most of the paraders, including the B/K/E Council, were still out front, only some of them with umbrellas. Mayor Tomaki stood by me with an umbrella assist. I just referred to the Hawaiian belief that when it rains at an occasion like this it signifies the gods' blessing, and I thanked the Council and the Mayor for inviting me as a guest on this occasion. I noted that I would be staying on Kili until next Monday to talk with them further. I gave the "Memory" book I had prepared, to Tomaki, with a description of its contents, including photographs from Rongerik and Kili in

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-8, MAR.)



TOMAKI JUDA WATCHING DANCES.

earlier years.

By now, it was 12:20 p.m. and Tomaki made some closing remarks, then all sang a song to end the ceremony and the crowd out front dispersed, most going to the nearby recreation hall, which was lit with fluorescent lights, generator-powered. There food was being served at long tables for the seated guests at one end of the hall. Food included barbecued pork, chicken, beef (on racks just outside, back of the speakers' stand), also husked ni, beru, breadfruit (baked and sliced), rice, and soft drinks. We as guests were invited to sit down where we wished. A band was playing at the far end of the hall. I sat between the Sam Thomsens and the Mike Cases. I had some rice, beru, ni (and iu afterward), pork, chicken, fresh cabbage.

About 2:00 p.m., a program began in the central part of the hall, with a dance group that had flown in from Lae Atoll, both men and women, in uniform dress. One man and one woman seemed to be directing their own Lae band when they performed. Kilon, elder of Kili, was dancing around and shouting at times; I wondered if he had some connection with the Lae people. After eating, I roamed about with my camera (as was Shimada) to take PIX of the dancers, audience sitting or standing along the hall's sides, especially children, and guests at the table. It continued heavy rain outside most of the afternoon. My feet were tired, and my legs, from standing and walking so much. (At one point, during the meal, I felt need to find a toilet, asked Jack who suggested the Dispensary outhouse; it was still raining, so I went to the van where my gear was stashed and found my umbrella, to walk across the field, using a pail afterward to take water from a catchment tank to flush.)

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-9, MAR.)



FEAST FOOD FOR GUESTS, RECREATION HALL.

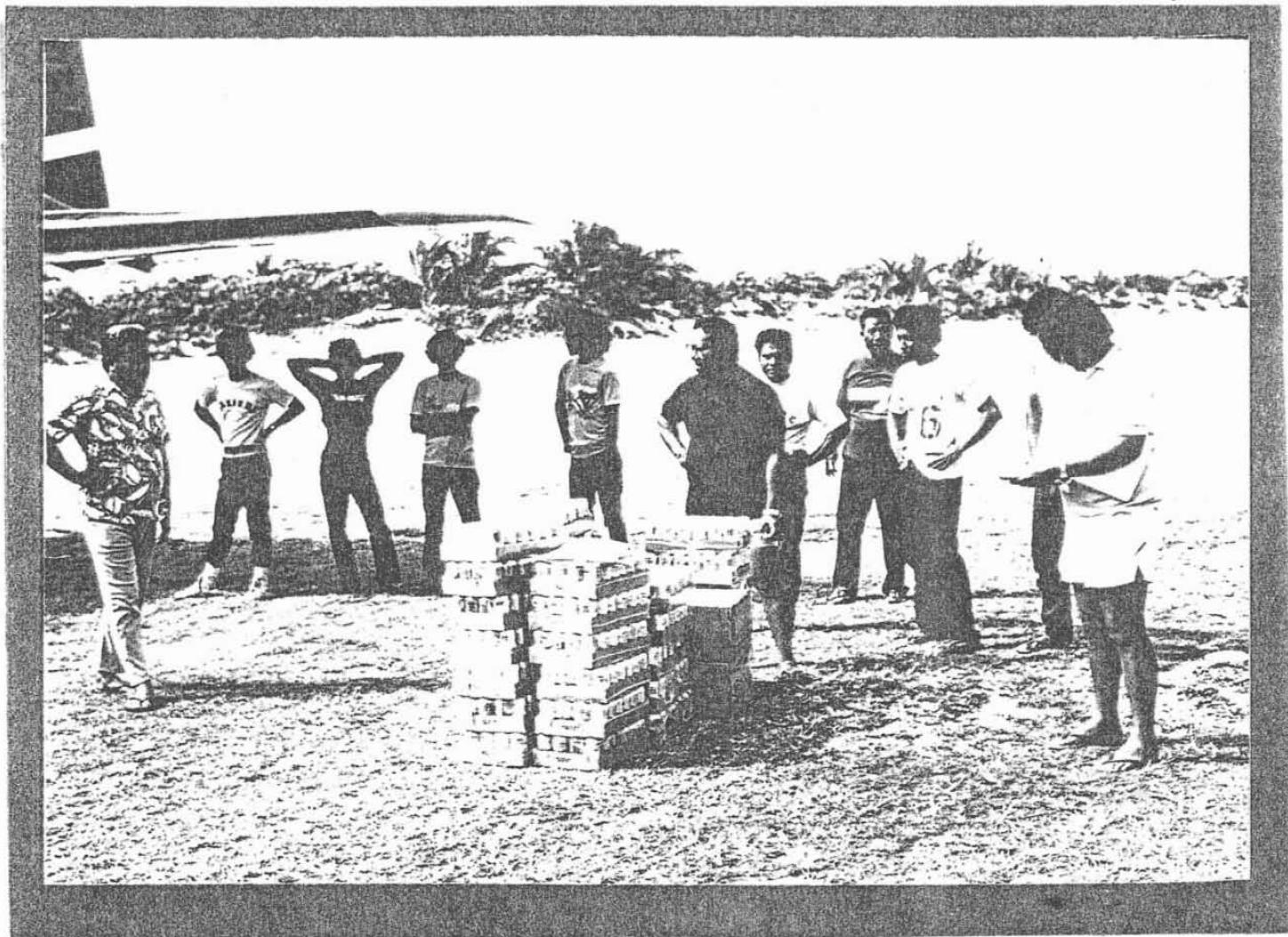
Back to the van, picked up my camera bag, to get another roll of film (24-exposure, No. 1) to take pictures of the dancers. After the entertainment was over, about 4:00, Jack had to use the toilet (and me, too) so we walked over to the RR restaurant, where Francis Reimers (in charge) said we could use their toilets (male/female separate) anytime, in back of the restaurant. Jack went over to the Dispensary and I used the restaurant facility -- Frances got some toilet paper for me.

About then, a small plane landed on the airstrip nearby, one of the German Dorniers that Air Marshalls had bought a year or two ago, with two propellers, carrying about 20 passengers. I went to the airport terminal area with Jack in his van, and watched as the Thomsens, Abner, Note, and others boarded the plane for the flight back to Majuro. Giff Johnson and Shimada Kousei also got on. The pilot is from New Zealand, name of Ian \_\_\_\_\_. Jack had a question about what planes were coming in tomorrow, as the B/K/E Council had chartered several flights to ferry all the visitors (mostly Marshallese) back home. The 748 would arrive at 10:00, he was told. By whose order, he wondered, and talked with Henchi Balos and the pilot. It turned out to be a special flight to bring in overdue USDA food, but could take some passengers back. Then a smaller plane would be coming in during the afternoon on a B/K/E charter.

The Dornier took off from Kili about 4:30. I had returned to the recreation hall by then. Was tired, returned to the guest quarters (3-room building with single shower/toilet) with Jack and Allen \_\_\_\_\_, a teacher who has been on contract here for one year, had grown up 10 years on Kwajalein Island where his father

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-12, MAR.)



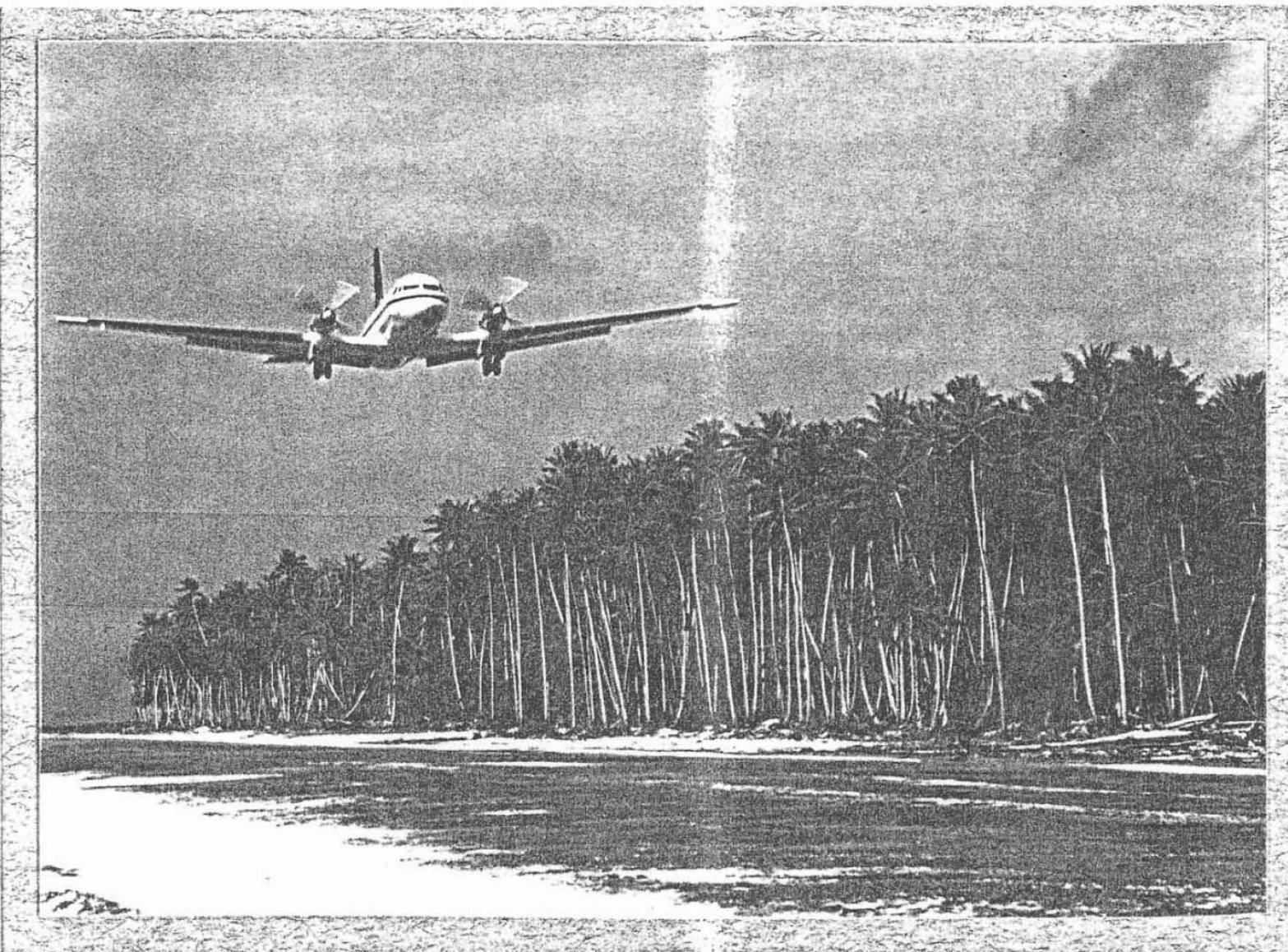
AMI-748 OFFLOADS SOFT DRINKS, FRANCIS REIMERS (RRE)  
AT RIGHT; MAYOR TOMAKI JUDA AT LEFT.

was a civilian worker. Jack is staying with Allen in latter's quarters at far end of classroom row, as the Dispensary rooms are crowded with visiting Marshallese men. Allen showed me how to start the water pressure pump on the wall outside to get water from the small tank for a shower, toilet, and wash basin. Latter faucets were working. I took the east room next to the bathroom; there are two other rooms on the west side, empty of occupants. A good bed, mattress firm, sheet, pillows, and a small bar (connected up but nothing in it), table with electric fan on it. No electricity at this hour, however, as generator not on. I unpacked and rested a bit. Put on zoris (my shirt and dress pants are still damp from the rain), white pants, and aloha shirt, and walked across to the RR restaurant, with my umbrella though the rain had stopped by now. At 6:00, took a table at far end, gave order to Francis Reimers (coffee, 50¢, with ramen/chicken bits, \$2.95). He apologized for the high prices, said freight costs from Majuro have to be included. As I ate, he came over from time to time to talk until Marshallese customers had increased to keep him busy. He has a cook, but handles the cash himself.

I left the restaurant about 6:45, stopped at the recreation hall to watch Jack and Mike Case playing basketball with locals at the west end of the hall. Jack told me he had taught them some, and threw three baskets in a row. He had complained earlier of a hernia pain from lifting things that morning. I returned to my room. Found no water in the shower, so I washed off in the wash basin. No towel, so I used my Palau T-shirt to dry off. Too tired now to work on LOG. Lay down with fan on, some rain outside. The electric power being on now allowed use of my corded recorder with

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-16, MAR.)



AMI-748 TAKE-OFF.

symphony tape for half-hour or so. About 8:30, I put on my radio to catch news, some in Marshallese, plus music. Turned off the radio, switched to the recorder again about 9:30. Slept fairly well. The generator next door went off after midnight, so no more fan, but cool from outside with windows slid open, though screens kept flies out. I used the toilet twice during the night -- dark, and I had forgot to bring my flashlight! I had set my clock alarm for 4:30 a.m. to get up and write in LOG, then recalled that with no electricity at that hour it would be too dark to work, so I cancelled the alarm.

March 11 (Friday) -- Kili

By 6:45 a.m. some dim light outside, so I got up to wash. No water now! No toilet flush either! I checked outside on the pressure pump that Allen had showed me, but no luck. I had left the door on lock as I came out, and now couldn't get back in -- in my lavalava and nothing else! I found one screen, above my bed, that was loose, so I pulled it out and climbed back inside. Then I put on my work shorts and went outside, checked that door was unlocked, found a bucket at the house to the west of here, and filled it with water from a catchment drum. Washed in my basin, using water from the bucket. The water was from rain runoff, so I brushed my teeth, etc, then used rest of the water to flush the toilet, and replaced the bucket where I found it.

Dressed in Palau T-shirt and shorts and zoris. Walked over to the RR restaurant at 7:20, it was open. Ordered coffee (50¢), pancakes and bacon (\$2.45). Was joined by Abaiu Jibaj, younger brother of Uraia who had been health aide when I was on Kili before. Abaiu is fat, has neat little moustache. He was on the Council (elected) till last year, and now works on the Council

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-20, MAR.)



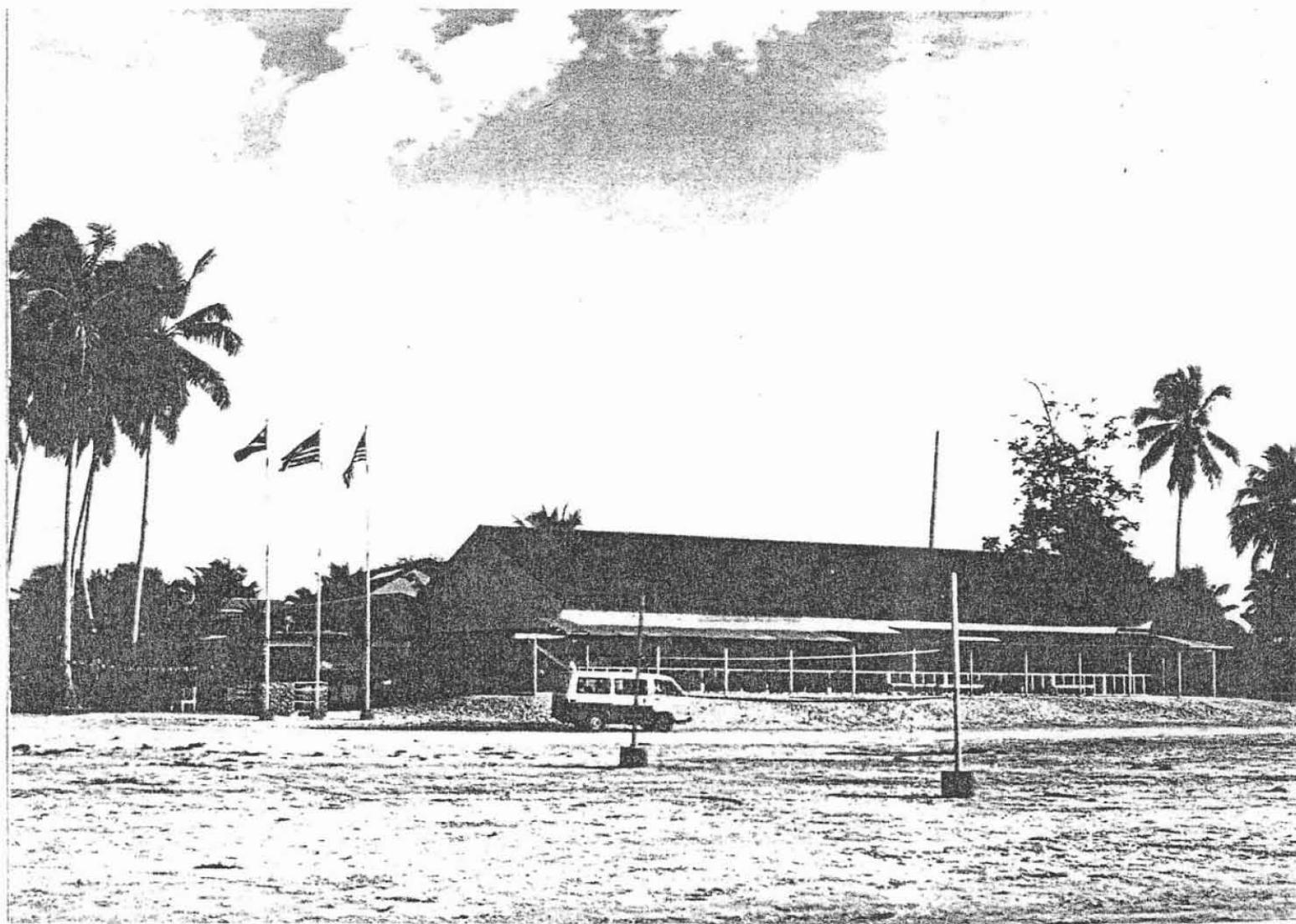
COCONUT PLANTATION, RIGHT OF ROAD FROM AIRSTRIP TO  
NOTE'S HOUSE ON "LAGOON".

staff of 5 persons under Mayor Tomaki Juda. The Bikini Trust Fund now amounts to \$6 million, nets about \$40,000 per month in interest for local distribution by the Council. The latter now is made up of 3 members from Ejit Island (Majuro) and 12 from Kili -- all elected, plus 3 alabs who represent the three clans. These are Kilon (Ijjirik), Netan Note (Makaoliej) and Jorri (Rinamu). The Mayor is elected (by the people or the Council?). The 15 elected Councillors are nominated from the bamles (families). After Juda died, Lore followed as magistrate for awhile, then Tomaki was elected. All officials have 4-year terms. The last election was held last year (1987). The Senator to the Nitijela from B/K/E community is also elected, is Henchi Balos, almost defeated by Johnny Jonjen last time. The latter is now at a Bible (Congregational) school in Minneapolis with his family. He has already spent two years there and will return to Kili in two years. Then he will probably be the pastor here, the first local Bikinian in that post since Jojaia. Rev. Harry Rakin is pastor now. Abaiu and I talked a little about the new group forming under Netan Note's leadership to favor Imada Kabua as Iroij-lablab over the community.

I returned to my room, worked on LOG (yesterday's notes) from 8:00 to 8:45. Finished a Pepsi from last night and a few biscuits. Electricity is on now, so I had benefit of the fan, as well as a good breeze through the open windows. Weather is clearing now. At 8:45, in my Palau T-shirt and shorts, I went out with my camera bag to walk around the east end of the island. Checked out the new church building, on the site of the old one. Houses below the church, where I had stayed in years past next to Juda's place,

KILI - MAR. 12, (988)

(3-22, MAR.)



RECREATION HALL.

have all been rebuilt. I walked on to the reef edge, surf was high, no sign of boats on the beach. Walked east along the main street, met Emjo and Jamore who said that the house built for the Kistes in 1963 had been torn down. New houses are built all over in this part of the village, have ply-wood sides, are flimsy looking. Met Ruban at the corner where the street turns right. He helped me identify Kilon's, Andru's, and Jukua's houses ahead, and Madribon's house still opposite Kilon's. But other houses have been built in this area, so I had difficulty recognizing the old layout with all of the crowding now.

I found the camera bag rather heavy to carry in the heat, so returned to my room and left it, keeping only the umbrella in case it rains. Returned to Kilon's house, and continued on the middle road east, through Laejo's family area, and Jojaia's farther on -- both of these men are dead now. I talked briefly with some of the people here, forgetting their names from before. Farther on to the east, I sighted a house built on the reef edge to the north. Walked over to it on a cross-island road, and met a woman who is married to one of the Note family, is from Ailinglablab, daughter of \_\_\_\_ (?). This house was built two years ago, she said. It's windy and takes water in a storm. I continued on the coast road to the far end, no more houses, several places on the shore where cars could launch boats on the beach. I turned the corner at the far end, and returned along the middle road, meeting more people (including one middle-aged man with a big nose, in the Laejo family). About 9:45 now, sweaty, as I reached my room. Used the toilet but no flush, so leave it for the time being.

Nearly time now for the 748 flight to arrive from Majuro (at 10:00?). Took my camera bag, left my umbrella, and walked across

KILI - MAR. 12, 1988

(3-23, MAR.)



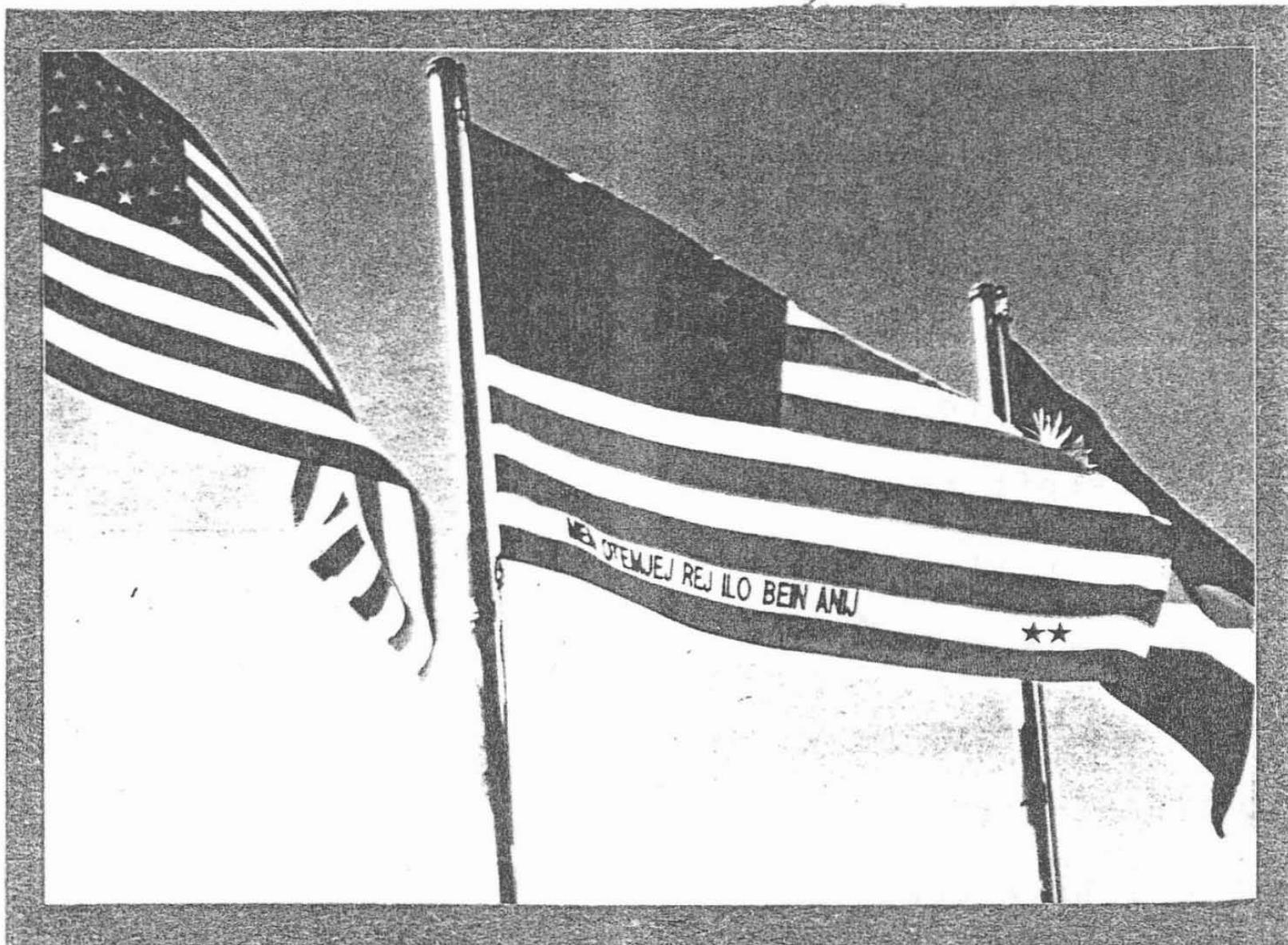
RRE RESTAURANT, ORDER DESK.

the playing field to the outer road on the south side. The 748 arrived on the airstrip at 9:55. I got a ride from Mayor Tomaki Juda in his sedan, to the airport terminal building. Asked to meet with him later sometime to talk about planning for Kili and Bikini. OK, he said. I told him he seems to be much like his father, Juda, quiet, fair-dealing, determined, respected.

Arrived at airstrip at 10:05. USDA goods and RR soft drinks being offloaded, latter for Bikini Day 88. Francis Reimers on had, ^ checking stores. Meet Mike Case, who is returning to Majuro on this flight, has a meeting there, has his own business now, just started last year. Meet Henchi Balos, admiring my Palau T-shirt with princess portrait. He talks with the NZ captain of the 748. Talk about the Australian Aborigines and Bikini cases. Pilot referred to bad conditions (alcoholism, etc.) in the railroad settlements in South Australia. I talked with him about my own work with the Bikinians. He said the 748 will come in on Monday (my departure date) about noon, returning to Majuro about 1:30 p.m. Plane was ready to take off about 10:15. I walked to the far side of the airstrip (after some PIX of the plane, departing passengers, etc.) to film the takeoff. Used telephoto lens, PIX of plane revving up its two motors, taxi-ing to the far (west) end of the air strip, and takeoff to the northeast about 10:30. It had a light load. Walked back to village, turned down ride offers, to cross-road (the one to the Note house on far reef side). PIX with wide-angle lens of coconut palms cut down, clearing piles of coconuts and underbrush debris. Why here, and nowhere else on island? The other watos I have seen seem completely neglected of copra production effort. Arrived at the middle road, turned west (left), passed two radio stations (construction company's -- ICM? -- on

KILI - MAR. 12, 1988

(3-24, MAR.)



BIKINI/KILI/EKIT FLAG (WITH U.S. AND REP. MAR. FLAGS).

the left, and COMSAT on the right, used by the B/K/E Council).

Returned to the guest house at 11:00. Need bath now, so ask woman at the house to the west (Bilip's family?) for a bucket of water. She assented. I bathed in the shower stall in my place, flushed toilet with waste water. Wiped dry with my T-shirt, and returned the bucket.

Heard sports play in the recreation hall, or outside on far side. Put on Aloha shirt and shorts, walked over there, met Jack and Allen (Jack said his hernia pain has disappeared). Watched Councillors race in a coconut husking contest (only 2 or 3 finished!). Announcer is a young Marshallese who Jack suggested could help me as interpreter tomorrow, too busy with festivities today. Food was being cooked on the barbecue racks nearby. Cokes were available; I took two cans back to my room. Returned to the play area. Invited by Tomaki to eat here with others. The local food servings are really too much for me! Quiet, while grace was said. I told Tomaki that Kistes wished to be remembered to him and the Bikini people -- I had forgot to mention this in my brief talk yesterday. He said my talk was "good," and maybe I would talk again after church services on Sunday. OK, I answered.

I decided to eat more sparingly at RR restaurant. Tomaki said, OK, but charge it to the Council -- I replied, no need. So, I went to the RR restaurant at 12:10, ordered coffee (50¢) and a grilled cheese sandwich (\$2.75). Later I bought the Marshall Is. Journal, just out (50¢). It costs only 40¢ in Majuro. I sat at an empty table by the side door, read the Journal a bit. In the next booth was Ijiro with wife and child. They left him and I asked him to join me. He is the son of Mark (son of Jokru). He

KILI - MAR. 12, 1988

(3-25, MAR.)



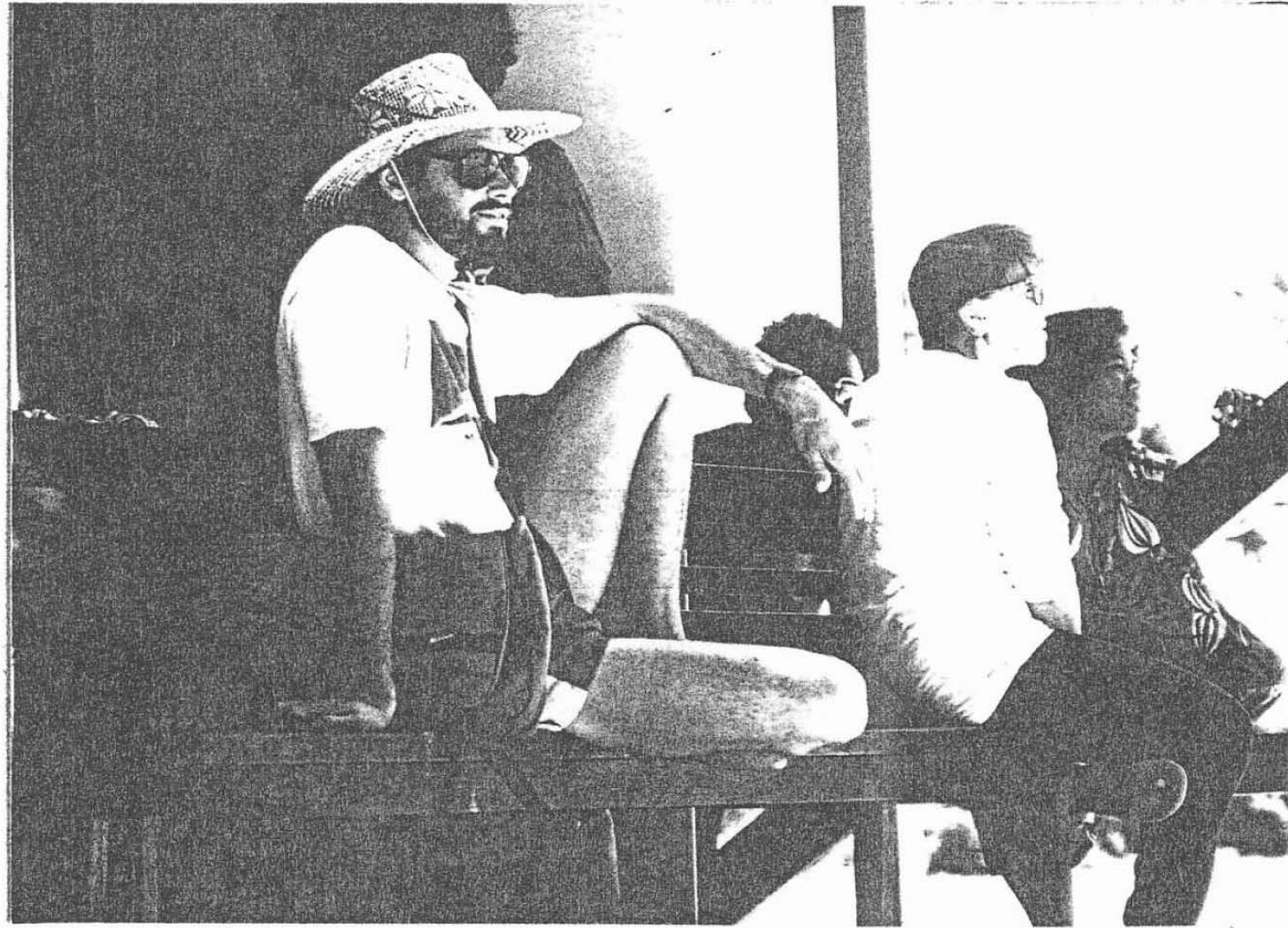
BARBECUE FOR GUESTS, BIKINI DAY '88, NEAR REC. HALL;  
(NETAN NOTE, AT RIGHT).

recalled meeting me at CCM (Pohnpei) when I was there with the accreditation committee, and he was one of several Marshallese students then in residence. He teaches in the Elementary School here now, about 40 students in grades 1-4) -- higher grades (here or on Majuro, I didn't understand). He knows Jeje Lajuan at Rita Elementary School in Majuro, with whom I worked on land tenure. I checked with him on the Council, number of members and manner of selection. Three alabs, including Netan Note for Makaoliej. That brought up the subject of the Iroij issue. Netan was not living on Kili until US payments to Bikinians began. He now favors Imada's attempt to re-establish the Iroij-lablab position here. I told Ijiro of my research in 1985-86 for Kabua Kabua, where the Germans and Japanese and now the US recognized Bikini Atoll as a part of Kabua Lablab's realm, and later Lailan's dispute with Jeimata. Ijiro said about 20 Bikinians support Netan on this issue. It's wrong, he said. If Kilon dies, the Ijjirik alab (iroij) could be Mark or another younger Ijjirik man. He does not see any take-over by Netan for Makaoliej. I find these restaurant talks quite useful, informal as they are, where English-speaking Bikinians are willing to talk privately.

Returned to my room about 12:50 p.m. Lay down and read M. I. Journal (report on aliens forbidden to mix in Marshallese politics, a bill passed by the Nitijela this week and authored by Henchi Balos, Amata Kabua, and Christopher Loeak). Worked on LOG (this morning to noon) till 3:00. Weather clearing rapidly now. Dress in shorts and Palau T-shirt, walk to recreation hall where teams are playing softball at far west of the field. Sit for a while with Kilon, nothing much to say though, owing to language problem.

KILL - MAR. 12, 1988

(4-1, MAR.)



ALLEN TAYLOR AND ALISON WHITE, ELEM. SCI. TEACHERS,  
AT RECREATION HALL.

Walk across to airstrip, to west end (reminds me so much of Ta'u airstrip in Samoa). Sand removal at far end to level recreation field (?). Follow the road clear to the end of the island, where a sharp curve turns one back. See many frigate birds, many rooted coconut seedlings, no care of plantation, too dry for breadfruit here, though a few seedlings started. Return to the cross-road, then left to the classroom area (four buildings along the reef side with stone wall separating from beach). This is near the Japanese reef dredging as I recall. Many houses near the school area. I meet Allen here, his house is the last of all at the west end, and is not associated with the school complex. Continuing east, pass site of planned (started) Mobil gas station, next to the long Council building which has some office facilities at east end. Allen says people have maybe 40 cars, mostly Toyotas sold to them by Reimers Enterprises. They now have their own gasoline supply in drums at homes.

Continue to walk to the church area, then cut in and return westward through the old "Joel" area. Arrive at graveyard, with white monuments, mostly unmarked, with flowers on Bobori's grave (died Feb. 4, 1988), the most recent. Grave area surrounded by a high cement wall, with steps on all four sides. Continued on west in the middle island area. Met Antab and Libain and a younger woman, about 28, who talked a kind of pidgin to me. They didn't remember me till she asked my name. Continued farther west on road past the school houses, then left to the middle road that returned east to the recreation field. Baseball was still in session. Sat with three elders a bit but had only little communication. The main thing today, I feel, is to let the people see me as I walk

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-3, MAR.)



RRE RESTAURANT AND DISPENSARY.

around. Tomorrow, I'll try to talk with some of them at length with an interpreter.

Returned to my room about 4:10 p.m. Hot sun now, forehead burning. Lay down to cool off a bit. Finish Pepsi from noontime. Then work on LOG till 5:00, all caught up now. (Addendum: Abaiu conversation at breakfast this morning. He recalled the party at my house years ago when he and other students from Assembly of God Bible School came out with James Milne. Jiba Kabua climbed the coconut tree in our backyard for drinking nuts, he remembered. He also asked if I knew what happened to the money Jibaj had invested (in 1957?) in American Savings and Loan in Honolulu. I said I thought that Dan Akimoto worked that out while he was with the Marshalls administration as finance officer. I suggested we talk with Uraia about that. He also recalled that his older brother, Netab (?), had died in a boat accident offshore Kili with Ralph Waltz who survived. Abaiu wondered why the US Government couldn't compensate the families of the two men who had died.)

Dressed in aloha shirt and shorts, walked down to the recreation hall shaded area, watched the baseball games (four in progress during today, last one in progress now?). Sat next to Lore and Kilon -- I referred to Kilon and me as lullab, old men with white hair. Suggested I talk with them tomorrow -- bwebwenato -- with an interpreter. Good, they replied. Joined by Ruban and a younger man (name?) who spoke some English, laughs a lot. I checked with Ruban about Ijiro's <sup>name</sup> -- he was sitting at the other end of our bench. Ruban said Ijiro is principal of the Kili Elementary School.

I moved over to talk with Ijiro, about 5:30. Corrected data on school enrollment -- eight grades (not four), and graduates

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-6, MAR.)



JOJAI FAMILY AREA, EAST OF RADIO STATION.

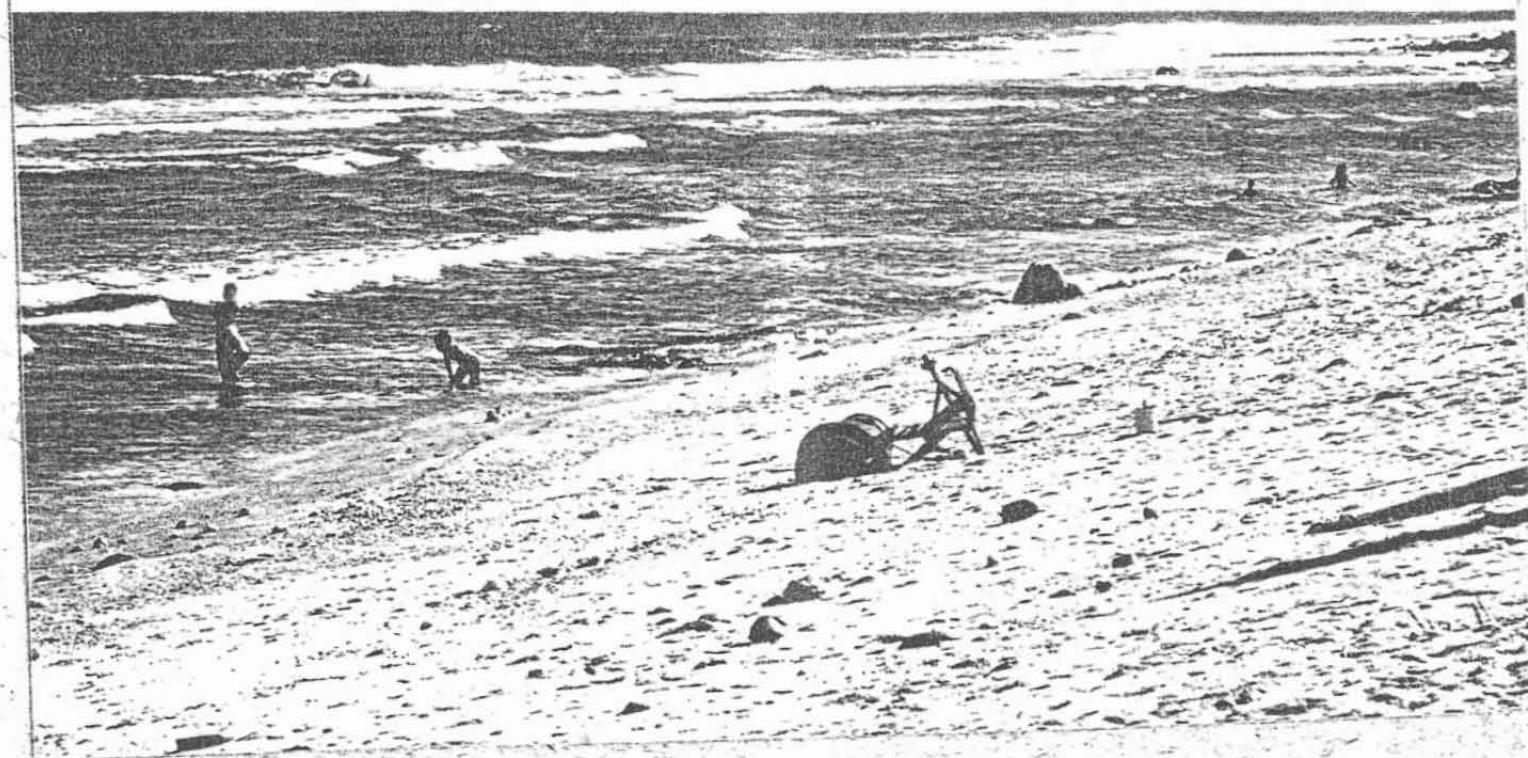
are accepted at High School in Rita on Majuro. About 120 students in all here on Kili, seven Marshallese teachers, all men, plus Allen and one American woman. I asked Ijiro about interviewing Tomaki, if I needed an interpreter. He said Tomaki's English is OK, if Tomaki agrees. I can meet Tomaki in the office at the end of the Council hall or check with him about a home interview. Tomaki's home is just back from the area here, fronting on the "lagoon" road, but "ocean" side of the street. I asked Ijiro if he had seen Henchi Balos recently -- yes, sitting back of the backstop on the ball ground. I wanted to ask Henchi about this week's legislation on "aliens" in political area.

I left Ijiro at 5:50, walked over to the RR restaurant, just closing up? Francis let me in, a young woman at the desk, where I ordered beef chowmein (\$4.95) and a big coffee (50¢). Later, I bought a cold Pepsi to take out (\$1.00). Only one other person was eating, some kids just finishing up. Doors were locked at 6:00 p.m. I took my time eating, ended about 6:25. Returned to my room, to leave the Pepsi, then went back to the ballgame to see if I could contact Tomaki or Henchi for interviews tomorrow. Stood back of the backstop -- Jemaliut No. 2 team was playing Bikinians. (Ijiro had told me about Jemaliut Nos. 1 and 2 teams, played last year in Japan, came out third in softball, in Saipan won No. 2, and Japan No. 1.) It was 7th inning now, Jemaliut team (from Majuro) seemed much better. I left at 7:00, back to my room. No generator on now, so dark inside. Lie down with lavalava on. Occasional cooling breeze. Drink some Pepsi.

Generator came on below and on west side about 7:15, then the one outside my room started (loud) at 7:35. Lights on, and

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-10, MAR.)



BOYS ON THE BEACH, NEAR OLD COUNCIL HOUSE.

then the fan, so I got up and worked on LOG to date. Now, 7:55. Back to bed, listen occasionally to my radio for news. Too loud outside (generator) for enjoying my recorder tape.

March 12 (Saturday) -- Kili

Generators were on all night. At 12:00 midnight, I heard police whistles, curfew for children, but adult activities had continued in the recreation hall. I had left the fan on, with pajamas to keep warm. When I got up to use the toilet in the night, the light was on in the bathroom, handier than the night before.

Finally, up at 6:30 a.m., fairly clear sky. Went over to Bilip's for a pail of water (barrel was over 3/4 empty now). No one up yet. I washed in my place, bathed from the bucket, threw the rest in the toilet. Returned the bucket. Shaved w/o cord. LOG brought up to date by 7:05. Made up the bed. Dressed, and walk over to RR restaurant. (I was very thirsty in the night, need fresh water to drink.) Restaurant not open yet. As I waited, met Ijiro, his wife, with two adopted children (his sister's kids). He told me he spent two years at CCM (1982-83) in Pohnpei. He'd like to go to UOG next.

At 7:35 a.m., the police guard raised the three flags, with a whistle signalling the deed. They got the Bikini flag upside down and had to redo the raising of it. This flag has a U.S. design with 20 stripes plus (?) stars and a motto along the bottom, something about "In God we hope." I went back to my room for the camera (the restaurant was still not open) and took a telephoto PIX of the flags against the sky. Then, a PIX with 50 mm. lens of the recreation hall, flags, and coconut trees in background.

K(LI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-II, MAR.)



KILON, AT CHURCH.

The restaurant is now open, 7:45. Ordered tea (50¢) and pancakes and fried eggs (no toast) for \$2.50. I had half-cup of hot water first, then tea. Sat with Kilon (alone), talked a bit and then he went over to Ijiro to get him to come and interpret for him. He wanted to know when I would be coming to talk story with him. I said after I talk with Tomaki. I asked Ijiro about an interpreter for meeting with Kilon. The latter had suggested Henchi Balos, but maybe that's not a good idea since Henchi is in the President's Cabinet now as Finance Minister. Kilon would probably like to talk more freely with someone else interpreting. I suggested Jack's idea of Lantino (?), son of Rev. Harry Rakin, but Ijiro thought it better to use a Bikini man who knows the local setup and language/tradition better. I said I'd ask Tomaki about this. Kilon goes to California on April 12th to be interviewed (by Radio Bikini producers?).

Ijiro went back to sit with his family. My plate was brought. I took PIX of the check counter with woman clerk and customers ordering (at 1/30 sec.). Kilon said to me that he had no sight in his right eye (I said, same for me in left eye). His hearing is OK though. He just had two cups of tea, declined food. I paid the woman at the counter for my breakfast. Left at 8:20 and returned to my room.

Worked on LOG to date. Generators are still on (so fan, too). Now 8:40, I tried the small frig by the bed, plugged in the cord, it opens without a key as I had found in Europe last summer. When the frig is cold, I should keep some Pepsi in it. Walk to the recreation hall, meet Jack Niedenthal, and we talked about interpreters -- Lantino, Ijiro, or others? I met Tomaki, asked for an appointment to talk and check the photo entries in the memory book I had

KILI-MAR. 13, 1988.

(4-13, MAR.)



ABAIU AND HIS WIFE, AT CHURCH.

given to him on Thursday. He said tomorrow after church is OK. Everyone is still caught up in games and sports today. I asked him for suggestion of an interpreter to talk with Kilon and Lore today. Ijiro was standing nearby, and Tomaki asked him to do it. Ijiro agreed, said he has no work today. It was then 8:50, so Ijiro went off to check with Kilon for a 9:00 meeting. He came back for me at 9:00, and we went together to Kilon's, then on to a smaller house nearby with a table, three chairs inside the room.

I asked Kilon to tell me his own version of the Bikini resettlement as he has described it to Americans in film sequences. He began with the decision by the U.S. to test the A-bomb in 1946, then the move to Rongerik, another U.S. decision. He said Lejolang told Jeimata to go back to Ailinglablab from Kwajalein, that the latter was getting too old to be involved in decisions, so the former did all the talking with the U.S. authorities about the Bikini evacuation, but did not involve the Bikinians in his talk. Rongerik was not populated, so acceptable, but few resources and finally starvation threatened. Then Mason came up from Kwajalein. I asked Kilon about Ujelang which had been projected as a Bikinian release from Rongerik. He remembered that, but did not know why the U.S. changed its mind. When the people were on Kwajalein in 1948, there was talk about Erikub, Lojjakar, Kabinmeto -- no interference then from Lejolang. Choices open finally narrowed to Wotho, because it was close to Bikini, better chance to return there, and some fear of Lejolang if they didn't vote for Wotho, also it had a lagoon and only small population; and Kili Island, unpopulated, U.S. government control, no Iroij-lablab, but no lagoon. He said there was worry about Kili's isolation from the

KILI-MAR. 13, 1988

(4-14, MAR.)



LEE AND HIS WIFE, LITIMIEN, AT CHURCH.

start, but they depended on the U.S. to look after them. When the U.S. forgot (in early 1950s), they nearly starved again, like Rongerik, he said. He recalled the 1957 achievements on Kili with James Milne and the Kili Development Project, including a farmer from Kosrae who taught them about taro cultivation. But still they wanted to return to Bikini. The ones who had favored Wotho included Lokwiar, Jibaj, Jonjen, Libtikoj. Juda's preference for Kiki prevailed. After the latter's death, the community depended more on the U.S. government, then "lies" as the U.S. began to deny its responsibilities to the Bikinians. He told of Pres. Johnson's approval for them to return to Bikini, and Andru and others (200?) went back for two years. Can't trust the U.S. government now. He said maybe 300 in whole B/K/E population now. Not all will return to Bikini, but would continue to depend on the U.S. government for support. He put the emphasis on the U.S. government, does not like the RepMar government to administer them. Since Senator Balos has become Finance Minister this year, no evidence of aid through RepMar. Bikinians want to deal directly with the U.S. government. For example, the USDA food that comes through Majuro, ship provision has been uncertain, yesterday the 748 plane had to bring the supplies in that were overdue. Kilon also stressed the point that Bikinians did not want a return of the Iroij-lablab, and resisted Imada Kabua's plan for one-third share in Bikinian income from the U.S. government, with President Amata's support apparently. I told Kilon of my own involvement in Kabua Kabua's court suit against Imada. Bikini would be part of the territory disputed whichever way the case was decided. Kilon said Kabua Kabua was here on Kili last year on Bikini Day, that the people have great

KIWI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-15, MAR-)



CHURCH ARRIVALS - JAMORE, NETAN (IN BACK), MIROM  
(AT RIGHT).

respect for him, a kind man, not grasping for dollars in tribute. Kilon played down Netan Note's move to restore the Iroij-lablab, said the people stand firm on this issue now. He repeated that many Bikinians regard the U.S. as their Iroij-lablab (or, he added, maybe "Mason" -- I laughed and said I'd want my one-third share 'then!). He urged me to aid the Bikinians in their desire to return to Bikini and to continue to reject Imada as Iroij, and to deal only directly with the U.S. government and not Rep-Mar. We ended our conversation at 10:45 -- 1½ hours. I told him that we three (Ijiro included) would keep this conversation secret as to any of it coming from Kilon.

Ijiro and I walked back to my place, then he said it was better if we separate -- he went to the recreation hall and I headed for RR restaurant, then doubled back to the recreation hall. I sat by Bilip for awhile, watching a girls' relay on the playground in a circle of coconuts. I went back to my room for my camera, took PIX with telephoto lens of the Bikini flag flying so that the motto showed -- "Men otemjej rej ilo ben anij." Also PIX of men, including Netan Note, tending the fire for chicken barbecue.

(At 9:00 a.m. this morning, on the way to Kilon's, a man came to invite me to breakfast at the recreation hall -- I said I had already eaten at the RR restaurant.)

Finished 24-exposure film roll, changed to No. 2 (also 24-exposure). Took telephoto shot of Allen and the other American teacher, a woman (later, she introduced herself, but I didn't get her name -- she said it was good to have me here for Bikini Day 88). Walked over to the RR restaurant (after seeing the mens'

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

[4-16, MAR.]



LORE, AT CHURCH.

relay race being set up). Talked with Francis Reimers, met his wife Agnes (Marshalllese), and a little blonde girl they had adopted in Majuro, when the mother had been unable to care for the girl. I asked him if I could get some drinking coconuts (ni), and he said he'd ask some locals for some. He had already offered to buy from them to sell in the restaurant, but had had no response. He will see that I get some, however. He asked if I would have dinner with him and his family one night while I'm here. I said, thanks, but I was trying to keep my schedule open as possible to meet with Bikinians, as my time is short. I bought a guava nectar (\$1.00), as he had no more Pepsi. Walked back to my room, drank the guava and two cookies while writing up my LOG (to date) by 12:05.

Walked down to the recreation hall annex, saw Uraia and Abaiu Jibaj by the barbecue facility. Asked Uraia about the savings deposit made by Jibaj (through me in 1957) for \$400. Later, Abaiu came to me, having discussed this with Uraia, who told him that he had received a check for \$700 through Dan Akimoto in Majuro several years later (after 1962?). But Abaiu said he'd like me to check on this with American Savings and Loan in Honolulu and write to him about it, if I can. He gave me his Majuro address, and I put the note in the back of my LOG binder.

It is now 12:15, and Tomaki spoke into the microphone to announce lunch as ready, and Rev. Harry Rakin gave the blessing. Tomaki invited me to take my place in the line for lunch, and I did. Had rice, a piece of chicken, and Pepsi. I sat down next to Simon, son of Jamore, who is a teacher at Ejit (about 40 students there, grades 1-8, after which they go on to high school in Rita).

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-17, MAR.)



DRESSY WOMEN COMING TO CHURCH.

He knows Jeje Lajuan. Then I talked with Brain (Arno man who came to Majuro, he said, in 1944 on an LST, worked with the Navy maintenance, and later was elected Mayor of D-U-D till he was defeated last year by Amata Kabua's daughter). He told me he had 17 grandchildren, at least -- he had given me another figure the other day that was wrong. He is here on Kili with his grandson in tow, is related in some way here. I finished my plate (greasy fingers) and Pepsi, and he took both with his gear to dispose of.

It was now 12:50, so I went back to my room, to ready for a 1:00 meeting with Netan Note that I had arranged. I went down to the street near the beach, stopped at a house next to the Church and met Rev Harry Rakin (he is from Ailinglablab, like Note). I said I would be coming to Church tomorrow. He asked if I could speak in Marshallese; I said, not for a public speech. He offered to show me Note's house, but there we were told he is over at Mark's (to the west of my place). I found him there playing checkers on a bench outside, with Bilip. I stood by to watch them for two games -- they are good players, fast, and fairly evenly matched. At 1:10, Note looked up and saw me, and suggested that we meet in my room, no interpreter needed.

I sat on the bed, and Netan Note brought in a chair from one of the other rooms, placing it in the doorway. I adjusted the fan to blow a breeze on both of us. We talked at first just to get acquainted. He knew something of my own experience out here, said he had left Bikini before WWII to attend the Japanese school in Jabor, Jaluit. He stayed in Jaluit for 10 years in all. He was born in 1918 (I had him born in 1917 on my census card, from info I had received from others when I was on Kili earlier). Then he

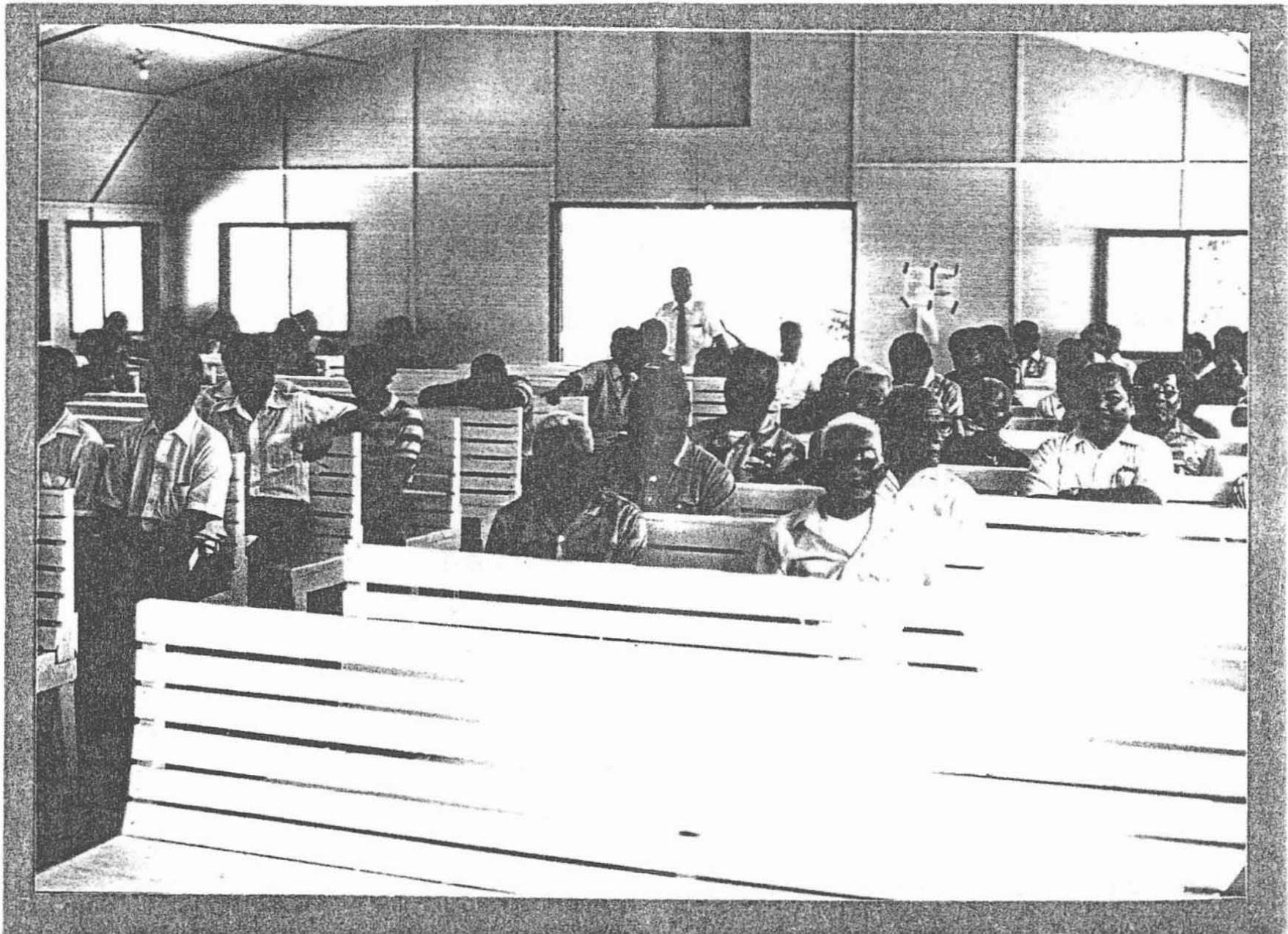
KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-19, MAR.)



RUBON, AT CHURCH.

went to Ailinglablab, for 10 years, stayed with Kabua Kabua sometimes, at Buoj, some time with Jeimata, and some time at a third place he called his home (name?). After the American occupation he was Magistrate of Ailinglablab, and came to Kili to live, in 1970. He didn't say why, then. He is probably the only one on Kili now, he said, who ships copra out for export. His land is Makaoliej, and includes the wato I saw yesterday and took a PIX of as the only cleared land I'd observed on the island. He said the B/K/E Local Government Council has 3 alab representatives -- Ijjirik is really under Banke, who is in Majuro, and not Kilon who will be next after Banke dies; Makaoliej head is really Miriam (?) and he will succeed her eventually, represents her now; and Rinamu whose head is Jorri. The other 15 members of the Council (12 from Kili and 3 from Ejit) are elected. Maybe 20 or 25 will run for office, whoever wants to, representing no special constituency as such. The top 15 are the ones elected, some are older persons and some are younger generation. He objected to my saying there were 11 alabs on Rongerik in 1948. Really, only two -- Ijjirik (Juda) and Makaoliej (Jokru). Rinamu was not counted as a bwij of Bikini, he insisted. He admitted that there had been 11 on the Council then, but only two were alabs proper. He asked me how it was that Juda was called the "King of Bikini." I said it was really the news media who were responsible -- "head" equalled "King." Like Lejolang, I said, who was cited at times as King of the Marshalls, as when he visited Pres. Johnson in DC. The press picked up on it and Lejolang never denied it, although the Marshallese knew better. It was much the same for Juda when Bikini and Rongerik were in the news. (I told him my experiences in 1946



WAITING FOR CHURCH SERVICE — MEN'S SIDE.

with USCC, when I had met Juda and others only briefly on Rongerik one afternoon on my way from Ebeye to Bikini by plane, said it was no business of mine then to talk with Bikinians; I told him also of my flights to other islands, as with Lt. Cyr to Lae and Ujae, and canoe travel from Likiep to Wotje and return, when we got lost.) He said the Local Government community now numbers 1,050 (1,500?) people -- 300 in Majuro, 200 on Ejit, 600 on Kili, 100 in Ebeye. He was not sure of the numbers. These people are the ones who share the interest from the Trust Fund. As a result there is no productive industry on Kili or Ejit -- no copra, no handicraft made. There are some stores in the community, that use the interest money to buy from RRE, to sell to the people who receive interest income. On the Iroij-lablab question, he referred to the 1920 agreement between Lailan and Jeimata (he thinks Amata Kabua has a copy of that agreement?), seems to accept that a division of the title was made as well as use of the lands. He said he understood that the agreement had continued to be acknowledged by Kabua Kabua and Lejolang in American period. Earlier, people from Bikini had gone to Ailinglablab to work for Jeimata, as recognition of this tie. In regard to the U.S. attempt to settle the Iroij-lablab share in Bikini Atoll, he had heard that Lejolang had accepted \$20,000, but in the "custom" he said the people remain under the Iroij and cannot reject him, although he can remove them from the land at will. He acknowledged that Imada Kabua is making a claim for the title and asking one-third of the income to Bikinians from the U.S., and that Amata Kabua is part of this deal. Netan (he prefers the spelling Nathan) thinks that about 200 of the B/K/E people (adults) share this view that the Iroij-ship must

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-23, MAR.)



42 YEARS AGO LONG  
LONG TIME IN EXILE

SONG GROUP, AFTER CHURCH SERVICE.

be re-established. I asked him his opinion as to the degree to which the B/K/E community is still a "group." He thinks probably there are three groups now -- the oldtimers who remain united about returning to Bikini; those who want the Iroij-ship re-established; and those who will not return to Bikini but will stay on Ejit or Kili and not accept Imada as Iroij-lablab. He thinks the U.S. government expenditures to reclaim Bikini are a waste of money -- how could over 1,000 people be resettled there anyhow? The younger people (and some of the elder ones) would rather have the money paid to them individually and continue their present status. I told Nathan that I would regard our conversation in confidence, and would not mention him by name as a source. I do not plan to publish anything after this visit to Kili. We ended our talk at 2:45 (about 1½ hours). I had a good impression of Nathan. His English is fair, better than he lets on.

Went over to recreation hall, saw Henchi Balos, agree to meet tomorrow, coffee at RR restaurant after 2 p.m. I'll meet Tomaki first, after church which lasts from 10:00 to noon. I told Henchi I wanted to get his ideas on the future of this community, also his interpretation of the Nitijela bill on aliens, which Henchi jointly sponsored.

Then I went over to the RR restaurant, asked woman there about drinking nuts. She brought out three for me, no charge. I asked if I could get some cold water, like it at home. She got me a large cup of distilled water (cold). I bought a can of guava drink for \$1.00 and a Bikini Day 88 T-shirt for \$11.50. Went back to my room. Tired, lay down at 3:00 to rest and cool off, napped a little till 3:45. Then I worked on LOG to date to 4:35.

Walked over to Bilip's. On the veranda now playing checkers

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-1, MAR.)



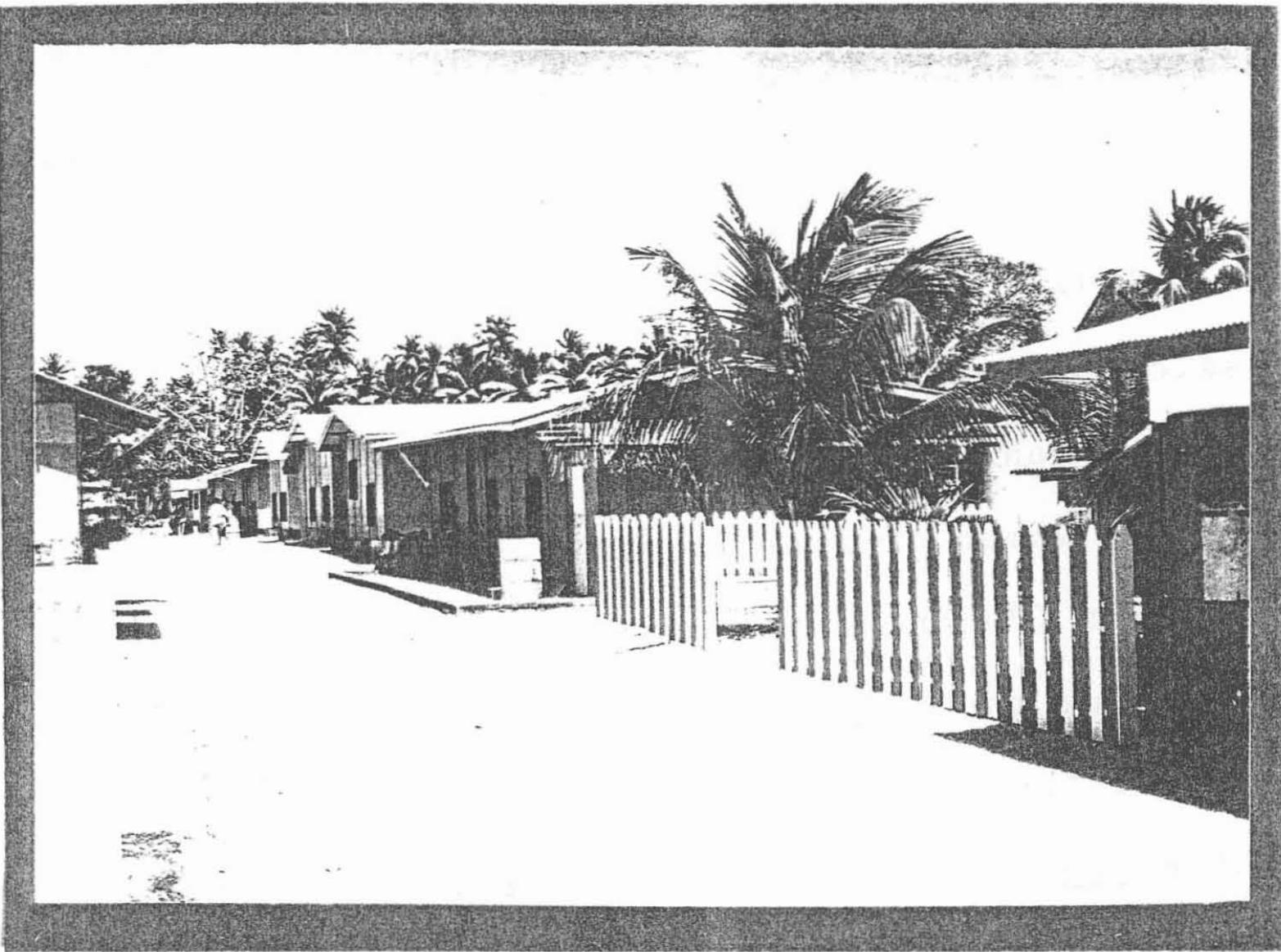
JAMORE, MIRIOM, AND CHILDREN OUTSIDE HOME  
ON MAIN STREET.

were Uraia Jibaj and one other (his hat was pulled down so I couldn't see his face as he played). Onlooker was the big-nosed young man from Kilon's housing area. Only a few pieces left, all kings, jump any number of spaces except when the other's piece taken. I watched till Uraia won, at 4:50. Then I walked down to the recreation hall annex, sat down and waited. See Ijiro, out front with Bilip, Kilon, etc. At 5:00, Ijiro joined me and we walked over to Lore's house, on the "beach" side of the street at the corner opposite Jukua's old place. (I heard that Jukua is now paralyzed, in Majuro, at home cared for by his family.) Lore was waiting for us. We three sat on the floor, window overlooked the ocean surf offshore. Lore leaned against the wall, and Ijiro and I sat out from the wall facing him and each other. (This was hard on my behind after awhile!)

I started my interview with Lore by asking him to tell me about Bikini before the move in 1946, as he has told it to the media. He recalled how pleasant the atoll was, a plenty of food and fishes, places to live. Leadership by Ijjirik (Langijet, Lainij, Langinmaljit -- Lokwiar, Juda, Jibaj, Jojep, etc) respected by the people. No mention of Makaoliej or Rinamu at first. Then he said the leaders of Makaliej were "nejin Ijjirik" (sons of Ijjirik) and only later did a Bikini man go to Rongelab and brought home a woman of Rinamu. She was given some land on Bikini by Langinmaljit (?) and she started the third jowi on Bikini. I then asked about the 12 (?) alabs in the Rongerik Council -- how come? He said they were all equal, all 3 jowi, except that Ijjirik provided the Iroiij (Juda, after Lokwiar). Other members represented various segments of the three jowi, with Jokru and Jonjen

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(S-2, MAR.)

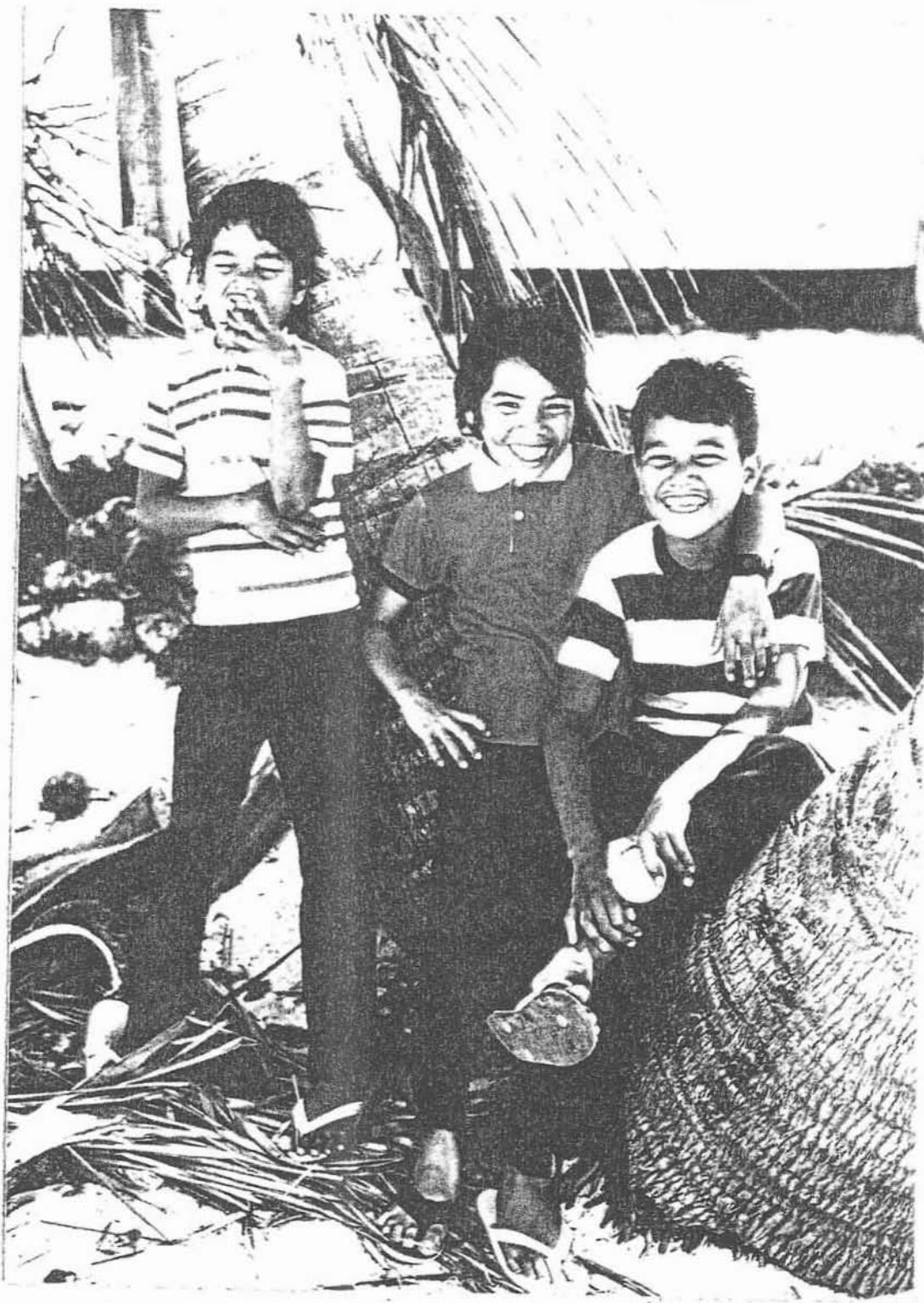


MAIN STREET, TO EAST. MAYOR TOMAKI'S HOUSE BACK OF  
PICKET FENCE.

as leaders of the two other clans. He suggested that some change in council leadership was taking place, but the structure of jowi membership remained intact. Then I shifted my questioning to 1957, when I had been told on Kili that the Council consisted of 20 members then, with some like Joel (?) not really traditional bwij heads (alabs) but heading up a new, important bamble (family). He admitted this change. And now, I am told that the B/K/E Council consists of three alabs, 12 elected members from Kili and three from Ejit, that election is open to anyone who wants to run, and the top 12 and 3 win and the rest lose, regardless of their position in the jowi system. Yes, he said, and he is an example of a traditional (land) head who lost in the last election. So, even persons marrying into the Bikini community can run and be elected though having no land title, he said. Also, only elected members have voting rights, not the three alabs. (Here, Ijiro interjected, there is a plan in the Council to admit the original (Rongerik) 12 alabs to non-voting membership, so at least these titled (land) persons will have a voice in discussion if not in the final vote.) Finally, I asked Lore about the integrity of the Bikini community today, still unified and proud of its own identity? Yes, he answered. But he admitted that on return to Bikini, not all people might go -- some would stay on Kili or Ejit or Majuro/Ebeye, and become second-class Bikini members, joined with the rest only by sharing in the income from the Trust Fund. Also, some division exists now on the Iroij-lablab question, going back to the division in the community on Rongerik before the move to Kili. I had asked enough at this point, it was after 6:00 p.m. now. But he had a question -- where, in their present numbers of over 1,000, could they hope

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-5, MAR.)



BOYS ON THE BEACH, NEAR NEW COUNCIL  
HOUSE.

to relocate as even Bikini is not large enough -- Maui? (I explained the negative reactions of Maui people and their Mayor.) Nowhere else seems possible nowadays unless Bikinians are willing to become citizens of the state or territory where they relocate. I told him about the Banabans going to Rabi in Fiji, and the Nauruans not willing to accept Australian status in Queensland. He then raised the question about "no Iroij over Bikini, ever!" I explained about Launa and Kabua Lablab in German times, and he knew of this, but said it was only a gentlemen's agreement, so to speak, not really giving up Bikini to Kabua Lablab. I explained further that German, Japanese, and American acceptance of Bikini as part of Kabua's territory was accepted on Kabua's say-so. It is part of the legal record now. I said that Jon Weisgall will do everything he can in legal action to make Bikini free, if this is what the people want. Divisions within the community will now make this increasingly difficult. Lore closed by saying he hoped I'd do what I can to "save" them again!

Ijiro and I left Lore's house about 6:25 p.m. Ijiro went back to the recreation hall area, and I went separately to my room. Tired, decided to bathe, freshen up. Went over to the house to the west, saw Edwin (?), not Mark, and asked for water and a bucket. He agreed, so I began to dip out of the barrel, which was nearly empty now. Then he said that was "Government" water, and took me around to the front of his place where a full barrel of water was available. I dipped with the bucket and returned to my room, took a bath in the shower area, washed down, threw the waste water in the toilet (good flush). Wiped off with my T-shirt and returned the bucket to Edwin.

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-6, MAR.)



NEW COUNCIL HOUSE, BEACH AT THE RIGHT.

It was now 6:45 or so. I decided against eating at RR restaurant as probably closed by now. Finished off my cookies, opened a can of Guava nectar, and ate iu from the coconut I had earlier drunk from and put in the cool chest. Lay down to rest. It is still noisy outside from the generator, but at 7:15 it was shut down. Now, there are no lights, or fan, and it's dark out. I played symphony music on my recorder (on batteries), and stayed on the bed in my lavalava.

Then, at 7:45 p.m. the generator started up again, so I had lights and the fan again. I closed the windows to keep the noise down, and worked on my LOG. I opened a second coconut -- Ijiro had told me that he had provided these coconuts at Frances Reimer's request! I drank ni as I wrote. Stopped at 9:20, fingers getting tired from writing, and started No. 2 LOG filler. Had a headache so took a Contac pill with my guava drink. Felt better then. I heard games going on in the recreation hall, lights all on and whistles blowing for sports play.

At 9:30, went to bed, in pajamas, with fan on. Finished the drink in the coconut and put the shell in the frig to eat the iu tomorrow.

March 13 (Sunday) -- Kili

Sky was clear last night, saw the moon and the Southern Cross out of the window facing south. Slept well; though the generator was on all night it sounded quieter (maybe some repair?). I had left the fan on, and kept the windows closed. Awoke at 6:30 a.m. Weather still clear. Went over to Edwin's for water with a basin I had found in one of the other rooms. I met Rev. Harry on my return, by his house. He said I could use his water supply anytime,

KILI - MAR. (4, 1988

(5-9, MAR.)



YOUTH PLAYS PIANO KEYBOARD, NEAR SCHOOL.

he showed me his wash sink with a hose and pump.

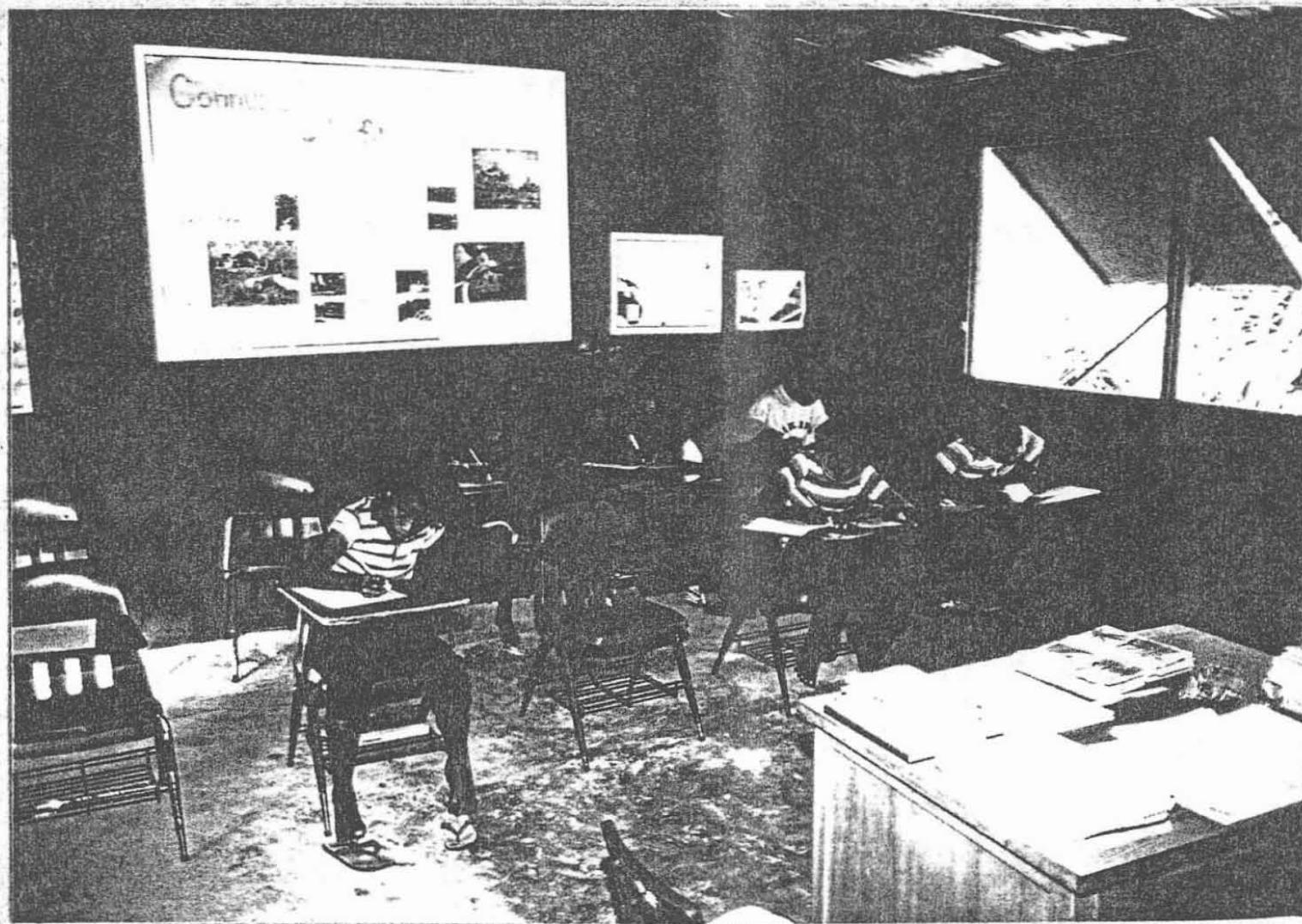
Washed, threw waste water in the toilet, then found that the basin I was using had small holes in the bottom and was leaking all over the bathroom floor! Back to work on my LOG, to date by 7:00. Shaved, but I had no more Aqua Velva when I dropped the bottle in the other room where I kept my gear; it splintered on the concrete floor and I cut two fingers picking up the glass fragments. Put my shaver on charge in the other room.

Walked over to the RR restaurant, which was open. Several Marshallese had already been served by Francis. I asked him for a cup of cold water, and he brought a container of mostly still frozen water! Ordered tea (55¢) and pancake, scrambled egg, and bacon (\$2.95 -- he said he had reduced the price of breakfast). I met a young man, name of Lee (son of Laejo and Marta who was the daughter of Lokwiar), and invited him to join me. He had already ordered coffee and a breakfast plate, but I offered to pay for it. I brought him some more coffee when I went for seconds on my tea (no charge for refill, said Francis). Lee is a policeman. About 20 on the force, he said, working different shifts. He goes on tomorrow night, is off this morning. He lives in Laejo's housing area, has about 30 people in his house! He has 5 daughters and one son now. He was born in Japanese times (1937) on Bikini, is 51 years old now, but he doesn't look that age. Some of his children are married and have kids of their own, which explains his large household.

Lee told me that the interest money received from the Trust Fund is not enough to live on here in Kili. The people do use coconuts, breadfruit in season (it's very good in the Chinatown

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-10, MAR.)



ALISON WHITE'S CLASS IN SESSION.

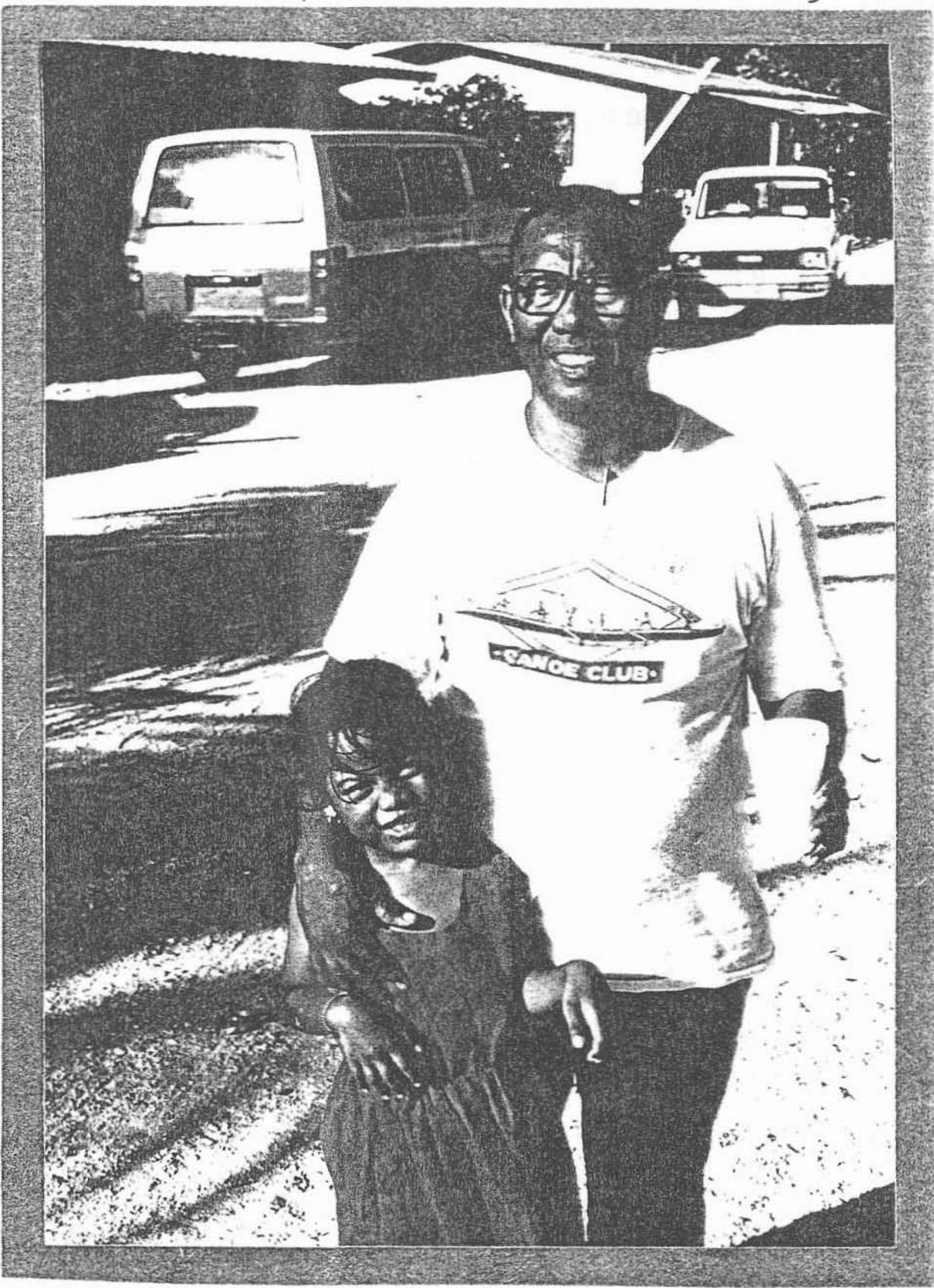
area), but no more pandanus nor arrowroot here. Some bananas. He said fishing is dangerous, too many sharks! Most food is imported. He said that Kili Island is too small now, for the population that may be as high as 1,000. When Bikini is considered safe for the people to return, some will probably decide to remain on Kili or on Ejit. He has traveled to Hawaii with the B/K/E delegation, and likes Hawaii -- it's big! His police job is easy, he just drives around. There is no drinking allowed on the island, it's a peaceful place. Curfew applies to children, under 20 (?). He said that both Juda and Ralph Waltz are buried in the island cemetery. Tomaki Juda is well regarded as Mayor, is quiet and respected for his decisions.

Francis' wife brought me two bottles (plastic) of clean water. I had earlier asked Francis if I could take him up on his invitation to dinner with them, tonight -- he said, OK, come about 6:30. They live in rooms above the restaurant, but eat down here. I paid Francis \$3.45 for Lee's breakfast. Left the restaurant about 8:00 a.m., after jollying two older women (who remembered me) who were eating at a table next to the order counter. I called them jiroñ (young girls) and they laughed.

Back in my room, put on my lavalava, and stored the water bottles in the frig. Worked on LOG to date, at 8:30. (Took another Contac this morning, with the cold water I had at the restaurant.) At 8:35, I took my camera bag and walked to the near edge of the recreation field. PIX of the restaurant, dispensary, and police station on the far side of the field. Next, I walked east to the cross-road coming in from the airstrip, took PIX toward the west (road sign, trees, recreation hall, and three flag poles).

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-12, MAR.)



IJIRO AND DAUGHTER, NEAR ELEM. SCHOOL  
(HIS PRINCIPAL).

Followed the mid-island road east to the radio stations in Chinatown. PIX of the B/K/E station from across the road by the IRC Co. Farther on, came to a cluster of houses, Jojaia's family area -- met Miram, daughter of Jojaia. Walked east a short distance to another cross-island road, an area with partly cleared coconut land. Turned south to the shore where the house belonging to Note stands, took PIX to the west from the top of the shoreline, with some of Note's house in it. Then back to the middle road and walked west. Met a man named Jemij (?) and Lijam, daughter of Jamore, who had helped Ruban and Salome feed me when I was working here in 1963 -- she was 19 years old then. Arrived at the bend of the old village road, saw a large but sick breadfruit tree at the corner. Jukua's house was shore side of Andru's house, and Kilon's house was closest to where I stood. PIX from this area, view of the corner, the breadfruit tree, too. Met Lee here, he was carrying water to the house (his) back of Kilon's.

I walked back to the Church, then down the hill to the old main village road. PIX of houses to the east, with a long paved area on the left (the old Council house?). So many new houses are built in this area now that it's hard to recall the layout 25 years ago! Went down to the beach, telephoto PIX of boys playing in the surf, view to the east.

It's now 9:15, walk back to the guest house, meet Ruban and others in the house west of the church. Hot outside; in my room I put on lavalava and drank some cold spring water (bottle never yet opened!). Sun is coming in the window over my bed, so drop the curtains and sit in front of the fan to cool off. Write in LOG to date, at 9:40. Lie down, relax before dressing to attend

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-13, MAR.)



GRAVEYARD (IN JITOEN); VU FROM NW.

Church services at 10:00. Nap. Hear church bell ring at 10:00. Dress in my white trousers, Samoa shirt, and lei received from the people on Thursday (artificial). Take my camera. Walk to the paved area in front of the church. I was invited to go inside and sit in men's area, but I declined just now. I wanted to wait for arriving people to get some PIX -- Kilon, Abaiu and his wife, Lee and his wife, women in pretty muumuu-type dresses (from the east side) and families (from the west side), plus others? I noticed that men still sit on the left side, women on the right as viewed from the back. A few family groups did sit in the middle, including Brain and his grandchildren.

People gathered at the church, slowly, but by 10:30, the place was filling up. Alison White, the American teacher, arrived with a Marshallese youngster. Elders (male) sat in front, and included Kilon, Lore, Netan, Henchi Balos, etc. Took PIX from side entrance at front of the men's side. Then, crossed over and got a similar view of the women's side (Alison seated in front row with the Marshallese youngster). Returned to the entrance to the church, at top of the hill, and walked into take a seat about midway, on the aisle. Lore sat next to me, reading from his Bible.

About 10:35, Rev. Harry Rakin came over from his house, just to the east of the church. He was all dressed up in light-colored suit and tie, very natty-looking, wears glasses. Service started with a hymn. Abaiu, seated in front of me to the left, borrowed a hymn book from another man (at his left) for me to use. While waiting for the service, a young man in back of me (Saimon Jamore) talked to me -- how old am I? He said I looked younger, etc. Another young man, in front of me (Charlie Ebream), a nice-looking

(5-14, MAR.)

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988



GRAVES, INCL. JUDA, LITOKION (JOKDRU'S DA), ET AL.

fellow, told me that people were very happy to see me here on the island, and remembered my earlier visits. He was only 2 or 3 years old on Rongerik (in 1948) so he didn't recall me then, himself.

The hymn was followed by Scriptural reading. (I had gone back to my room for my tape recorder, and set it on the bench beside me to record segments of the hymns, etc.) Rev. Harry blessed four deacons (?) who then passed collection plates, receiving mostly paper money from the congregation. I put in 4 quarters, as I had no dollar bill with me. Took PIX of Rev. Harry receiving the collection from the four men at the front of the church. He then gave a long sermon (in Marshallese, of course) from about 11:00 to 11:35. Then there were more hymns to sing, and finally the benediction.

Then, groups of men and women went forward to sing, men first and then women, some from the Lae visiting group, some from Ejit. Took PIX of these, last on roll of film. Then, three musicians played good music with their electronic guitars and organ. I recorded this, along with some of the other singing (A and B sides of the tape, B not quite used up).

Left church at 12:30 or so, by the front entrance, and returned to my room. I had seen Tomaki Juda in the front row, middle, and he said to come to his house at 2:00 for a talk. He and others went down to the recreation hall annex for lunch (rice, chicken, etc.). Back in my room, I opened a coconut and ate iu with some Guava nectar that I still had. Have headache and my back is tired, so I lay down awhile, nap.

About 1:50 p.m. I dressed, walked to the "lagoon" road where I met Jamore, asked him the way to the Mayor's house. It was a

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-15, MAR.)



GRAVE OF BOBORI, JOEL'S SON; DIED FEB. 1988.

short distance west of the Church, with a blue-white paling fence at the front. There, I asked a young woman if Tomaki was at home. She said he was not back yet from lunch at the recreation hall. I said I'd wait, sat on a bench in the shade outside the house, on a kind of veranda. She sent someone to tell Tomaki I was here. The report back was that he had left the lunch area, and no one knew where he was now. She and I talked a bit. She had been to high school in Oklahoma, is Tomaki's "sister-in-law," she said. Then she went to where she had been resting and went to sleep.

Tomaki Juda finally showed up at 2:40 p.m., apologized for being late (he forgot?). He suggested we sit on the bench just inside the fence on the veranda. I told him I thought he was very much like his father as administrator of the B/K/E Local Government -- quiet, firm, open, and respected. After Juda died, he said, Lore was Magistrate for awhile, then Tomaki took that office, for 8 years. Now he has been Mayor more than 4 years under the B/K/E charter or constitution, as in other local Marshall Islands local governments. The Council (20?) that I had known from my last visit here in 1963 was changed under the new constitution. Now, there are 3 alabs (non-voting but free to discuss) of the 3 jowi, plus 12 elected councillors (Kili) and 3 from Ejit. Last election was held July 1987. Anyone can run for office if a certified member of the B/K/E community, i.e. of Bikini descent or married in, and living on Kili for at least 6 years. Of those running for office, the top 12 (Kili) and 3 (Ejit) are elected. The Mayor is then elected by the Council, although a move is on to have him elected by popular vote. He confirmed the information I had from Netan Note that the Ijjirik

KILI - MAR. 10, 1988

(3-6, MAR.)

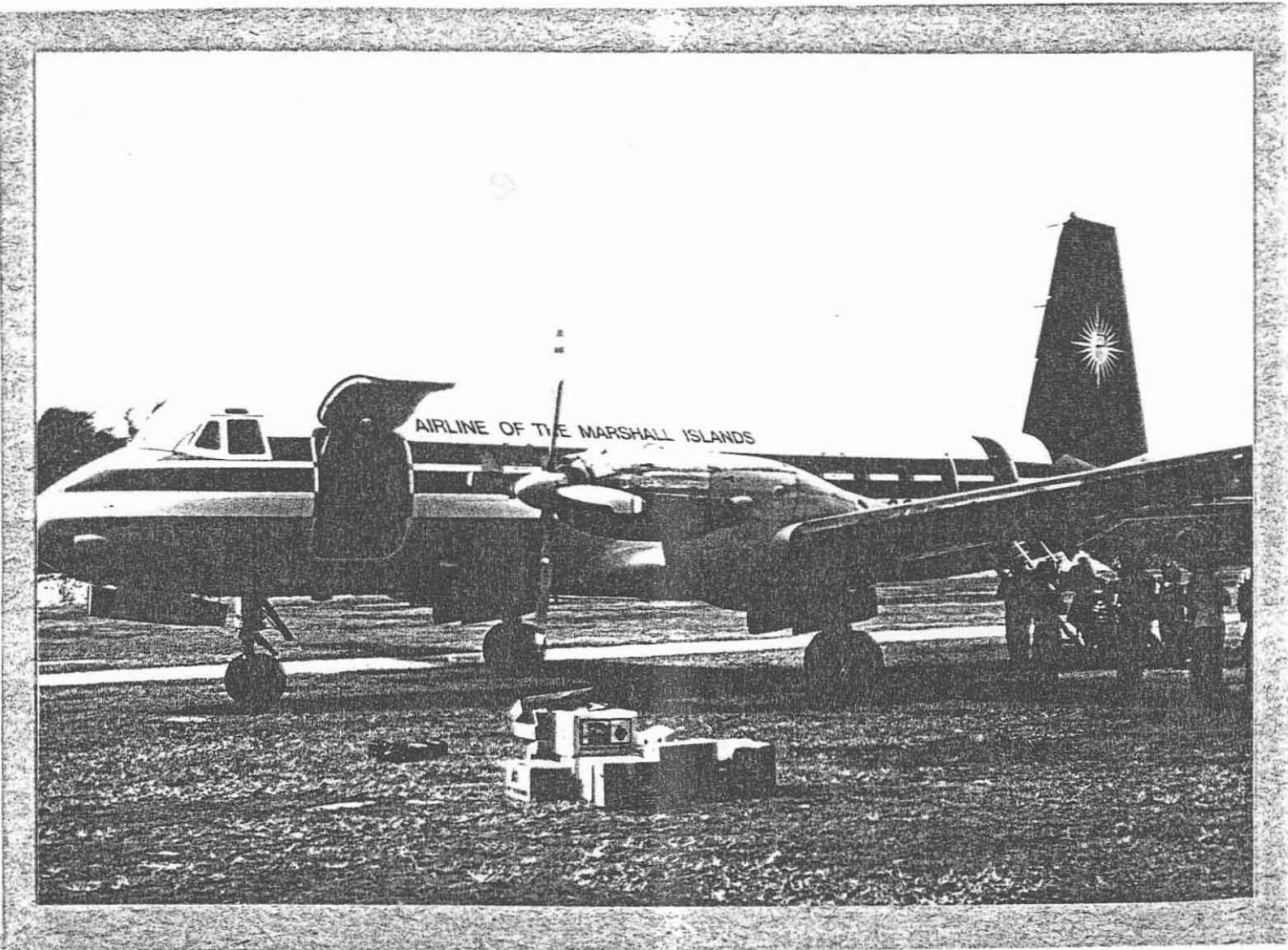


GIRLS WATCH DANCING IN RECREATION HALL.

alab is really Banke (son of Likitkij) who is ill in Majuro, and Kilon (son of Reab) is acting; in Makaoliej, Tora (daughter of Likiej) has Netan Note acting for her (he is son of Lerikrik); and in Rinamu, Jorri is the alab (son of Lijeko and Laninmaljit). Tomaki said there is an idea (no action yet) to restore the other 9 alabs of the original council, to the present governing body, but without the right to vote. This is an attempt to re-emphasize the Marshallese tradition (of hereditary succession) in contrast to the American democratic system of election. He said that Netan Note opposes this move, asserting that there are only 3 (or 2) alabs in a traditional sense. The term of office for Mayor, as for Councilmen, is 4 years. Election is held for all at the same time, no staggering of the membership. We then talked about the eventual return of the people to Bikini. He admitted that some (how many?) would not move from Kili or Ejit, still fearful of radiation on Bikini, or preferring to continue residence in a place that is more suited to their present way of life. On Bikini, there is plenty of fish, coconuts, but people would still need to buy their food with interest money from the Trust Fund or get USDA food as they do now. It would be impossible in any event to support 1,500 persons, the official figure of beneficiaries now, on Bikini. He made the same point, as others I have talked with, that Bikinians insist on dealing with the US Government rather than RepMar in the future on fiscal matters. At present, USDA food comes through Majuro and is then sent on here (or to Ejit) by ship, but the schedule is too irregular to count on. Hence, the emergency plane with USDA food that came in the other day. We talked a little about Netan's influence here. Tomaki said that Netan wants to protect

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-10, MAR.)



AMI-748 LOADING UP FOR RETURN TO MAJURO.

his own standing by keeping the number of alabs on the Council to 3. If others are added (even without a voting right) Netan would face more opposition than even now, to his thesis that the Jeimata line of Iroij-ship be restored. Tomaki knows that Imada is moving to restore his authority (from the Jeimata line), but to date only administrative actions have been taken in a broader context, nothing yet in the Court. He said that most Bikinians are still of the opinion, as in Juda's time, that Bikini had no Iroij ever, in fact. We ended our talk about 4:00 p.m.

(This morning I had made an appointment with Henchi Balos, in church, to meet for coffee at RR restaurant at 4:00 p.m.) I now went directly there from Tomaki's house, arrived at 4:10, but no Henchi there. I ordered coffee (50¢) and waited at a table till Henchi came in about 4:20. He said he had overslept! I had the "memory" book on the naval period with me, as I had asked Tomaki to help identify some of the people in my pictures. So I started with Henchi on the same subject, but mainly just looking at the photographs from the earlier years on Rongerik and Kili. He was very interested in my picture of Joel (Henchi's mother was Elwine, his father was a Japanese, and he had been adopted by Kilon; Elwine was daughter of Joel). Henchi asked if I could send him a copy of Joel's picture and gave me his address (P.O.Box 48, Majuro, 96960). Then, I asked him about the office of Senator from B/K/E which he holds -- how and when the election is held. It takes place in November when the members of the Nitijela are elected all over the Marshalls. His term is 4 years. He was re-elected, unopposed, last year, although he said he was sorry about that because he really wants to retire from politics. It's too

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-13, MAR.)



KILI AIR TERMINAL, DAY AFTER "BIKINI DAY 88."

demanding, away from his family frequently, high travel mileage on both United and Continental, as well as Air Marshalls between Kili and Majuro. I asked what communication he has with the B/K/E community in his representation of their interests in the Nitijela. Actually, there are very few issues that arise there that directly affect this community in overall Marshallese politics, he said. There is opposition to the Compact that was evident in the referendum earlier. So, he votes pretty much as he wants to. He is now (since January) Minister of Finance in President Amata Kabua's new Cabinet, so he has a lot of clout in that national setting. I asked about payments to the B/K/E community from the US. He felt that these should be maintained directly, except for the monies that come to them from the Compact under Section 177. Apparently, all funds (from both sources?) are paid directly into a bank account (in New York City?) which administers the distribution of monthly payments from the interest income. On the Iroij issue he was evasive, said he didn't really know the background, except that everyone says that Jeimata was Iroij-lablab over Bikini and that Lejolang followed him quite properly, even though Bikinians had rejected Lejolang in the resettlement on Kili in 1948. He seemed to be saying that custom should be followed, and thus is in support of Netan's acceptance of Imada now, as successor to his father Manini and his uncle Lejolang before that. I had no more questions regarding Bikini, but asked Henchi about the bill that was passed by the Nitijela earlier this week on "Aliens," authored by him, Christopher Loeak, and Pres. Kabua. He admitted that the bill was vague as to what "political interference" meant, but the Cabinet's decision would prevail. I asked if my work with

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-14, MAR.)



AMI-748 TAXIES FOR TAKE-OFF.

Kabua Kabua would make me suspect -- he said, no. Probably, tho, lawyers, maybe Jon Weisgall! He said one reason for the Act was because of the Public Defender and 2 lawyers in the RepMar legal section and their actions relative to the last election for the Nitijela. He did not go further in explanation. He had ordered coffee and a plate lunch. About 5:30, as we began to end our talk, he ordered two more coffees with hot water. I declined the one he offered me, but later drank some of it as my throat was dried up with talking. I left Henchi Balos about 5:40 p.m., thanking him for his time, always like to talk with him, as we have on several occasions before, in Majuro. He is one sharp, ambitious individual, despite his intent to retire from politics to build up his small family business, nothing big like Charlie Domnick and others in Majuro.

I bought a can of guava nectar from Francis (\$1.00), told him I was sorry, couldn't meet him for dinner that evening as Tomaki had asked me to be ready at 7:00 for a public meeting in the recreation hall. I returned to my room, still with headache and backache, so lay down to rest. Slight rain at one point, then it cleared. I got my basin filled with water from Rev. Harry's wash area (used his faucet) and did a quick wash-down, flushing the toilet with the waste water. Drank the last of the 3 ni and cracked it open to eat the iu inside, drinking guava nectar with the coconut meat.

Meanwhile, church services had started, at the regular time of 5:00 p.m. (?). Tomaki had told me there would be no church tonight. I watched for developments at the recreation hall, from my window, but nothing like a meeting was starting. I went over

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-17, MAR.)



CLEARED COCONUT AREA, NETAN'S WĀTO (NEAR AIRSTRIP).

to Edwin's house with the "memory" book, as I saw Ruban, Salome, and others there, to identify the rest of the photos. Some discussion -- a young man named Emoj (young son of Jibaj) was helpful in interpreting, but also had definite ideas of identity of some of the people pictured (e.g. the two young girls on Kili in 1949) and Elijabōt (woman making pandanus fiber), insisting that her name be spelled with an initial "E" (he was right, as I later checked my census cards).

I went back to my room then and red-inked all the rest of the person identities, so I could give the book back to Tomaki at the festivities tonight. The Church service was over about 7:00 p.m., then all dispersed for evening meal, some food still being cooked for visitors at the recreation hall annex. I wandered down there and sat awhile, refused an invitation to eat. Brain and his family were there early, later Allen Taylor came to eat, "to get ready for tomorrow at school," he said.

Returned to my room again, getting on past 8:00 p.m. now. Musicians setting up at east end of the recreation hall. I lay down in room, napped off and on, restless. About 10:00, I went to the recreation hall, found the musicians in operation, people lining up on either side of the hall, some sitting on benches. I watched from the outside for awhile.

The program formally started about 10:25 p.m. Lantino was MC on the mike, standing near the musicians. Formal presentations (modern and rock) followed by dance groups from Kili and Ejit, and the Lae visitors (who had their own musicians) -- similar dances as on Thursday afternoon. I saw Tomaki seated on a bench at the far (west) end of the hall, next to benches heaped with 20-30 Kili

KILI - MAR. 11, 1988

(3-18, MAR.)



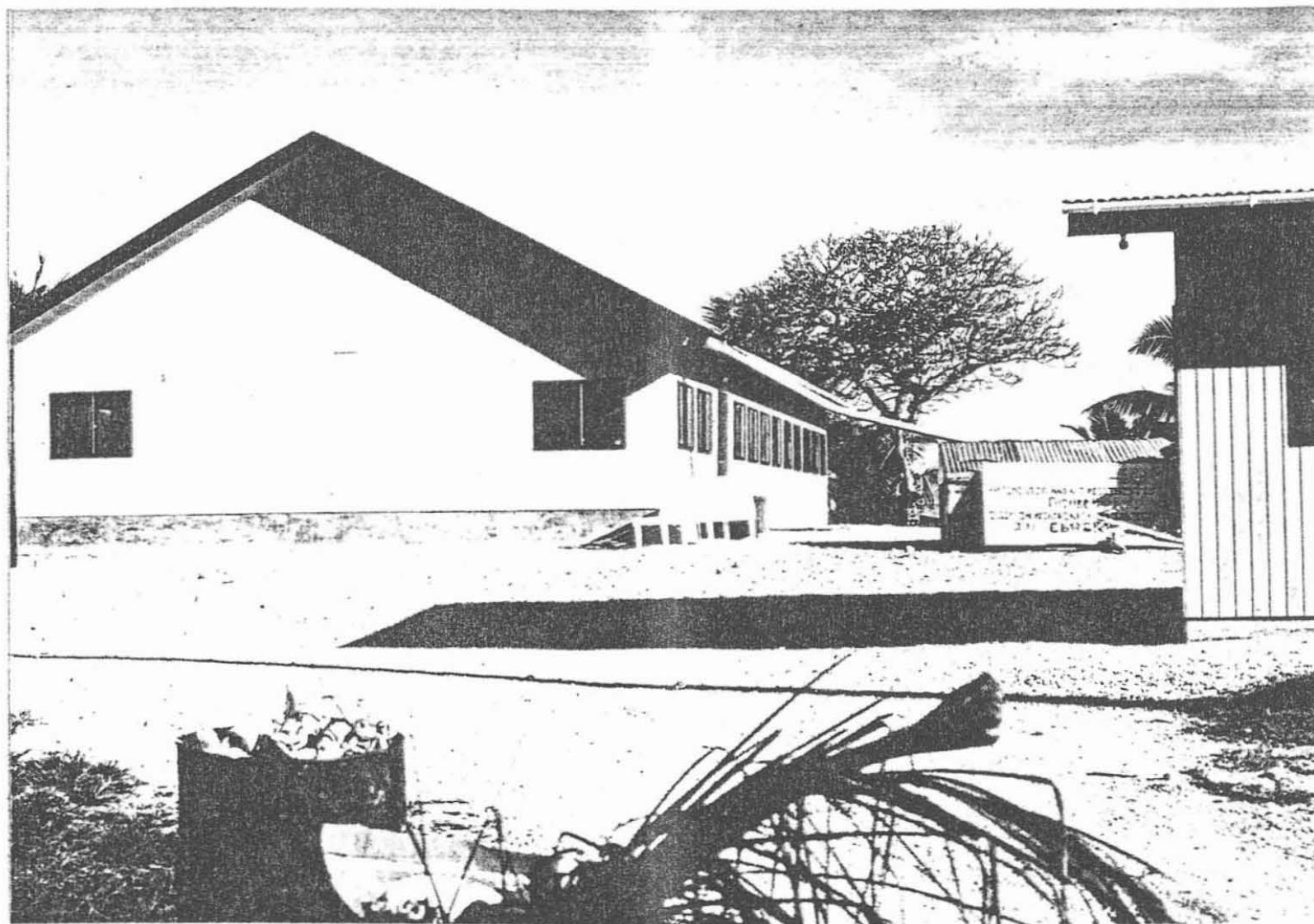
CROSS-ISLAND ROAD (NETAN'S WĀTO).

bags -- for me, I thought? Time is really getting on now! At 11:30 or so, Lantino and another man began handing out prizes (what for?) in envelopes, named persons coming up as called and collecting the envelopes -- some 2 or 3 times -- both children and adults. Tomaki then joined the two men to hasten the distribution. Then he and Henchi Balos passed out more envelopes (with checks?) to groups that had contributed to Bikini Day 88 festivities. He called my name, gave me three Kili bags (one small and two large ones). The rest of the Kili bags remained by him in a pile (for whom? dignitaries who were here on Thursday maybe). He made a gift to Henchi Balos, who gave a long speech, thanking the people. Then Tomaki called on me.

Jack Niedenthal had been sitting in the west end for some time, and now interpreted for me -- we each held a hand mike. I started with "42 years is a long, long time in exile" (the sign at the church front this morning). I said 42 years was my own time in the Marshalls, having first come in 1946, when I first met the Bikini people on Rongerik in May of that year. Then, I told of my study at the request of the High Commissioner in Jan-Feb 1948 to check on the condition of the Bikinians then, a time of starvation, and the resultant quick move by the Navy to resettle the community on Kwajalein, and later to Kili. Then, in 1949, I had spent a week with them on Kili and later, in 1957, all summer. This was after the Kili Development Program, when progress had been made with export of copra, jekaru, handicrafts, and the settlement at Lojjakar and the boat, the Libra -- high hopes then. Then the typhoon in late November 1957, destruction of their resources here and in Jaluit and the Libra. Later, in 1963, I re-

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-2, MAR.)



REAR VU OF CHURCH ; GUEST HOUSE(AT RIGHT).

turned to Kili with Bob and Val Kiste, I said, and recalled Bob's hard work in their house till the wee hours. I told them that the Kistes had a son, Vince, several years later, who is now in college on the mainland, while the Kistes live in Honolulu where he works at U Hawaii. I said I was aware that Bikinians faced new problems now, but have strength in their unity and leadership. Hopefully they will overcome as they did in the 1950s. Maybe we shall meet next on Bikini! I thanked them for their invitation for me to attend this annual affair.

Then, Tomaki Juda made a speech closing the festivities, and was followed by long talks from Jamore and from Kilon. Tomaki finally had to cut Kilon short. Finally, Rev. Harry Rakin gave a long benediction. All was over about 1:30 a.m., after everyone joined in singing an anthem (?). I had been sitting on a cement step at the side, with Brain, and my behind was sore and my back ached.

Returned to my room, flopped into bed, no concern now about the noise of the generator next door. Slept well. I had thought about getting up early to catch up on my LOG notes, but decided it would be better to sleep till dawn anyway and did not set my clock alarm.

March 14 (Monday) -- Kili

A fairly clear day. Awoke at 6:40, having slept about five hours! Brought a basin of water from Rev. Harry's wash-house, set it on the toilet so no leak from the basin onto the floor this time. Flushed with the waste water, as before. Shaved, without the cord, charge OK. No Aqua Velva after! At 7:00, I laid out my clothing and other gear to pack up later, as I leave Kili today.

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-4, MAR.)



PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION HALL (VU FROM EAST).

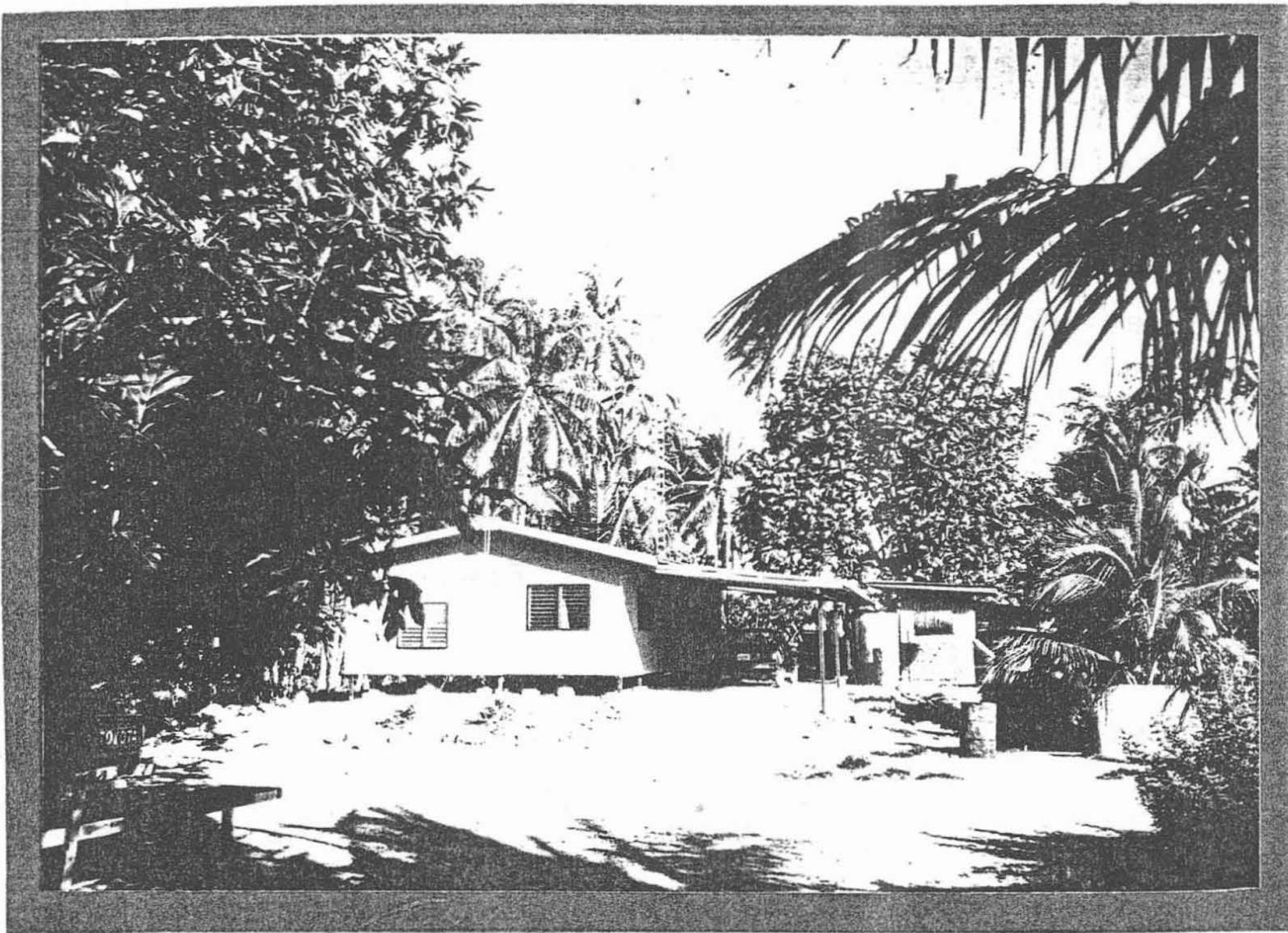
Put a new film roll in my camera (36-exp, #2). Drank the last of the cold spring water from the first bottle, and took the other one to return to the RR restaurant at 7:15. Many customers, waiting for hot water for coffee, none in the jug on the counter. Frances gave me some cold water. Soon the hot water arrived (two jugs). I ordered pancakes and crisp bacon. Got some hot water and a tea bag. Sat with Ruban and two other Marshallese men. He said that Jack Niedenthal would interpret when we meet at 9:00 this morning. They left after a bit, and I finished my breakfast -- paid \$3.45 to Francis. Told him I had given back the unopened bottle of cold water and had used only one -- thanks.

It was now 7:45. Ijiro said he had to go to ring the bell for school. I returned to my room. Walked down the "lagoon" road later, west to the site of the four classroom buildings -- 2 classrooms in each, for eight grades. At the first one, I saw Alison White with her class of 5 or 6 students. I asked her which room was Ijiro's -- the last one on the west end of the row. I wanted to get a picture of him, in class if I could. But a Marshallese teacher whom I met said that Ijiro had to check on some food supplies and wasn't in class. So I went back to Alison's classroom, asked to take a couple of flash PIX, one of the kids at their desks, the other, from the back, of her at her desk.

Left the school area, walked back east to the village cemetery, asked one Marshallese man which graves were those of Juda and Ralph Waltz. He showed me -- no lettering on the earlier grave markers. I took a wide-angle shot of the cemetery from the northwest corner, then closeups (also wide-angle) of graves of Juda, Bobori (latest, still decorated with flowers) and Ralph W.

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-5, MAR.)



B/K/E RADIO STATION, ACROSS FROM "CHINATOWN" AREA.

Returned to my room to leave the camera bag. Sweaty now. Packed my gear. Two of the Kili bags received last night I put together, with some clothing stuffed in the smaller one. This left one Kili bag to carry empty. All else fit nicely in my suitcase and briefcase. Got a basin of water from the barrel outside Rev. Harry's house, and did a quick body wash in the shower stall. The waste water was enough to flush the toilet well.

About 9:20 I went down to Ruban's house, on the side street just up the hill a ways. He was waiting outside with his wife (I didn't recognize her as Salome). (Earlier I had seen Jack Niedenthal outside the RR restaurant, when he apologized for his "poor" interpreting last night, said he was tired, had no sleep from the generator noise by his place. He said Ruban had asked him to interpret for us, but he thought it would be better if I got a Marshallese to do this, as we had discussed yesterday.) Ruban now told me that Jack was coming to interpret, but I replied that I didn't think so, and suggested that he find someone in the area to do the interpreting. Ruban was upset at this. A young man in his house spoke some English but told me he wouldn't be able to interpret adequately. Finally, Ruban went off and brought back Abaiu Jibaj (everyone here calls him Mike; it's easier for Americans to pronounce, Abaiu had told me). We three went indoors, sat on the floor. I said to Ruban that I just want to hear how things are with him and his family since I last saw them in 1963. The houses hereabouts are all new, built by IBC to the same design, and have served him OK. He said there is not enough money from the interest payments, costs too much buy food, etc. here. The island is too crowded, not like Bikini! He (like the others) gets \$30 (about)

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(4-7, MAR.)



SHORELINE, NORTH SIDE (VU FROM EAST); NOTE'S HOUSE  
AT LEFT.

each month from the Trust Fund, for each member of his family. He counts his kindred as 30 in number, although they live in several houses, both here and on Ejit. He gets money for himself, wife, and children and grandchildren -- 7 people besides he and his wife. This comes to about \$2,500 a year, he said. Additionally, now that the Compact is in force (Sec. 177), payment is made quarterly from interest on the resettlement fund (Bikini) -- it was over \$100 but now is closer to \$90 for each person in the B/K/E community. This about doubles the income for his family, Ruban said. Abaiu interjected that the Trust Fund is now about \$6 million, is held in a banking institution (in New York?), and payments are made directly to individual recipients from there. The same is now true for interest payments from the Sec. 177 fund. I asked Ruban if there is any production from the land on Kili now. None, he said, no copra, handicraft, etc. as was done before. People use coconuts to eat, some breadfruit in season. Very little fishing is done, it's dangerous beyond the reef. There are no more canoes on the island, only a few boats with outboard motors. I asked if the wato system is still in effect here, as it had been set up in the 1950s. Yes, he said. The housing area and the recreation area in the center of the island is considered to be Council property. The portions of watos covered by the air strip on the "ocean" side are still considered to be owned by the bwij in question, and no payment has been made for "loss" of the land to the landowning units. Ruban wondered, why not? I asked, if the people are allowed in time to return to Bikini, how many actually will go back? Most, he thinks, but some would stay here or on Ejit. Good fishing on Bikini, lots of coconuts and pandanus to eat, but

KILI - MAR. 13, 1988

(A-8, MAR.)



DYING BREADFRUIT TREE, AT JUNCTION OF MAIN STREET  
AND CROSS STREET (FOREGD.).

the people would still need USDA food or other support for imported food. He did not think outrigger canoes would come back into use, although some older men still know how to build them. People would probably use outboard-motor boats, even though fuel costs are admittedly high. He did not have much to say about the Iroij question, except that Bikinians never admitted to an Iroij-lablab. Stories that an agent of Jeimata (!) had visited Bikini in earlier years and that agreement had been reached was one "between equals," one of friendship and not for tribute or land control. At the end of our talk, I asked if he had any questions for me (after I had told him about Bob Kiste's progress at U Minnesota and at U Hawaii (Center for Pacific Islands Studies), and that Val was teaching in a private Honolulu school full-time). His one question was how to increase the money income -- is there any other source for Bikinians? I said the only one I could see would be the \$450 million lawsuit against the US, if Jon Weisgall can get a waiver of the Compact clause in this case. As of now, all claims against the US must be mediated with the RepMar government (unless a recent court judgment is appealed). We ended our talk about 11:00 a.m. Actually, Abaiu had provided as much or more information on the interest payment process, as he is on the Council staff and understands these matters better than Ruban does. I thanked Abaiu for his help.

Returned to my room. Drank the last of the guava nectar I had bought at RR restaurant. I walked over there about 11:00 to inquire about the situation on the incoming air flight -- the first plane had departed Kili for Majuro about 10:40. I found Jack Niedenthal and Allen Taylor having lunch inside. I got some cold water

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-3, MAR.)



DWARF COCONUT IN FRUIT.

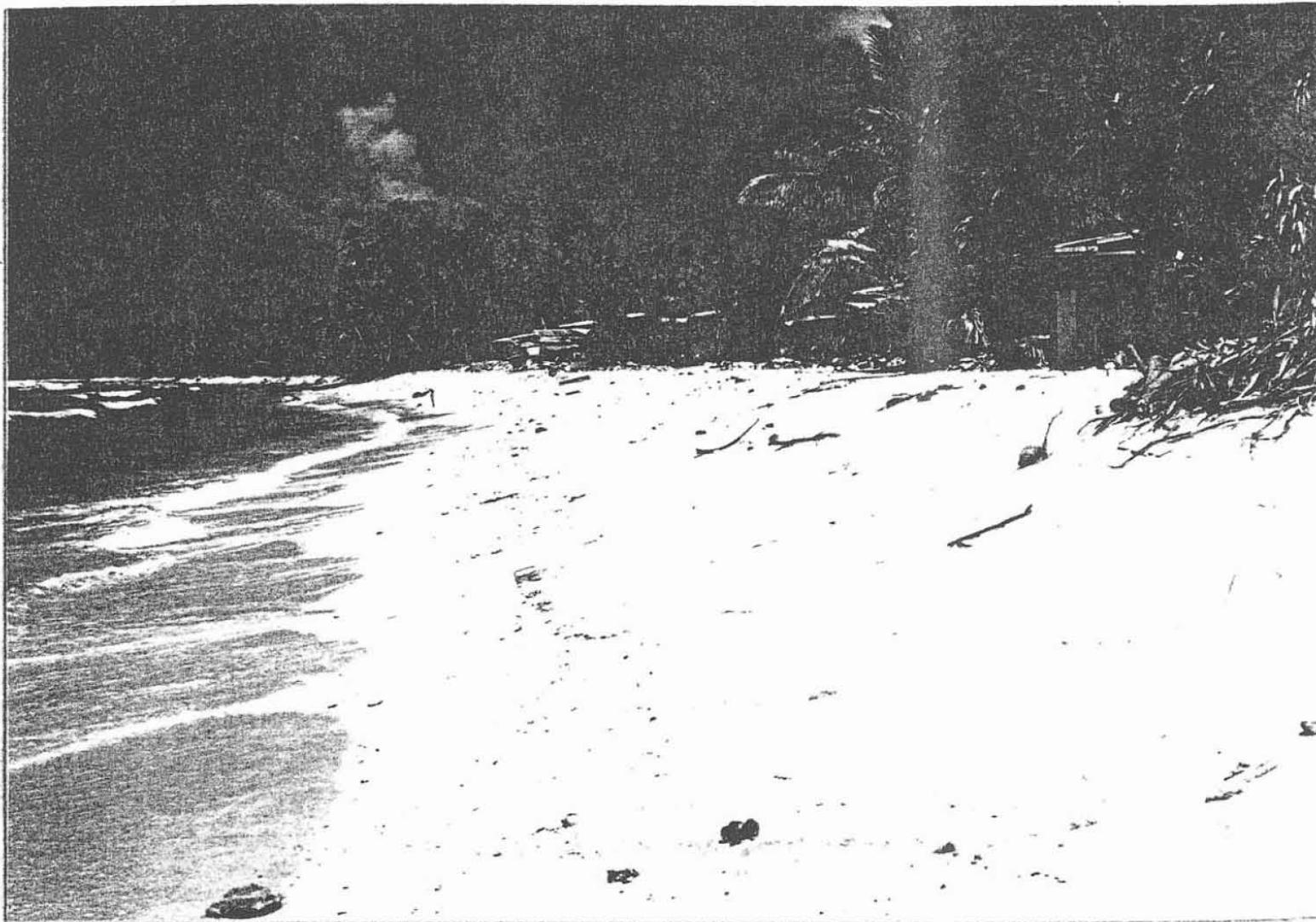
from Francis and joined them (I will eat when I get to Majuro). Jack said it would probably be 1:30 before the arrival of the second plane from Majuro. He would pick me up at that time or have someone else help me get to the airstrip with my gear. Allen was laughing because classes had been dismissed this morning -- teachers were too tired after the festivities last night or were busy getting ready for a wedding scheduled this evening (Ijiro is working on this, I know). I told Jack that I was all packed, ready to leave anytime, and will just rest up in my room till I hear from him. He said the arrival time will depend on when the plane leaves Majuro (for whatever reason).

So, back to my room, lie down, rest, nap, wake up when I think I hear the plane, but only a car motor on the grade outside. It clouded up at one point, no rain, but maybe? Finally, at 1:30, I did hear the plane come in, but no sign of Jack! I put my gear outside the door, looked around the area for some car transportation. Found one sedan by the recreation hall annex, a man leaving for the airport with some women passengers. He readily agreed to take me and my gear to the terminal, and drove to my place, putting my bags in his trunk.

We arrived at the terminal just as departing passengers' gear was being checked on the ground near the plane. Unloading of goods from the plane was still ongoing. I saw Rev. Harry and asked where I should check in -- he pointed to a man in green shirt, near the baggage being checked over. I took my suitcase there, asked to be OK'ed for the flight. My name wasn't on his passenger manifest! But he did some figuring, finally crossed off names of two persons and added mine. I followed my suitcase till I saw it stowed on

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-4, MAR.)



BEACH, NORTH SHORE (VU TO EAST, NEAR COUNCIL HOUSE).

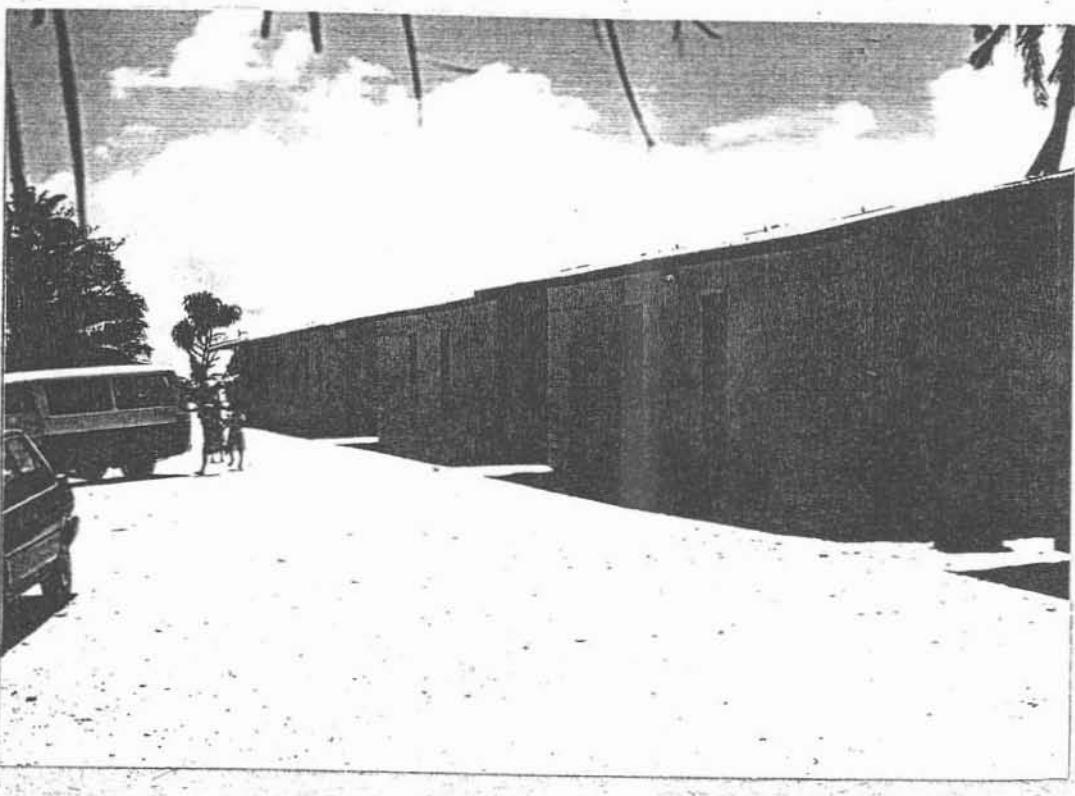
board. Just then, as I went back to the terminal shack to get my carry-on stuff (camera bag, Kili bag, and briefcase), Jack showed up, apologized for not having got to me sooner (overslept?). I went over, near the stair ramp, and boarded the plane about midway -- it was fully booked!

Got a seat at the Emergency Exit, center, right side. The Rolls Royce engine on the wing just by my window. I did not plan on taking any PIX going back to Majuro. Brain and his family were the last ones to get on, had a problem finding seats. Kilon was in a seat on the aisle across. A young woman and her little girl took the single seat next to me. Seats are two-and-two abreast. The two engines revved up, and we took off from Kili about 2:05 p.m. with a full load, and used up the entire length of the runway. High cloud cover, and we flew just under it. Could see the ocean all the way. Heading northeast, we crossed the lower part of Jaluit about 15 minutes later and crossed the atoll parallel to the east coast, then off to Majuro.

Landed at Majuro in good weather at 3:00 p.m. Deplaned on the rear ramp stair. No special entrance regulations in the terminal, except we waited for our checked baggage to be dumped in a pile outside the Immigration gate. I got my suitcase, walked thru to the lobby to the taxi rank outside. A Kili man was already getting in the back seat. I got in front, after the driver stowed my gear in the trunk. Paid him \$2.00 for the ride in to Hotel Ajidrik. On the way, enjoyed identifying new (and old) structures -- passed Giff Johnson's place, the U. S. "Embassy," PI Inc (Kramer), etc. Arrived at Ajidrik's about 3:30 p.m. Was checked in by a new man at the desk, and Kati gave me the key to my old room, No. 11. (End of Kili phase -- start of Majuro.)

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

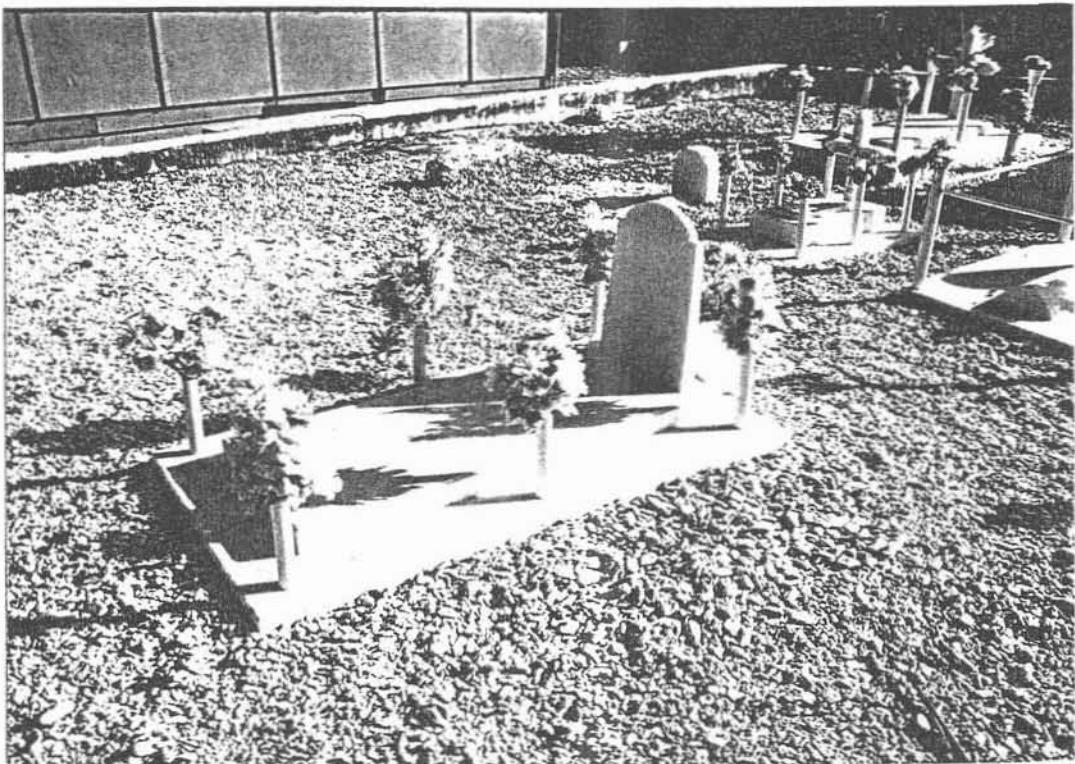
(5-8, MAR.)



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS (VU TO WEST).

KILI - MAR. 14, 1988

(5-16, MAR.)



GRAVE SITE, RALPH WALTZ, FORMER B/K/E LIAISON.

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