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Summary

1. The fellowing report conveys impressions and information gleaned from a two-week visit in early January to the Truk, Panape, and Marshall Islands Districts of the TTPI. The three districts contain about 70 percent of the TTPI's 102,000 population. Truk alone holds 30 percent.

2. Although there is independence sentiment in all three districts, especially in Truk, by and large those who are aware of the status question tend to favor some form of association with the U.S.. They envisage a fairly loose arrangement which, above all else, must exclude U.S. eminent demain rights, and provide for termination or change of status. "Free Association", when understood, is sometimes seen as a transitional stage leading to independence in the distant future. Balancing the above, there is minerity, but growing sentiment for closer and perhaps Commonwealth type association among certain groups in the Marshall Islands. It is doubtful This latter group will ever dominate either leadership or public opinion. When all is said and done, real awareness of status options and issues in all three districts is limited to a small handful of Micronesians in the district centers. Even among these, most are taking positions on the basis of erroneous information or impressions. Well over 95 percent of the population of these three districts does not have a clue on what the status question is all about, although many do have strong views on some of the elements of the status question -- such as land control.

3. As in Palau (see reftel), the effectiveness of many TTPI programs and policies is seriously and adversely affected by what could be called an information gap. It is partly a question of absence of accurate information, and partly a breakdown in the "consultations process." The latter situation is improving, but major weak points remain. A particularly serious problem is a clash of attitudes over the question of how to proceed with economic development. TTPI administration encouragement of U.S. investment in these districts is seen as an effort to benefit U.S. enterprise and interests, and not Micronesia. It is felt by many that there is insufficient interest in stimulating Micronesiam enterprise. The end result is little action.

4. Micronization of District Administrations has been welcomed and appears to be proceeding at about the right pace. Senior Micronesian leadership in district administrations is impressive. But there are weak spots at lower levels, with the possibility of deterioration as "decentralization" progresses. Pressures for and interest in establishment of elective district governments exist and are mounting, but do not require precipitate action (although such might be desirable for political reasons).

5. The question of public lands disposition is a serious irritant in the Marshalls and Truk, and these districts probably would be receptive to "decentralization" of public lands and their management. The problem is not

as serious as in Palau. Aside from economic development and public lands issues, other problem areas are perennial complaints about insufficient or inadequate roads, power, water supplies, schools, and medical facilities, as well as transport to and from outer island areas. Education policy is attacked by articulate Micronesians, and by many Americans who appear to know what they are talking about. There are frequent complaints about the slowness in settlement of land disputes involving the government, the handling of the cadastral survey program, and other aspects of land management.

Background

6. Between January 2-15 the reporting officer visited Truk, Penape, and the Marshall Islands District. Owing to a shortage of time, most of each visit was in or near the district centers. Much of this report is therefore based on the observations and views of qualified observers resident in the districts. As in an earlier visit to Palau District, major contacts were with district administration officials (mainly Micronesian), district legislators, municipal councillors, traditional leaders, businessmen, students and teachers, Peace Corps volunteers, and missionaries. As opportunities arese, efforts also were made to draw out the views of individual "ordinary" Micronesians.

7. As compared to Palauans (reftel), TTPI eastern district Micronesians superficially appear to be more along the lines of what most Americans like to think Pacific islanders are all about: trouble-free, cheerful, and emotionally-stable people inclined to inertia and to a lack of interest in anything but food, sleep, and the opposite sex. To some degree these simplified characterizations are accurate. The ambition, energy, tenseness, emotional instability, and hostility to all things foreign (but mainly American) so evident in Palau are in large measure absent from these three districts. But there are important exceptions. The Trukese in Particular tend to surface deep-rooted hostility toward "foreigners" (mainly Americans as the most obvious ones), and a streak of violence emerges under the influence of a couple of drinks. Further, although real or felt grievances are less likely to be openly and forcefully aired, in varying degree the same ones that exist in Palau exist in all three eastern districts with, ofcourse, local twists and variations. This is particularly true of Truk and the Marshalls, while Ponape might be considered to be one of the TTPI districts least prone to strong anti-administration or anti-American sentiment.

8. One important point should be kept in mind in reading the following. The purpose of this report is primarily to portray Micronesian attitudes, not to explain or defend our policies and programs. Consequently a number of criticisms of the TTPI administration are reported. Unless otherwise stated, the criticisms or allegations are those of American and Micronesian informants

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and are not the reporting officeris. Many allegations are unfair, some are totally wrong, and many are at least only partially accurate. But they appear to be believed and this is critical in terms of political attitudes toward the U.S. and its administration of the Territory. One troublesome but stark bit of reality in the three districts just visited (as in all others) is that, among key political and traditional leadership circles, an "us against them" syndrome is operating vis-a-vis the U.S. and our administration of the Territory. Every form of criticism or _complaint was offered in almost every conversation with political and traditional leaders, and practically no mention was ever made of any accomplishments or positive policies. Under direct questioning many will reluctantly admit to program achievements, but then proceed to find flaws or faults in those programs. One important fact is not given recognition by most of these leaders. In the present transitional period leading to self-government, responsibilities for most programs, policies and operations are shared between Micronesians and Americans, and between the executive and legislative branches -- the latter being wholly Micronesian. Yet when this is pointed out, failures or flaws are normally attributed to Americans, and most successes are attributed to Micronesians.

9. A final point must be made. An effort has been made in this report to assess the degree of sentiment existing for one form of status or another in each of the three districts. However, it is difficult to provide precise statements or conclusions simply because there are no ready means of measuring sentiment. Few Micronesians discuss status questions even among themselves; and in the case of those who are more or less committed, the commitments are vague and ill-defined. Even among some Congressmen there is a tendency to espeuse independence on one occasion, and free association on another -- dependent on the speaker's mood and audience. It is probably safe to say that the number of Micronesians totally dedicated to one course or another is miniscule, except in Palau and the Marianas where lines are drawn and opinions are often firm.

Congressional Elections

10. Earlier reporting indicated that political status was not a significant issue in the 1970 Congressional elections in these districts. This impression was confirmed during the just-completed reporting trip. In the Marshalls and Truk only one seat in each district was contested while all seats were contested in Ponape. All incumbents were returned. At one time or another all candidates made reference to the status question. But by all accounts all indicated support of the position taken by the Congress of Micronesia last summer, and there was no debate nor expression of serious differences on the status question.

Future Political Status Question

11. Attitudes in the Eastern Districts - Information on and awaremess of the status question are far less obvious in these three districts than

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in Palau. Probably no more than a few dozen persons in each district have read the Micronesian Status Delegation's report, and very few more than that have other than a remote conception of what status is all about. As in Palau, however, an enormous amount of misinformation is available. In each of these three districts (at least in the district centers and surrounding areas) there is widespread belief that Commonwealth status means the U.S. Government would own all public lands and would be able to tax or seize private property at will. In the Marshalls there is added emphasis that the U.S. Government would own the beaches. This misinformation clearly has been deliberately disseminated by a number of Congressmen, but not by all.

Unlike Palau, there is no evidence that any district administration personnel have been party to this type of "political education." To the contrary, the Micronesian District Administrators in the Marshalls and in Truk have made efforts. (apparently without much success) to correct misinformation of the above character. Among some quasi-educated or educated Micronesians, there is some questioning of this interpretation of Commonwealth, and in the Marshalls, at least in the district center, there is growing awareness that some Micronesian Congressmen are being somewhat less than honest. In Majuro (Marshall Islands District Center), the above, coupled with deep resentment of

12. Turning to the other districts, Penape and Truk, none of the traditional leaders in Ponape appear to have more than marginal influence over or interest in thestatus question, except for those few who happen to hold major political office. They probably can be discounted as a major factor so long as they are assured that their few remaining functions are respected under any arrangement. In Truk, Chief Petrus, aged about 67 and ailing, still has the last word on virtually anything of importance. Although he has (in a letter to the Truk District Legislature) endorsed the

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Congress's position on free association or independence, in a comersation with the reporting officer he expressed considerable concern over the pace of events and suggested that much more must be done in terms of economic development and grass-roots political development before any final decisions are taken on Status. His main concern seems to be the preservation of Trukese culture and traditions. He claims that he prefers association with the U.S., provided he can be assured that his requirements relating to protection of . culture and tradition (including land ownership) can be met. However, these claims conflict with the fact that at least half of the Trukese Congressional delegation endorses independence, or sees free association as only a step to independence. None of these Congressmen would favor a position opposed by Petrus. In all probability Petrus favors ultimate independence, but prefers to go slowly and avoid during his remaining days the political strife that will come with any form of self-government. If for this reason alone, Petrus will be a moderating influence, and a special effort should be made at all times to assure he is adequately and correctly briefed on status issues.

13. The district legislatures in these three districts have not yet taken a formal position on the status question (unlike the Palau District Legislature which has formally endersed the position on status taken by the Congress of Micronesia). During a special budget session this past December the Truk District Legislature briefly considered adoption of a resolution endersing "free association or independence," but then postponed action until the Trukese translation of the Status Delegation's report to the Congress of Micronesia becomes available. (Translations in all major TTPI languages are new complete, and will be published in the near future). The Penape and Marshall Islands District Legislatures have also postponed consideration. At this moment, it appears likely that all three legislatures will consider the report at their respective spring sessions. Although firm predictions are dangerous, all signs are that each of the legislatures will endorse the Report, and the position taken by the Congress of Micronesia on "free association or independence." Whether this action will be taken with any real degree of comprehension of the issues involved in status is debatable. Likewise, it means unlikely that more than a quarter of the legislators concerned, particularly in Ponape, view independence as a serious option or alternative for Micronisia in the forseeable future. In discussions with the few district legislaters present in the district centers, extremely ambivalent attitudes emerged. Almost all of them maintained that the Congress is the only body with the expertise necessary to cope with the status question, and that they (the legislators) and their own constituents should support whatever position the Congress takes. Yet, in the same conversations the same legislators expressed considerable concern over the absence of information on status questions, and fears that the Congress is moving tee fast. Almost all, despite the Congresses' rejection of Commonwealth, assumed that this status option is still open. Most expressed the view that economic

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development and education are mere pressing and immediate requirements and that there should be far more progress in these areas before the trusteeship agreement is terminated. In short, the district legislators may take a more moderate or even conservative approach to status than do their Congressional counterparts. Yet, despite their concerns, it also appeared clear that in the final analysis most of them would follow the Congressional lead. There were some major exceptions to this rule, primarily in the Marshalls. Some "commoners" in the Marshalls District Legislature are obviously concerned over abuses of Iroij privileges and responsibilities by traditional leaders who also hold elective political office. As already indicated, this is leading some Marshallese, including members of the District Legislature, to examine more closely the merits of Commonwealth status with a view to assuring some restraints on the Iroij.

14. Other opinion groups seem inclined as follows. At each step the reporting officer spent several hours with groups of senior high school . students. These students had a greater awareness of status issues than most groups of licronesians in the district, although much if not most of their information was wrong. The striking thing about these meetings was that in most instances the students had already made up their minds, and about 65 percent favored free association. About 15 percent favored independence, and 10 percent favored commonwealth status. The remaining 10 percent were undecided and wanted more information. Percentages in each district were much the same. Most of the "committed" students were uncertain of their respective positions, and a significant number could be shifted one way er another given more information. Indicative of their uncertainty was the fact that the single most appealing feature of free association was the concept of unilateral termination. Most students appear to interpret this as meaning that after a period of experimentation, there would be an apportunity to move not only to independence, but also to Commonwealth or similar status. (This attitude prevails among many legislators and municipal councillors as well.) Another assumption among the students (and also many district legislaters and municipal councillers) is that either free association or indepen-dence is there "for the taking." The suggestion that it takes two to associate, and that there must be advantages for both parties comes as somewhat of a rude shock. On the other hand, sentiment for independence is strongest among these students (and others) who appear to be aware of U.S. reluctance to consider this alternative.

15. With regard to Micronesians in middle-level and senier TTPT administrative positions, it is difficult to assess their attitudes. Perhaps quite correctly, they are reluctant to express their views on status, even though their awareness of status issues is probably higher than that of any other group, including students. Based on scattered conversations, there

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is clear concern that the Congress may be moving too fast, although most endorse the basic concept of "free association" and the four "non-negotiable principles", provided U.S. funding is assured. Few express any interest in independence, and only a few specifically endorse the Commonwealth concept as put forth last May. Even the latter qualify their endorsement with the view that some features, such as eminent domain, make Commonwealth unacceptable as a practical matter. Some also point out that even the term "Commonwealth" is now unacceptable for emotional reasons. However, among all Micronesion executives, objections to the Congressional handling of status appear to be directed not so much at the substance of the matter as at exclusion. of Micronesian executives from the negotiating process.

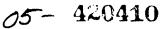
16. One final and major group deserves mention — the some 95 percent or more of the population of these districts which remains totally ignorant of the status issues -- and especially that half of the population which lives away from the district centers in the "outer islands." Although these areas were not visited during this district tour, some generalizations can be made on the basis of information available from reliable American and Micronesian observers.

a) In any contest of will or views between the U.S. and their elected and traditional leaders, ordinary Micronesians will follow the lead of the latter. But, left to their own devices and given the option, most probably would, in any act of self-determination held now, vote for the <u>status que</u>. Such a choice would not be a positive endorsement of the existing situation, but rather a typical conservative and reflexive islander rejection of the unknown.

b) Their concerns are very immediate and visible ones: the frequency of shipping in terms of their ability to sell copra and purchase needed trade goods; the abailability of medical services and education; the development of new sources of cash income; and the security of land ownership or tenure. They are neither for nor against any particular form of status at present, nor are they particularly pro or anti-American (or TTPI administration). To the extent that they can identify any improvement in their way of life with present or future association with the U. S., they will be inclined toward association -- and most of them are probably presently so inclined in a vague way. But to the extent that they see their basic way of life and their lands threatened by association they will be inclined against association.

c) Against the above background, the only viable approach on status to this group is development of a saturation-type political education program, keyed to a low level of sophistication, and designed primarily to scotch misinformation and assure a reasonable degree of honesty on the part of Micronesian political leaders during the status negotiating process. Such a program might slowly build up restraints on the Micronesian Congress.

d) At the risk of repetition, in the final analysis any contest over



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differing positions on status, between the U.S. and the Congress of Micronesia, will be won by the Congress. Consequently in the end our best and only hope is to negotiate a settlement or arrangement which the Congress itself will "sell" to the Micronesian masses.

17. <u>Some Complusions on Status</u> - Some generalizations and conclusions are possible from the assorted impressions received and attitudes perceived , during this trip.

a) Among the very few Micronesians in the three eastern districts who are aware of the status options and issues, most are loosely committed one way or another -- mainly to free association, and mainly on the basis of inadequate and erroneous information. There is a little sentiment for Commonwealth status in Ponape, none of significance in Truk, and a small, but growing minority group favoring such status in the Harshalls. A minority in each district, but particularly the Marshalls and Truk, favors independence. In some cases, this may be a bargaining tactic, particularly among Micronesian Congressmen. However, such sentiment is particularly sincere among certain traditional leaders in the Marshalls, and among some Congressmen, traditional leaders, district legislators and municipal councillors in Truk, and among a very few Congressional and other leaders in Ponape. Independence sentiment stems in part from deeply-rooted animosities toward the U.S. flowing from felt or real grievances vis-a-vis the U.S. and the TTPI administration. In the Marshalls, that sentiment also flows from the desire of traditional leaders to strengthen their positions, and in particular from widespread resentment over what many Marshallese consider to be the high-handed manner in which land has beer, acquired for U.S. military use (Kwajelein, Eniwetsk, Bikini, etc.) In Truk/ is a genuine fear that association with the U.S. could mean military bases in Truk, and consequent Trukese involvement in a future war. The heavy bembardment, destruction, and Trukese death tell in World War II are still vivid memories. As in Palau, there also is a strong streak of district nationalism not matched in the other districts. In Ponape, the lines are not frawn so clearly, Commitments are less well-defined, and grievances real or imagined, are relatively few. Penape may be considered a "soft" district (together with Yap), and probably would in the final analysis go along with any form of association which did not threaten Penapean lands, and which provided for a possible future change of status.

b) The number of Micronesians in these districts familiar with the specific legal issues surrounding the status question (sovereingty, federal supremacy, etc.) is so small as to be almost non-existent. However, there is a very broad understanding of the concepts of eminent domain and unilateral termination in all leadership circles. Every person with views on status, that the reporting officer met (even those who otherwise favored Commonwealth status) flatly opposes any form of U.S. eminent domain (which is identified with military bases), although most (except in Truk) accept the possibility

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of lease of lands, by negotiations, for military purposes. On unilateral termination, with a few exceptions this is seen as as essential element of any form of association with the U. S..

c) Many of these who favor the Commonwealth or a similar concept of _______ close association argue that the label has brought on such a negative emotional reaction that any future U.S. proposal must avoid use of that terminology.

d) The same individuals argue that the U.S. refusal epenly to accept and to discuss independence as a legitimate option for Micronesia is in fact prompting independence sentiment among these whe are aware of this situation. "People want what they are told they cannot have." These individuals also argue that the Micronesian bargaining position (with respect to the concept of free association) is strengthened by a conviction that the U.S. will pay any price to forestall independence. Individuals, such as the Micronesian District Administrator in Truk, and the Deputy District Administrator in Penape (whe appear to favor close association) suggest that a far better tactic would be to bring independence into the open as an option, state that the u.S. desires association, but that, like any patnership, such association must offer advantages to both sides. From that point, the tactic should be to elicit concessions from Micronesia in order to make association advantageous from a U.S. point of view. Suggestions and views along the above lines were offered at each stop by various well-informed Americans and Micronesians.

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e) Although about 1. of the combined Trukese, Ponapean, and Marshallese Congressional Delegations (in particular the Trukese) presently tend to favor independence, at least in their public statements, most of them such that are prepared to accept at least a loose form of association with the U.S., and most are prepared to make concessions to obtain such association. The degree to which concersions can be obtained from these leaders, and from those who publicly enderse the free association concept, varies widely with most truly prepared to accept independence in place of anything smacking of Commonwealth status as proposed last May. All reject U.S. eminent demain rights, all insist on a unilateral termination clause, all insist on tight Micronesian control of U.S. private enterprise activities in Micronesia, and all insist on selective application of "federal supremacy." Mest prebably will eppese American nationality for Micronesians, but might accept such if all other conditions are met. (except the Trukese) are prepared to negotiate land-lease or option arrangements for U.S. military purpeses, but will drive an extremely hard bargain. Among these groups, the Marshallese are convinced that the Marshall Islands can finance independence through base rental arrangements. Neither the Ponapeans nor the Trukese offer any reasonable explanations of how they would finance independence, although they obviously hope for both U.S. and Japanese foreign aid.

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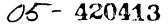
f) While sentiment for independence in these three districts (except in the Trukese Congressional delegation) is still in a distinct minority, that sentiment is increasing for a variety of reasons. Some Congressmen and other key political leaders, who originally spoke of independence as a bargaining tactic, are now beginning to believe their own rhetoric -- and _ some of their constituents have begun to accept that rhetoric as gospel. As already indicated, among those who are aware of U.S. opposition to independence an emstional reaction is setting in, and some (who would not otherwise be attracted to independence) are now openly speaking of its attractions. Reason does not necessarily prevail with most of those who favor independence. Among the Congressmen (and some other political leaders) there is the heady attraction of personal status and the certainty that they will make out, even if their constituents do not. Most others favoring independence are either too ill-formed to understand the implications of independence, or are too emotionally involved and motivated to really care about the repercussions. There also is the underlying conviction among many that one way or another the U.S. would provide minimum effential financial support to an independent Micronesia, if only to block entry by the Soviets or others.

g) With some outstanding exceptions, most Congressional leaders from these districts are at least as concerned with their personal political and economic fortunes as they are with the welfare of their constituents. In the final analysis, any association arrangement must be seen to benefit and protect their own selfish ambitions and interests. (This applies equally to most Micronesian Congressmen from the other districts.)

Attitudes toward the Military

18. Attitudes in all three districts are highly ambivalent. Initial distrust and suspicion of military civic action teams largely seems to have disappeared and in all three districts there is now **distribut** high praise for their programs and efforts — as well as for their personal relationships with all levels of Micronesian society. There were some teething problems with earlier teams, particularly in the Marshalls and Truk, but district leaders in all three districts now would like to have more teams. Of all U.S. programs in the districts, these appear to be among the most effective in terms of public relations and immediately felt advantages. (Rather unfortunately, in all three districts the performance of the civic action teams is all too favorably compared to that of the TTPI Public Works Department.) Balancing all of this, these efforts are seen as a public relations excercise by and for the U.S. military. Program benefits are welcomed, but in the short run it is at least questionable that there is any liklihood of attitudes toward military bases and land for such bases changing except among some young Micronesians.

19. The level of suspicion of U.S. defense intentions in the districts



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is illustrated by the groundswell of rumors and even fear generated whenever any unidentified U.S. military personnel, aircraft, or ships turn up without adequate advance dissemination of information as to the precise reasons for their presence. The importance of providing advance information, including district radio announcement, cannot be overemphasized. This applies particularly, to ship visits to more remote islands for surveillance purposes. Arrangements for such information dissemination now appear to be Vell' II nand.

20. Attitudes toward existing and potential military installations vary between the three districts. In Truk, vivid memories of the war override all other considerations and, except for some younger Trukese, opposition to establishment of any major bases in the Truk District appears to be real and almost total. In Ponape attitudes are more mixed, but most Ponapeans, including both the traditional and political leadership, probably would accept such installations if the economic rewards were sufficient, particularly with regard to land leases.

21. In the Marshalls, there is much vecal epposition to existing installations, but both traditional and political leaders for the most part are simply establishing a sound bargaining position. This applies particularly to those who stand to benefit from lease payments. On the other hand, there is real and bitter resentment with regard to the level of compensation for persons displaced from Bikini and Eniwetok, housing and other conditions at Ebeye Island (where the Marshallese workforce employed at Kwajelein is quartered), and the continuing retention of Eniwetok Island in the absence of any perceived operational use. There is also increasing resentment over the fact that we tend to negotiate mainly with the traditional leaders (Ireij) with regard to land settlements, and make most payments through them. Some Iroij are considered to withold more than a fair share of monies for their own use. More importantly, the practice of dealing primarily with them, rather than with land occupants or users, is seen as reinforcing the traditional and almost totally foudal power structure at the expense of the "commoner." Although "alabs" (kin group leaders) have also been involved in recent "mid-corridor" and other negotiations, iroij control or malipulation of the "alebs" apparently has been such that iroij power remains unaffected. Yet, given the complex communal structure of land ewenership and use, and the multiplicity of pessible claimants, past effects to deal directly with "com oners" have led to near chaos when large blocks of land have been involved. See page 20 for further discussion of this problem.

Attitudes toward the TTPI Administration and its Policies and Programs

22. Perhaps our single greatest problem is that most Micronesians, even with almost full "Micronization" of district administrations (and a high degree of "Micronization" of the headquarters staff), still consider the administration to be wholly an agent of the U.S. Government rather than their own government or administration. Such is likely to be the case so long as all executive branch positions are appointive, and are filled mainly by either Washington or by Saipan. A consequence of this attitude has been a tendency, particularly in political leadership circles, to be unduly suspicious of any and all program and policy motives, and to be extraordinarily sensitive to real or imagined administration faults and weaknesses. Conversations with almost any. Micronesian leader from without the administration have all the

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aspects of "gripe" sessions, with never a word said of the administration's accomplishments. Significantly, most such gripes (often unfairly) are directed at TTPI headquarters rather than district administrations. When things go wrong or don't happen, the vague "they" are at fault.

23. So long as the present administrative structure remains, and is seen as being "American," there can be only partial remedies to this problem. Aside from the obvious necessity of assuring that programs and policies are of a positive and beneficial character, the key elements of enhancing the administrations acceptability at the district level would appear to be: (a) a steady flow of accurate information on policies and programs; and, (b) constant consultations between the administration and Micronesian political and traditional leadership at all levels. As indicated in an earlier report on Palau, our greatest weakness with respect to the above requirements is the absence in the districts of an adequate flow of information geared to all levels of interest and sophistication. This relates to every aspect of our interests in the TTPI -- not only status, but also with regard to such simple questions as why improvement of a road is not taking place. Admittedly part of the problem here is that Micronesian leaders. outside the administration, although themselves often informed, make no effort to keep their respective electorates, clan groups, villages, etc. informed. At certain levels of Micronesian political leadership(particularly Members of the Congress), blockage of the flow of information is deliberate, er information is distorted -- hostility towards the administration has pelitical advantages for them. But in other areas, the problem of information dissemination is wholly the fault of the administration including at the headquarters level. indianar One majer example of a communications breakdown appears to be Marshallese rejection of the cadastral survey program. Owing to inadequate information dissemination, convictions arese to the effect that the survey was a prelude to either government seizure of lands, or to individual land titles. Land is corporately

24. Consultations are perhaps the single mest vital ingrediant of any given policy or program. In each district visited thus far, district administrators, local political leaders, traditional leaders, and other knowledgeable observers have insisted that almost any program, no matter what <u>its positive merits, will be badly received and often doomed to failure if</u> imposed or implemented without consultations and concurrence by local leadership. In this regard, one cannot help but be impressed by the excellent working relationships and regular consultations which now exist between District Administrations and local leadership in all three districts just visited. Relationships seem to be as smooth as possible in the circumstances,

or communally held in the Marshalls.

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and senier Micronesian executive leadership within the administration in these districts would appear to be outstanding. The one remaining American District Administrator in the Territory (in Ponape) has a Micronesian Deputy. Both seen to be effective. The weak links in several instances are not Micronesians, but Americans within the District Administrations who have not adjusted to the "winds of change."

25. On the other hand, and despite enormous improvements is the past several years, district administration officials and political loaders alike believe that there are still serious weak points in the consultations process between TTPI headquarters and the districts. The Public Works Department and some offices engaged in economic development in particular are accused of taking arbitbary decisions without adequate consideration of district attitudes or information. (There is also the complaint, particularly withrespect to these same offices, that the level of headquarters inaction on requests for decisions or information is still too high.) It is also felt that too many departmental directors are insufficiently personally aware of the conditions and problems peculiar to the districts. However, it must be noted that the present administration has made a truly impressive effort to correct what were essentially inherited weaknesses. Such weaknesses as continue to exist tend to result from the occasional need to take immediate action, or flow from the ill-advised actions of individuals or offices who, in effect, ignore the very specific policy and instructions laid down by the High Commissioner. Incidents of the latter character are in decline. Further, it seems probable that allegations of "lack of consultationS are as often as not based on old incidents, er en unrealistic expectations ef what is pessibleer desirable. Is te complaints of inaction, they are often legitimate, but can usually be truced to staffing problems (mainly varant positions) at headquarters and not to disinterest or lack of effert. This particularly applies to these offices dealing with economic development.

26. A criticism frequently made by competent senier Micromesian efficials and political leaders at the district level (and by many Americans), relates to the experience or background of Americans recruited either for district as headquarters level positions. Except for those in narrow, highly specialized technical fields, it is felt that most American personnel simply do not have the right kind of background for the TTPI -- it is argued with some force that an expert on urban development from San Matee, California, or an agriculturalist from the American mid-west, has little or nothing to offer the Territory. It is suggested that this is the case with all but a few individuals development. It is argued that more effort should be made to recruit personnel who have had experience with AID or UN agencies in under-developed areas of the world.

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26.A Considerable attention has been given above to "consultations". One new aspect here has been the recent involvement, for the first time, of district legislatures in the budget programming process. This has been well received in each of the districts thus far visited, although the very participation of these bodies has tended to complicate further the already over-complex programming cycle. This legislative involvement will most certainly lead to greater pressure for elective district governments with district executives responsible to electorates or legislatures rather than to the High Commissioner. Existing pressures are at a fairly Bw level, except perhaps in the Marianas, Palau, and Truk. In each of these districts there is the conviction that it is time to at least consider a change. In Ponape, Yap, and the Marshalls, BONFIDE TIAL

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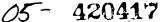
there is some talk, but little significant pressure. The one conclusion that can be drawn is that planning for change to accomodate such pressures should commence now. In all liklihood creation of true district governments will have to be accompanied by sizeable grants-in-aid to each district legislature. Further, those district legislators met on this trip insist on one basic "truth" -- each district should be permitted to devise (with outside guidance and help) its own governmental framework.

27. Turning to specific programs and policies, for reasons already stated there is little praise or even admission of accomplishments but only criticism. In all districts, typical complaints relate to the conditions of all reads; the absence of power and water supplies except in limited sections of district centers; inadequate shipping schedules to and from outer islands which in turn affect copra production and cash income; inadequate health, education, and utility services in the outer islands; education policy and goals; lack of progress or drive with respect to marine and agricultural resources development; and to the land management program and public lands.

28. With respect to education policy, there appear to be two major complaint areas. (1) The view is often voiced by Micronesians and Americans alike that the drive to build as manyclass rooms as possible and place children in them has led in many areas to a sharp reduction of the quality of education while the "quantity" has increased. It is suggested that it might be better at this time to focus more on the adequacy of teaching staff, text books, teaching aids, etc., and less on numbers and physical plant. (2) Another and more frequently heard fear and criticism is to the effect that neither primary nor secondary education is adequately keyed to Micronesian requirements. It is felt inadequate attention is being given to all levels of vocational education, and that there is too much focus on a standard U.S. type "liberal arts" education directed at university entrance. Given the quality of that "liberal arts" education, most students emerge from secondary schools equipped for neither university education, nor for employment in the TTPL. One high school principal told me that some 90 percent of his graduates leave school and wind up unemployed or in a form of employment having no relationship to their education. Put another way, they could have gone into the same jobs with no more than a few years of primary education. Their education provided no marketable skills. In another district a district administrator claimed that the quality and character of education is such that each high school graduating class contains a majority of social misfits unsuited for any employment other than menial labor, but unwilling to perform menial labor. The numbers of young unemployed men hanging around district centers, in what amount to island versions of Chicage street gangs, would tend to confirm that allegation. Balancing the above, most educatars in these three districts (including the -high school-principal-zentiened wove)-piz-great-hepes on the present administration's establishment of a territory curriculum council, and on the administration's appointment of a territory Board of Education. These moves, together with current efforts to provide text books geared to territorial requirements, are lauded as major steps toward improvment of the present situation.

29. The nature and methodology of economic development are probably the single greatest sources of criticism among articulate Micronesians in

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the districts. Everyone accepts the goal, but the thrust of economic development programs, or the means to the end, provides one of the most serious "friction points" in the TTPI. The subject is too complex for serious treatment here, but following are some of the fastors. In a nutshell, administration policy has been to encourage investment of U.S. capital in tourism, fisheries and other developmental areas. The scale of most investment proposals is such that local capital, and thus local corporate management and control in any given enterprise, is likely to be weak or almost nonexistent. Such proposals, rightly or wrongly, are viewed as being expleitative and of no particular advantage to Micronesians. The principle of 10 percent of something being better than 100 percent of nothing is not recognized. In most instances, district economic development boards (which now have a more or less final say on such investment proposals), take a most negative view toward any proposal which does not provide for a major Micronesian share in management and control. The end result is that nothing happens. Part of the problem undoubtedly results from inadequate information and analysis being provided on the nature and benefits of any given investment proposal -- but more basic is the resistence to the admission of outside enterprise and outside control of resources development. Coupled with this problem is the allegation made by district political and business leaders to the effect that the TTPI administration is not interested in nor geared for the encouragement or development of small local enterprise, particularly with respect to marine or agricultural resources. The allegation is not a fair one -- but of political importance is the bolief that the TTPI administration is geared mainly to encourage the inflow and development of U.S. private enterprise, and not Micronesian enterprise. (In fairness to the administration, present policy provides only for assisting in the presentation of worthy investment proposals. No effort is made to force them on any district, and failures of such properals often can be attributed in part to an unsophisticated hardsell approach by the concerned American promotors. As to the complaint that nothing is being done to assist in the development of Micronazian enterprise, much more could be done, and now is being done. But many of the complaints either ignore what is being done, or are unrealistic in terms of what is feasible either economically or in terms of human and capital resources.)

31. Amongst Micronesians of all levels of sophistication, there is extreme bitterness about the condition of roads, and the extent of water and power supplies in and near the district centers, as well as sharp criticism over the level of inter-island transportation. It is pointed out that the roads are so poor or non-existent even on the very edges of the centers that it is difficult and often impossible (owing to transport problems) to cash crop even for the small district center markets. (I can personally testify that district roads generally are the most miserable and inadequate of any in all of Oceania.)

32. It would be possible, with considerable expenditure of funds, to achieve faster and highly visible results in these complaint areas in a relatively short period of time. Programs in these areas already exist,

but are generally phased over a period of years. A high impact program would require a major shifting of priorities at the expense of many impertant but perhaps less visible programs. It has often been suggested that high visibility (and thus "PR" value) projects of this nature might be a useful tool in terms of promoting a greater degree of acceptance of (and reliability on) the concept of close association with the U.S.. In these three districts, as in others, most observers are inclined to believe that a high level of "PR" projects over an extended period of time would undsubtedly tend to serve the above end among ordinary Micronesians, and particularly younger Micronesians. However, most observers are convinced that such a program would have little or no impact on the political leaders (particularly Members of the Congress of Micronesia) who are the keys to a status settlement. These leaders will argue that anything that is done is only the just due of Micronesia under the Trusteeship Agreement. Further, the same leaders, without changing their own rather fixed attitudes, are likely to play on any "vote-Buying" tactics in an effort to obtain all possible and then take most of the credit for it.

33. Still, certain "PR" projects of major utilitarian value (e.g. roads) could have considerable political impact if implemented soon enough to take effect in the time remaining to us. They would at least reduce the present high levels of bitterness and criticism, and could over time help stimulate popular moderating influences and restraints on those political leaders who presently advocate that Micronesia can de without the U.S. . Alternatively, one could argue that such projects be delayed and held out as benefits which would flow from close association. With respect to the allegation that too little is being done in the outer islands, it is true that a relatively smaller effort is being made in terms of capital improvements and provisi n of various services. The economics of servicing small population pockets scattered over millions of square miles of ocean make impossible any sort of effort comparable to that in the district centers. Nevertheless, the trend is teward doing much more. One third of the FY 1972 capital improvements program is directed at the outer islands, with particular emphasis on school construction. But little or no programming is possible (or even necessary) with respect to certain activities, e.g. major reads, electrification in most instances, and major airports. See page 23 for details on the FY 1972 capital improvements

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The "Public Lands Issue"

34. The referenced report indicated that in Palau the question of disposition of public lands has managed to sour the atmosphere surrounding development of new policies and programs -- not to mention the status question. No where in the three districts just visited is this issue so serious. But in the Marshalls and Truk it is a sufficiently serious irritant to influence Micronesian attitudes toward the U.S. in general and the TTPI Administration in particular. At the root of the problem is the fact that most Micronesians de net accept that public lands are being held in trust for a future Micronesian Gevernment. Public lands are viewed as U.S. Government lands, being held [and:used]for whatever purpose may come into the mind of the U.S. Government. (Here again the Micronesians draw no distinction between the U.S. Government and the TTPI Executive Branch.) Further, they claim that most of the public lands "inherited by the U.S." were in the first place illegally taken from Micronesians by previous administrations. They argue that the existence of bills of sale, etc. mean nothing -- land-owners or users were either forced to sale, or did not understand that they were selling rather than leasing land. (Mest anthrepologists support this Micronesian view.)

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35. The end result is that Micronesians in Palau, the Marshalls, and in Truk are convinced that the U.S. is illegally withelding from Micronesians their rightful and only resource -- land. Yap is not mentioned as I have not yet visited that district (I gather the miniscule amount of public land in Yap causes no serious problems.) Ponape is in a different category and will be discussed separately.

36. In Truk, only about 15 percent of the land is classified as "public", and none of that area is "military retention." Nevertheless, the question of ewnership of public lands is probably one of the two or three most important issues and irritants in Truk. The attitude exists that unused public lands, should be returned to their original owners (or heirs) and that private or clan ownership of public lands in use should be recognized and leasing arrangements established (this does not apply to all public lands -- some of those in use, and a few parcels not in use, are recognized as being legitimate public demain). In demanding the return of these lands, the mechanism most often proposed is that they be turned over to district governments for ultimate disposition. The District Administrator in Truk strongly endorses this view. He further argues that the entire land management program should be decentralized to the district level, with the necessary increase in district staffing and funding. He sees positive political and administrative value in following up on such decentralization that has already taken place (the present administration, as an example, has already authorized district administrators to leasepublic lands for up to 25 years without reference to Saipan).

37. In the Marshalls, only about three percent of the land is public, but precisely the same attitudes prevail - including these of the District Administrator.

39. In Penape some 65 percent of the land is public, but these lands are largely in areas of no immediate perceivable value and there are no serious pressures for return of the public lands to "original owners." There appears to be general acceptance of the present policy of homesteading or otherwise leasing public lands which are of value (particularly in the district center). The only serious complaints are directed at the slowness of this program. Nevertheless, many Micronesians and some Americans in the district Administration favor turning public lands and land management over to the district. They believe that, with proper staffing and funding, district land management would be more efficient and more responsive to local requirements.

39. To sum up, there may be positive political and administrative benefits to decentralizing totally public lands management. However, as reported in a separate message, there are also some serious disadvantages. See SAIPAN A-1.

40. Aside from the question of public lands ownership, a number of other serious complaints are heard in every district with respect to almost

every facet of land management and administration. Among these are: (a) delays (sometimes stretching out over years) in payments made to land-owners by the administration for lands condenned or otherwise taken by the administration for public use; (b) alleged unnecessary delays in settling disputes over title when the administration is involved as a disputant; (c) allegations that compensation for lands cleased d for public use is generally far too low; (d) claims that homestead titles are often delayed beyond all reason (in one case, a group of some 15 homesteaders had met all homestead requirements and had been waiting for their land title certificates for some seven years -- the concerned district administration was only vaguely aware of the situation, but moved to rectify it shortly after it was brought to their attention); and, (e) claims that the cadastral survey program has been inadequately explained and thus resisted through misunderstanding of the survey's purpose. All of the above allegations may some degree merit. With regard to the cadastral survey, it is being resisted in varying degree in each district because of inadequate "grassrests " publicity. Land-emers are eften convinced that the survey is simply a preliminary to government seizure of lands. In the Marshalls, the program has come to a total halt for reasons explained earlier in this report. (In point of fact, the administration at the program's inception mounted a " massive information and "consultations" effort with leaders in all districts. The breakdown in communications appears to have been partly the fault of a district leaders who did not "carry the message" back to their respective electorates or villages, and partly the consequence of survey teams not engaging in sufficient "followup" as part of field preparations for any given survey. This situation is being rectified in part by changes in personnel. It is important to note that the Congress of Micrond La has given full support to the cadastral program.)

Attitudes toward Rest of TTPI

41. The Palau report (reftel) noted the nationalism verging on chauvinism which exists in Palau -- an almost total absence of interest in and disdain for the other districts. To a milder degree the same attitudes exist in Eruk. But for the most part, in the eastern districts, district nationalism (or parochialism) is less well-defined and is mathly a function of lack of contact with other districts. It is not comparable to Palau's active disinterest and disdain. Further, Palau is a relatively compact district with a real degree of "national" (or district) identification. The eastern districts, particularly the Marshalls, are widely dispersed with many small outlying islands. Thus, outside the district centers, it is difficult to find among ordinary Micronesians much of a sense of district identification or nationalism, much less territorial identification.

42. In the Marshalls, and possibly in the Kusaie area of the Ponape district, there is also the potential for separatist sentiment in the sense that ethnic, linguistic, and family ties with Nauru and possibly with the Gilbert Islands could lead someday to moves toward some form of loose union between these dispersed areas. Some political leaders in the Marshalls (notably Senator Amata Kabua) have discussed this possibility with Nauruan leaders, including President DeRoburt. There presently appears to be ne active movement in this direction. Nauru probably would be most cautious

about such an arrangement as it could wind up financing any widespread Micronesian Confederacy or Jederation. In Kusaie there still remains considerable sentiment for a breakaway from Ponape District, and formation of a separate district.

43. Of greater immediate significance is the attitude of political leaders in these eastern districts toward Commonwealth sentiment in the Marianas District. None appear to be too concerned over a potential breakup of TTPI through separate status for the Marianas. They hold no love for the Chamerres of the Marianas and seem to take a stance of "good riddance."

44. Another area of district parochialism or nationalism holds potential trouble with respect to any status settlement which envisages U.S. payment for land use rights as a means of financing a self-governing Micronesia. In principle, it might be desirable (as suggested by some Micronesian politicians -- including Senator Lazarus Salii) to provide an annual lump sum payment to a Micronesian Government for, in effect, land use and land option rights. However, it is difficult to envisage Marshall Islands (or Marianas or any other district) leaders agreeing to share "payments" for their lands" with other districts.

War Claims

45. In each of the three districts, but particularly the Marshalls and Truk, war and post-secure claims have been major issues and a source of considerable antagonism toward the U.S.. At the time of my visit to these three districts legislation was known to be before the U.S. Congress, and the general assumption appeared to be that the matter was well on the way to settlement. Although bitterness was expressed over past delays and the anticipated levels of compensation, by and large there appeared to be resigned asceptance of the proposed measures, and relief that some money was finally in sight. The news that the U.S. House of Representatives had failed to act on this legislation did not reach these districts until after my departure from the area. Undoubtedly the reaction will be to chalk up the House's inaction as simply another example of U.S. indifference to Micronesian grievances and rights.

Some Miscellaneous Observations

46. Leadership Problems in the Marshall Islands -- In no other district of the TTPI has the traditional leadership system remained so strongly rooted and effective. This fact, and abuses of responsibilities and privileges by traditional leaders, is now causing what could be called a leadership crisis in the Marshall Islands -- a crisis which might affect the status question. Reference has been made to this situation in several parts of this report, but the following supplementary (if vastly over simplified) information is of importance.

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47. Essentially there are three levels of society in the Marshalls: (a) the <u>iroij</u> or hereditary chiefs; (b) the <u>alabs</u>, or leaders of kin or clan groups; and (c) the <u>lajors</u>, or commonses. Land being the only resource (other than the sea and the lagoons) in the Marshalls, the relationships of these three classes to the land is vital. Essentially land is held corporately or communally by the Marshallace with the <u>iroij</u> and <u>alabs</u> determining and allocating land use rights. In the past, there was a tendency for land use rights to be hereditary. Traditionally, too, commoners or land-users payed tribute (in the form of a share of land produce) to their respective alabs who in turn payed tribute to the iroij. However, the traditional system also provided for the redistribution of tribute by the iroij and alabs to those below them in one way or another. One could almost describe the tribute system as a form of income tax, with servicesexpected in return, including "welfare payments" in time of need. (With the introduction of the American Administration, the levying of tribute has continued, but with no redistribution.)

48. Under earlier administrations the above system was breaking down, primarily because of the iroij being stripped of many of their powers -in particular of such rights as they had over land. This erosion of iroij powers has been reversed during the American Administration. At the same time, the means of removing irresponsible iroij which existed previously are no longer available: any power-hungry, irresponsible iroij was killed and replaced. No effective sanction has been worked out to replace that means of "recall."

49. Among commoners in the Marshalls today, many of the alabs, and even a few enlightened iroij, the complaint exists that the TTPI Administration and U.S. military have re-established an autocracy by the manner in which they have chosen to deal with the iroij. (Many Americans, particularly military personnel, openly call them "Kings".) It is pointed out that the iroij should have no right, by themselves, to sell or lease land, but that for reasons of convenience the U.S. has consistently negotiated primarily with iroij and has given de facto recognition to iroij ownership of lands. Thus alabs and commoners alike are stripped of their lands, without their consent, by the iroij, Further, it is claimed, payments to iroij by the U.S. for land often do not trickle down to the commoner who has lost his land, or the trickle is a disproportionately small share of the total payment.

50, Complicating matters further for the commoner, U.S. recognition of the/"right" to dispose of land as they see fit has given them enormous political and economic power over ordinary Marshallese. Any Marshallese with dependence on the land(and this means almost all Marshallese) cannot afford to cross politically or economically any iroij without fear of retribution.

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52. Many Marshallese point out that they are virtually helpless in the present circumstances to strip such iroij of their political office, or to place legal restraints on them through legislation. The power that the U.S. had given to them, through recognition of land control, has assured to these iroij the means of destroying all those who "cross" them.

53. The end result is frustration and bitterness directed at both the U.S. and ireij, and the growing conviction among some Marshallese that free association or independence would mean further abuse of power and position by such ireij ______ This does not imply that all ireij are _______ equally ill-thought of or considered so irresponsible. But it does appear to be true of most of these in key political office, and particularly those associated with the military installations at Kwajelein, and the district center on Majure Atoll. Also, it does not mean that Marshallese seek destruction of the traditional power and leadership systems. Rather they sock resteration of perspective, or a return to more traditional relationships and respon-

53A. It is difficult to see what can be done by the administration to improve or change the situation. As indicated earlier, recent efforts to include kin group leaders in land negotiations seemed to have little impact on irrij power and manipulation of the negotiations and subsequent compensation to their own benefit. Past efforts to deal with individual land claimants or occupants became hepelessly complex, mainly because of the difficulty of sorting out conflicting and often exaggerated claims to any given parcel of land. From a practical point of view, the only real solution may ultimately be a land reform program directed at assuring individual occupany and use rights. But such a program could wreck have on the conclex and interdependent Marshallese. There may be little that we can do other than to provide quiet encouragement to such Marshallese who seek to reform their own society through legislative and other means.

Parther Commont on District Administrations

54. Elsewhere mention is made of how impressive are the senior Micronesian staff in the three district administrations, but particularly the Micronesian "Distads" in Truk and the Marshalls, and the Assistant "Distad" in Penape. Hewever, this leadership is "thin" at the top. The middlelevel, both American and Micronesian, is dangerously weak. The situation appears to be becoming more serious as "decentralisation" of executive functions

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continues. Each district administrator expressed support for the thrust and success of "decentralization" to date, but also some concern for the fact that staffing at the district level was not sufficient to cope with increased responsibilities.

55. With reference to the background of American personnel, one cannot but be struck by the low level of applicable prior experience inmost instances. Many are competent and are now performing as well as could be expected of anyone 2- but only after a long and sometimes mistakeridden period of breaking in to a totally new environment with requirements pr problems never previously encountered. Some do not "make it" and the result is a further tarnishing of the American image, as well as further growth of the conviction, prevalent among many Nieronesian leaders, that Micronesia can do without much of the expensive American "expertise" now being provided. However, this is but part of the problem of policy and program formulation and implementation in the Territory.

56. Evident in Saijan, but particularly so in the other districts fust visited, is the fact that we have managed to transfer to Licronesia fiscal, programming, personnel, and other administrative procedures far too complex and inflexible. They may be essential for various legal reasons, and they may be well-suited to 200 million Americans in 50 states. But they are ill-suited to 100,000 unsephisticated, non-homogenous Hicronesians scattered in six districts over three million square miles of ocean. This, together with the cumbersoms budget process and the personnel problems outlined above, creates a structure or "system" which all too often slems to frustrate rather than to serve policy and program implementation. Further, as pointed out by numerous people in the districts and in Saipan, our procedures for programming, budgeting, staffing out, spending, and auditing \$5000 are little or no different than those for \$5,000,000. The consequence is that it takes an enermous amount of time to handle the many small projects which are often the most important. The end result is a tendency to focus on a few major projects, while ignoring or setting aside a wide-range of many small on is.

57. In the circumstances, any successes here (and there have been many in the past several years whither or not they have been recognized by Micronesians) result from the ability of the High Commissioner and the District Administrators to get things done <u>despite</u> the system, rather than through the support of the system.

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FY 1972

Capital Improvements Program

Total	20,660,000	14,035,000	5	,132,000	1,493,000
Maintenance and Rehabilita a. Heavy Construction E b. Emergency and Minor c. Road Construction Eq	quipment Construction	es:			200,000 200,000 400,000
b. Power, TT-Wide		2,000,000		100,000	
a. Water and Sewerage		5,339,000		200,000	
vater, Sewerage and Power	Facilities:	:			
b. Civic Action Teams				700,000	
a. Bikini Rehabilitatio	n		·	125,000	
Community Development Fac:	ilities:				
-		300,000			
 b. Central Land Record c. Rice Project, Ponape 	s Vault	30,000			
a. Ice and Cold Storag	e Facilities	250,000			
Resources and Development	Facilities:				
		127,000	<u>1/E</u>	40,000 E	
g. Telephone System h. Warehouses		160,000			
f. Communications Syst	em, Palau	300,000			030,000
e. Inter-Island Ships		200,000			638,000
d. Dock, Ponape		500,000		800,000	
c. Dock and Harbor, Ku	Isaie	2,772,000		600,000 Z	· ·
b. Airfields		725,000		375,000 2/	•
Facilities: a. Roads				~	
Transportation and Commun	dications				
a. Dispensaries				100,000	
Public Health Facilities	:				
		100,000).		
b. Secondary c. Community College		1,100,000		1,300,000 E	55,000
a. Elementary		253,000) .	792,000	55,000
Education Facilities:			•		
a. Transmitter (5KW),	Truk	79,00	0		~~
Public Affairs Facilitie	25:				
		<u>Centers</u>	_	Islands	TT-Wide
		Distric		Outer	

1/ The amount of \$100,000 will be used to provide 10,000 square feet of additional district center warehousing in Majuro and two to five outer-island copra warehouses. \$67,000 for Saipan dock.

E - Estimates

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