

Turmoil in Paradise:

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Micronesia at the Crossroads

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By Captain James H. Webb, U. S. Marine Corps

The occupying forces which flooded into formerly contested areas following World War II established a totally new balance of power situation in our world, one which has prevailed with few major changes until today. For the United States, this process involved, among other moves, the initiation of a strong presence in the Western Pacific area, including the military occupation of former Japanese possessions and of Japan itself. With our newly acquired and recaptured bases ringing the bulk of the East Asian continent, we adopted the strategy of the "forward position," which provided distinct political, economic, and military advantages, in that we were able to influence and aid the redevelopment of the occupied countries, and, from our bases, support national policies when emergencies developed within the area.

However, events which are continually reshaping the world have also altered the effectiveness of this strategy. Under current and projected fiscal and manpower pressures, we can no longer afford to operate from so many diffuse locations. Burgeoning populations, with needs to expand, gaze longingly at our bases. And, finally, new political tensions place the continuation of bases in jeopardy.

Recognizing these developments, President Nixon initiated a new direction for U. S. foreign policy in 1969 when he proclaimed what has since been termed the "Nixon Doctrine," which laid down three principles as guidelines for future American policy toward Asia:

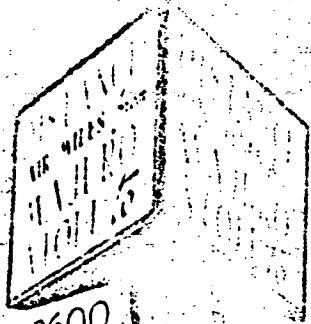
- ▶ The United States will honor all of its treaty commitments;
- ▶ We shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied to us or whose survival we consider vital to our security;
- ▶ In cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with treaty commitments. However, we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing for its defense.

That slightly facetious World War II signpost the Americans erected on newly-won Majuro Atoll in the Marshall Islands reminded the troops of how far they had come by 1944—and how far they still had to go—and, more, it showed them, as it shows us today, that the vast area known as Micronesia is, in many ways, both the geographic and strategic crossroad of the Pacific. We paid a terrible cost to oust the Japanese; but, 27 years later, most Americans view the region with the kind of indifference that could cause it to revert once again to Japanese control.

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NAURU-550

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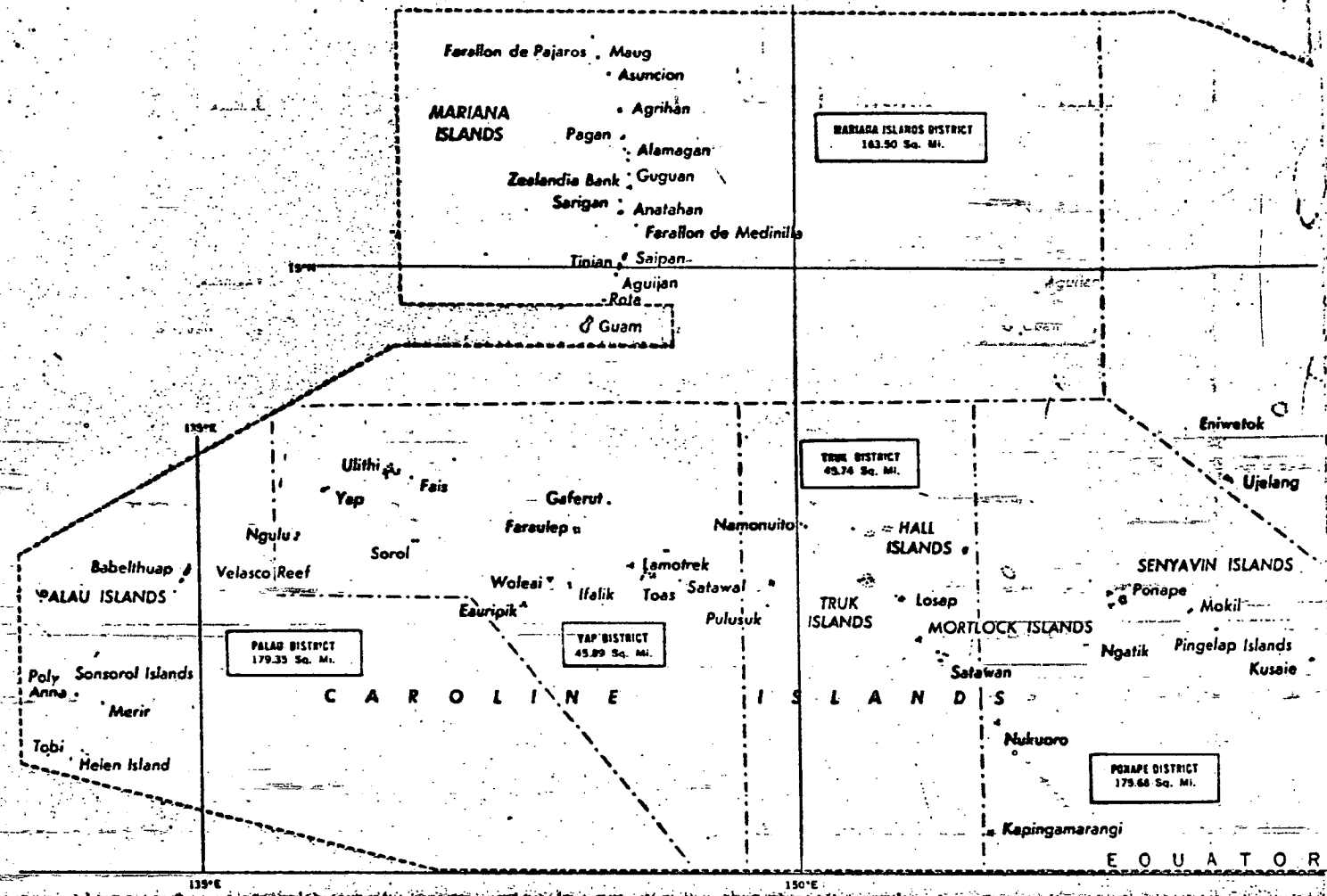
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The Nixon Doctrine has been interpreted as one of the major shifts in U.S. foreign policy since World War II, in that it gives America greater flexibility in the international arena and allows us to assume our oft-discussed "lower profile" in Asia.

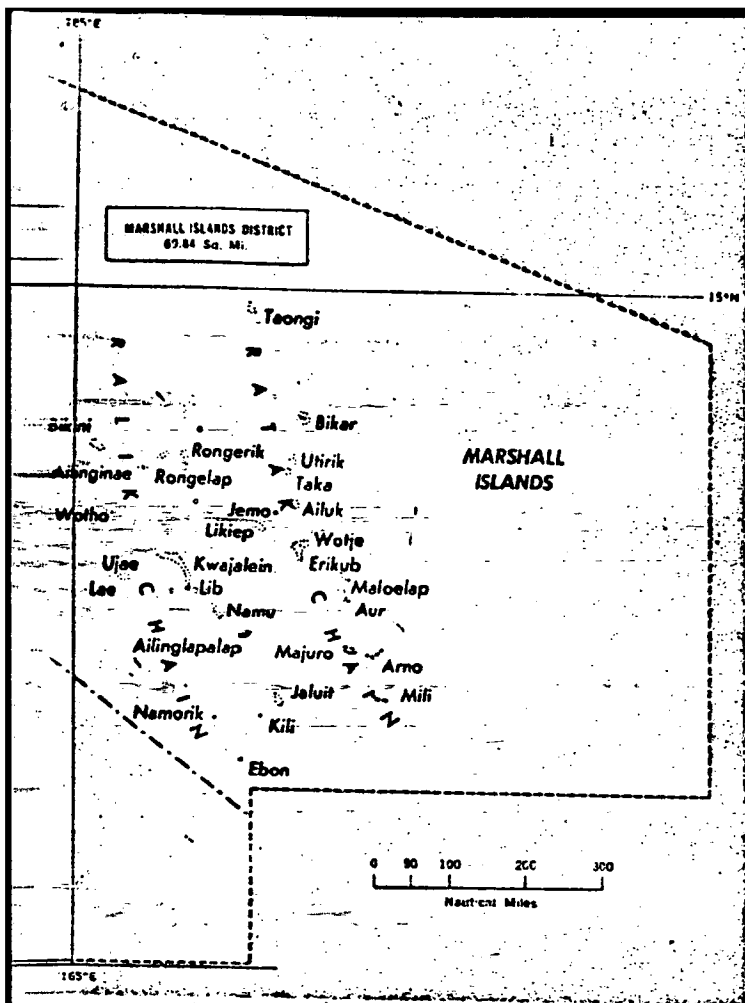
In consonance with the Nixon Doctrine, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird has opted for a strategy of "Realistic Deterrence." This strategy is based on what is termed the "new realities of the 1970s,"—i.e., the present strategic, fiscal, manpower, and political realities which have forced the United States to modify the defense posture which emerged following World War II.

Perhaps the overriding consideration of both policies has been the fiscal and manpower aspect: the Nixon administration has been searching for more economical ways to meet our commitments. As a result, in addition to our well-publicized withdrawal from Vietnam, we have quietly lowered our troop levels in Thailand, the Philippine Islands, Japan, and Korea by well over 64,000 men since President Nixon took office, and this trend promises to continue, with Korea already slated for total withdrawal of U.S. combat forces by 1975. Furthermore, continuation of other bases, most notably on Japan, Okinawa, and Taiwan, is dependent on

quite tenuous political understandings.

Ours is the hard choice, then, between two hard realities. On the one hand are the fiscal and political realities which call for us to abandon our present "forward position" strategy; on the other are the strategic and other political realities, which dictate that we must maintain a strong presence in the Western Pacific in order to honor treaty commitments and protect national interests. The course we ultimately follow is very likely to be a major change in, but not the abandonment of, our strategic posture in the Western Pacific. As Richard Butwell, Chairman of the Political Science Department at the State University of New York College, and former faculty member at the Naval War College, wrote in the December 1971 issue of *Current History*, "The objective behind the Nixon Doctrine was disengagement—but disengagement from a particular role in Asia, not disengagement from Asia altogether."

A strong probability in the development of a new U.S. role in Asia is for us to fall back from presently occupied "forward positions" to a more consolidated and economical "internal position," from which the same national security goals could be accomplished. The ideal—perhaps the only—location available for this



The Senate, Congress of Micronesia, is seen in session at Saipan, Mariana Islands



R. WENHAM

type of regrouping is the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, with Guam as a cornerstone. This realignment of forces would offer tremendous economies in maintenance and operations, and provide practically all of the advantages of the interior position since the Trust Territory surrounds the U. S. Territory of Guam, which will continue to be fortified in any contingency.

The Trust Territory, or Micronesia, which was the scene of such bitter World War II battles as Kwajalein, Peleliu, Saipan, and Tinian, has been the subject of renewed interest by military planners who are now searching for possible alternate bases in the Pacific area. General Lewis W. Walt, former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, made a comprehensive tour of the Trust Territory in 1969. General Walt was impressed by the military possibilities of the area, indicating afterward that it was particularly well-suited for amphibious training requirements. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, inspected the Territory in late 1971.

Concrete evidence of our future plans in Micronesia followed in October 1971 with the meeting in Hawaii between the Joint Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia and a U. S. Department of State

delegation. John C. Dorrance, political advisor to the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, released a statement in which he said that "the U. S. at the [Hawaii] talks did describe foreseeable defense land requirements in Micronesia, and outlined them in detail."

Attainment of these requirements, however, is by no means assured. Recent political developments between the Trust Territory government and our own have created a highly emotional and volatile situation which has necessitated careful and extensive negotiations. Furthermore, the United States is not the only nation which would like to maintain a presence there.

Still, few people in or out of the military follow the Micronesia developments; or even seem aware of their possible importance to our future.

The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands consists of more than 2,100 islands sprinkled over three million square miles of open sea, and includes virtually all of Micronesia except Britain's Gilbert Islands and Guam, which is an unincorporated territory of the United States. The Territory consists of three major archipelagoes: the Carolines, the Marianas, and the Marshalls.

Roughly rectangular in shape, it runs north from the equator 1,300 miles, and has a width of about 2,300 miles—approximately the size of the continental United States. Its easternmost point is 1,800 miles from Hawaii, and its westernmost only 500 miles from the Philippine Islands.¹

Despite its numerous islands and extensive area, the total combined land mass of the Territory is only some 687 square miles, or about two-thirds the area of the state of Rhode Island. Its population is a bit over 107,000, or about one-ninth that of Rhode Island.

The people of the Trust Territory are thought by anthropologists to have their origins in Southeast Asia and Malaysia. They have undergone almost continual occupation of some sort since Magellan first discovered the Marianas in 1520. Spain colonized the Marianas during the 16th century and added the Carolines and Marshalls in the 19th century. Spanish policy in Micronesia followed the patterns set in her other colonial holdings, such as the Philippine Islands and Hispanic America, in that the major efforts, beyond the introduction of domesticated animals and some new crops, were missionary in spirit, dedicated to bringing Christianity to the people.

Following her defeat in the Spanish-American war in 1898, Spain was forced by the Treaty of Paris to cede Guam to the United States. The following year she sold the Marianas and Carolines to Germany, who had earlier seized control over the Marshalls as a result of Spain's weakness there.

The German administration in Micronesia encouraged the development of trade, and established copra as the economic foundation of the area. The Germans also developed a limited public works program, building roads, harbors, and canals on selected islands. German control over Micronesia was rather abruptly terminated, however, by the outbreak of World War I, when Japanese naval squadrons seized control of the area.

Owing to its proximity, Japan stood to gain more than its predecessors from the colonization of Micronesia. Consequently, the Japanese lost little time in consolidating and improving their position there. In 1920, the League of Nations formally granted Japan a mandate over the islands, and a Japanese civilian administration established itself shortly thereafter. Japanese citizens were encouraged to emigrate to Micronesia in order to help develop the budding economy, and with Japanese control of the political and economic structures, the Micronesian economy prospered for the first time in its history.

Older Micronesians still remember the Japanese with

a degree of fondness, for although the islanders held few positions of importance under their restrictive control, jobs were in abundance, and the industrious Japanese introduced educational systems, agricultural progress, refined fishing techniques, mineral exploitation, and communications between the far-scattered islands. Additionally, the tropical settings in Micronesia drew thousands of Japanese tourists. This fond remembrance of past days plays an important part in today's political considerations.

The term "Trust Territory" came into being when, following World War II, the United Nations established 11 of them, all of which were to be administered and supervised by more established nations until such time as they could effectively administer themselves. By a joint resolution of the Congress in July 1947, the United States accepted a U.N. trusteeship for "The Former Japanese Mandated Islands." The area subsequently became known as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Today, it and the Trust Territory of New Guinea, which is administered by Australia, are the only two U.N. Trust Territories which have not been released from their Trust status to a more independent form of government.

A unique feature of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was its establishment as a "strategic trust" through certain provisions in the Trust Agreement between the United States and the United Nations. Indeed, the Trusteeship Agreement forms the basis of most of the present negotiations concerning all aspects of the Trust Territory's future, since it presently is the definitive document pertaining to U. S. rights as the administering authority. It would, therefore, be beneficial for this discussion to examine pertinent sections of this document before proceeding further.

Article 5 of the Trust Agreement for Micronesia provides the United States with the following entitlements as the administering authority:

- ▶ To establish naval, military, and air bases and to erect fortifications in the Trust Territory.
- ▶ To station and employ armed forces in the Territory;
- ▶ To make use of volunteer forces, facilities, and assistance from the Trust Territory in carrying out the obligations toward the Security Council undertaken in this regard by the administering authority, as well as for the local defense and maintenance of law and order within the Trust Territory.

Article 5 is a significant reference point for discussions regarding the establishment of bases in the Territory, but, surprisingly, it is not a unique entitlement of our "strategic" trust. The pivotal Articles which determine the strategic nature of the Trust Territory are the following:

- 1) Article 13 empowers the administering authority

¹ See D. J. Morgiewicz, "Micronesia: Especial Trust," U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings, October 1968, pp. 68-79.

to close certain areas for "security reasons." This has been done in the past, most notably when the Central Intelligence Agency was operating a training center on Saipan in the 1960s.

2) *Article 15* maintains that "The terms of the present agreement shall not be altered, amended, or terminated without the consent of the administering authority." Under provisions in the other Trust Territory agreements, amendments were decided by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Proposals concerning the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands are decided in the Security Council, and as such America has a veto power over proposals regarding the Agreement, and, thus, over the Territory itself.

3) *Article 8* contains what has been termed the "most favored nation" clause, which has served to preclude any nation other than the United States investing in the Trust Territory. As a result, U. S. expenditures account for approximately 80% of all revenue received in the Territory. This clause has been the source of much discontent of late, since Japan has indicated strong desires to invest heavily in its former possessions.

In any event, the United States, which never seems to lose a war or win a peace conference, managed a diplomatic *coup d'état* in the Trust Agreement for Micronesia. What we achieved was and is a seemingly air-tight document which gives our nation total control over all external and many internal issues in the Territory. Perhaps the overriding consideration in our desires for such a strongly worded document was the tremendous strategic potential of the Territory, and the bitter lesson learned during World War II as a result of what historian Donald D. Johnson termed "the strategic absurdity of attempting to defend Guam and the Philippines in the midst of, or on the other side of, a mass of . . . hostile bases." One man who recognized this "strategic absurdity" almost two decades before Pearl Harbor was Marine Lieutenant Colonel Earl H. "Pete" Ellis.

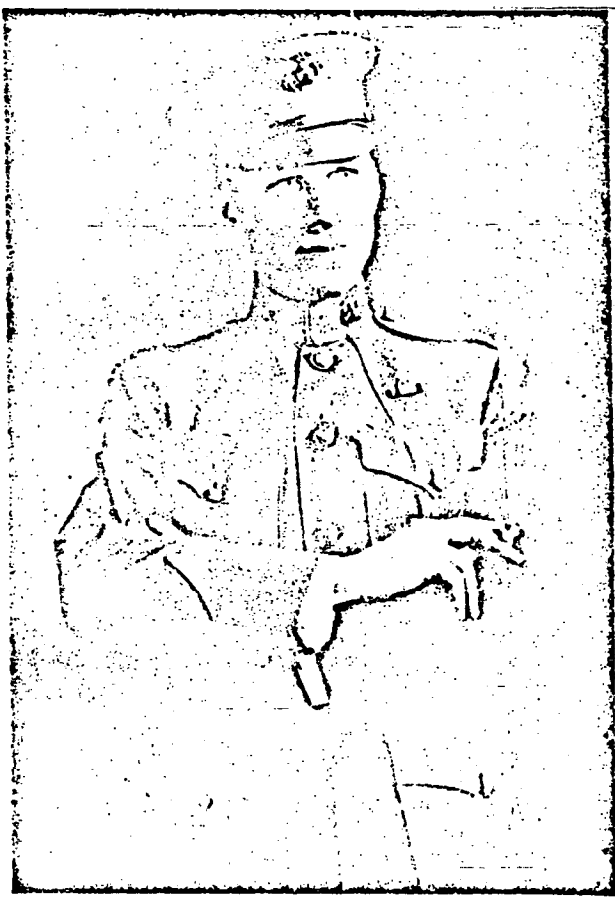
To most Marines, "Pete" Ellis is just one more name on the roster of larger-than-life figures who seem to abound in Corps folklore. But, in one respect, he was unique: he was an all-too-human man who thought his way—rather than fought his way (although he did his share of that, too)—into the Marines' Valhalla. Ellis, a gifted officer who had served in the Philippine Islands and Guam prior to World War I, became convinced that the League of Nations had laid the foundation for a new World War when it granted Japan its Mandate over Micronesia in 1920. In July 1921, convinced of this likelihood, Lieutenant Colonel Ellis wrote virtually all of a 50,000-word Marine Corps report on the area, pointing out its strategic value and suggesting how to

attack it. Two years later, while on a personal reconnaissance mission, he died under mysterious circumstances in the Palau Islands.

Ellis saw the islands of Micronesia as a series of mutually supporting "Pacific Gibralters," and, in his study, which was code-named Operation Plan 712, he warned that:

"... the continued occupation of the Marshall, Caroline, and Pelew Islands by the Japanese . . . invests them with a series of emergency bases flanking any line of communications across the Pacific throughout a distance of 2,300 miles. The reduction and occupation of these islands and the establishment of the necessary bases therein, as a preliminary phase of hostilities, is practically imperative."

More than 20 years later, Ellis' prediction was fulfilled. Micronesia had indeed provided Japan with a



Lieutenant Colonel Earl H. Ellis

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

superb buffer zone and, if it had the will—it now had the way to control the Pacific waters from Hawaii's backdoor to the Asian mainland. It was only at a terrible cost in blood and treasure that America was finally able to neutralize these coral redoubts.

Although there are still those who argue otherwise, Japan's strategic aims in the Mandated Islands prior to the outbreak of hostilities seem to have been offensive in nature, with Micronesian bases slated to be the springboards from which strikes would be launched against our Central Pacific bases.² Indeed, the natural path which these islands provided across the Pacific provided ideal locations for such purposes. Moreover, when Japan was forced onto the defensive, the relatively light fortifications on its possessions seemed to confirm that their defense had not been anticipated, but nonetheless proved to be of very tough mettle, as any veteran of the Central Pacific campaigns will recall.

To a large degree, then, Japan's earlier strategic use of her former possessions has dictated America's post-war strategy in Micronesia: since our greatest concern has been the prevention of another nation's use—for offensive or defensive purposes—of the area, our mere possession constitutes a significant deterrent to aggression in the central Pacific. Thus, ours is in essence a "negative" strategy. Our major concern has not been military presence, but rather the denial of that aim to other powers and, with the exception of a missile testing center on Kwajalein in the Marshalls, we have not operated military bases in the Trust Territory.

As mentioned earlier, current developments may cause us to abandon our "negative" strategy and fall back from our forward positions to a more consolidated, economical posture. Should this occur, the Trust Territory provides excellent strategic advantages for this contingency, too, the most striking one being that of the interior position.

The Trust Territory islands surround the vital defense bastion of Guam which, owing to its U. S. Territorial status, will continue to be used and protected in any contingency. From Guam, and from bases within the Trust Territory, our forces could react quickly in any direction to support the seabase concept. Properly constituted, an economical force, coupled with a strong naval presence, could provide a low-profile deterrent to the kind of threat which would now be handled by our forward positions in that area. Additionally, bases in the Trust Territory would strengthen our defensive posture by straddling sea lanes and once again providing forces to react to any threat to Hawaii.

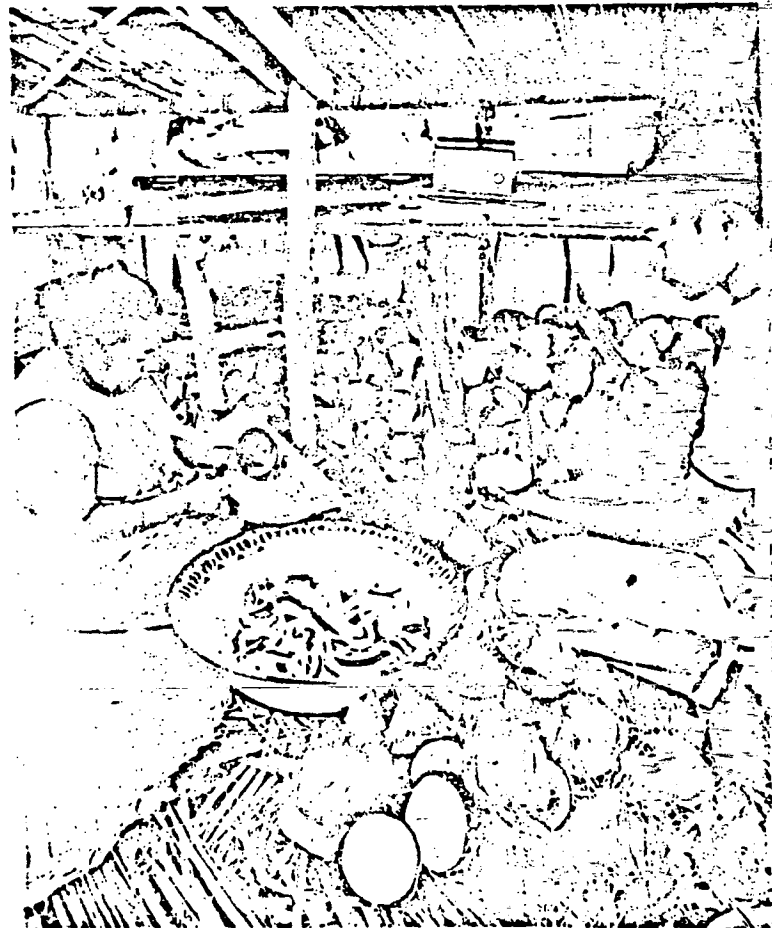
The internal position is strategically advisable when

paramount considerations involve reacting in more than one direction with limited forces available. This may be precisely our situation in the western Pacific in the near future.

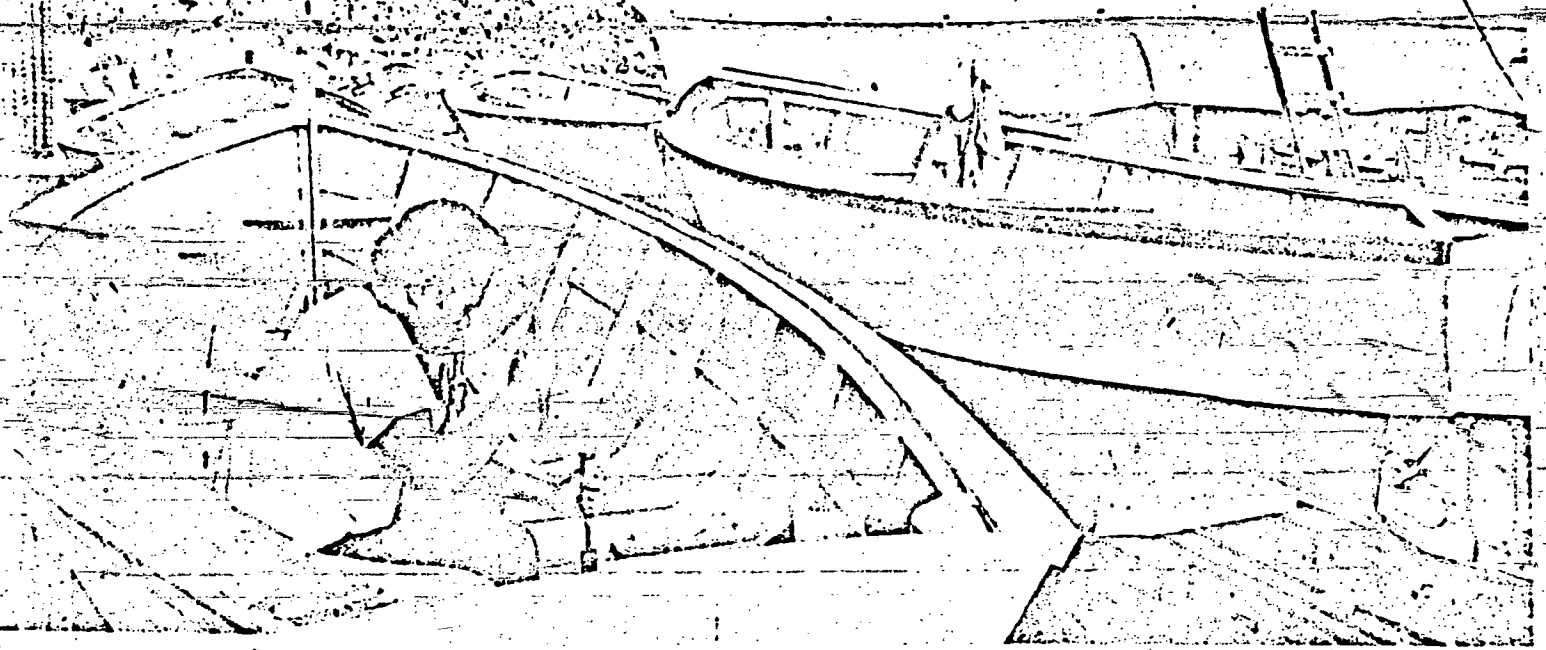
It would seem, then, that the solution to our problem is quite simple. Given a requirement to relocate bases, a relatively untouched area to move them to, and airtight legal authority to do so, there appears to be nothing in our way should contingencies call for such action. Right? Wrong!

As with so many "simple" solutions, there are other, hidden considerations which, although not legally binding, constitute high hurdles in our path. We must, for example, find a way over or around the internal and external political maneuverings which have come to the fore in recent months.

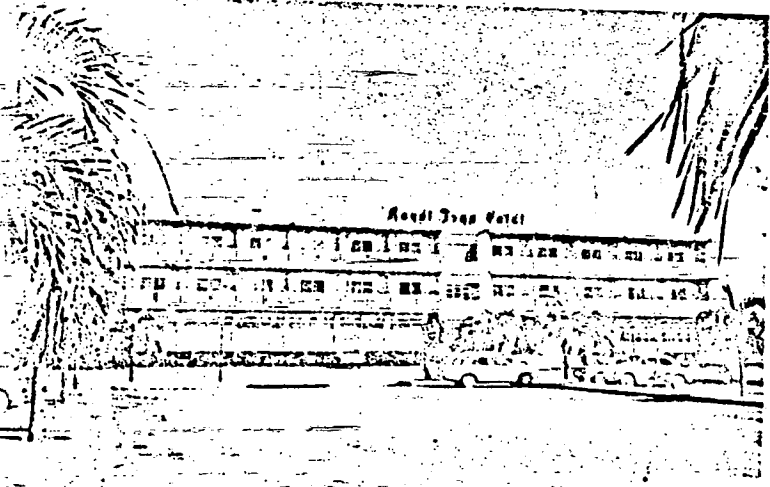
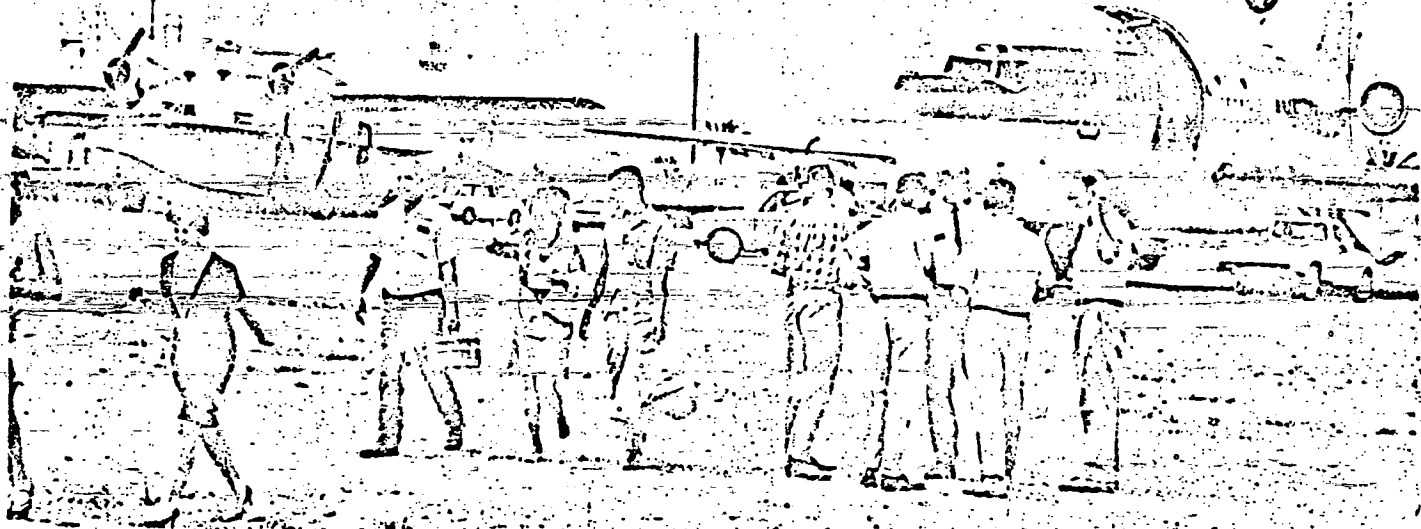
The most often discussed hurdle involves the future political status of the Trust Territory. Article 6 of the Trust Agreement provides that we, as the administering authority, shall "promote the development of the inhabitants of the trust territory toward self-government or independence as appropriate." This has been perhaps our greatest contribution to the people of Micronesia



²See M. Okumiyaz, "For Sugar Boats or Submarines?" U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings, August 1968, pp. 66-73.



A policy of "benign neglect" on the part of America, with an annual budget that has been as low as \$12 million, has retarded trade and industry throughout Micronesia. To be sure, copra workers still extract the meat from the husk on Truk, native Palauans construct small boats on Kōror, pepper orchards are being tended on Ponape, and bouito are still caught off Yap. These activities, however, contrast sharply with the bustling, prosperous days of Japanese occupation.



The continuing expansion of Air Micronesia, some of whose passengers are seen arriving on Moen Island from Majuro; the construction of modern hotels, such as the Royal Taga on Saipan; and the availability of native crafts and products are three reasons why tourism is on the increase. Not surprisingly, fully 30% of the 26,700 tourists who visited the Territory in 1970 were Japanese.

over the past quarter century, since the ideals of democracy have been instilled and emphasized with evangelical fervor.

Beginning in 1965, the Congress of Micronesia has virtually controlled the internal affairs of the territory. As such, Micronesia seems politically, if not economically, ready and able to move forward from its trust status to a more independent form of government.

In May 1970, our government offered the Trust Territory a Commonwealth status similar to that now enjoyed by Puerto Rico. The Micronesian Congress Status Committee rejected this offer. Senator Lazarus Salii of Palau, who is chairman of the commission which had just spent two years studying the question

of the Territory's future status, quite eloquently stated their position in a speech before the Congress:

"In peace and war this was our home. To others, it was a strategic area, a defense perimeter, a trust territory, but we considered this our home. And in the last few years we have insisted that we have the right to rule our home . . ."

Following Sali's speech, the Congress voted down the Commonwealth offer and countered with what has been termed the "four basic principles." These ostensibly non-negotiable items are that:

- ▶ Sovereignty in Micronesia resides in the people of Micronesia and their duly constituted government;
- ▶ The people of Micronesia possess the right of self-determination and may therefore choose independence or self-government in free association with any nation or organization of nations;
- ▶ The people of Micronesia have the right to adopt their own constitution and to amend, change, or revoke any constitution or government plan at any time;
- ▶ Free association should be in the form of a revokable compact, terminable unilaterally by either party.

Pursuant to these requirements, Micronesians generally seem to favor some form of revokable "free association" agreement, whereby the United States would continue to exercise external control over the area, but would surrender all internal control. While this does not appear to have met with any great objection on our part, the prospect of a unilaterally terminable relationship has caused considerable ire within our government, and has jeopardized future land agreements.

In light of the possible ramifications involved in such a stand, President Nixon recently appointed Franklin H. Williams, a highly skilled diplomat and the President of The Asia Foundation, as his personal representative during negotiations concerning the Territory's future political status. Williams was given the rank of Ambassador, the first ever to the Trust Territory, which is an indication of the increased priority the Nixon administration has placed on the issue.

During the week of 4-12 October 1971, Ambassador Williams and his delegation met in Hawaii with the Joint Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia to further negotiate areas relating to Micronesia's future status. Although no firm conclusions were reached in this regard, except that it was agreed that Micronesia's future political status will ultimately be determined by some form of plebiscite, our defense land requirements underwent extensive scrutiny, and the U.S. position was clearly stated by John C. Dorance:

- ▶ The United States will exercise no rights of eminent domain in Micronesia. Upon termination of the

Trust Agreement, all future U. S. land requirements will be met only in accordance with Micronesian laws and with the consent of that government.

- ▶ The United States expects to make fair and adequate compensation for any lands used.

▶ The U. S. position is that, for the protection of both parties, the detailed arrangements for defense land requirements be negotiated and effected prior to the termination of the Trust Agreement.

- ▶ Although details were not disclosed, new defense land requirements in the Marianas and Palau were described.

Further status talks were held in Palau from 2 April to 13 April 1972. As a result of these discussions, our two delegations came closer to agreement on a number of issues, and agreed in principle on the basic nature of the future relationship. Additionally, a new development surfaced in the form of a possible secession from Micronesia by the Marianas District.

It was tentatively agreed in the April talks that the future relationship between the United States and Micronesia would be sealed with a Compact of Free Association, subject to the approval of the Micronesian people, and that defense land requirements will be negotiated before the signing of a Compact. Once settled upon, these base rights will continue for the length of their specified terms regardless of any future termination of the proposed Compact.

The debate over the principle of unilateral termination of a future compact continued, but both sides eased their stances on the issue. It now seems that the compact, if approved, will be mutually terminable for an initial period, to ensure that the relation of Free Association is fairly tested, and then unilaterally terminable after that. Exact details for such a compromise are still uncertain.

Another highly important development which opened a totally new chapter in the Micronesian situation occurred at Palau. Representatives of the Marianas delegation, which favors a closer alliance with the United States, presented a statement to Ambassador Williams requesting that the American delegation join them in separate talks. Citing the correlation between political stability and economic development, and no doubt inspired by the obvious success of their sister island Guam, the representatives asked to discuss the possibility of their joining us in a much closer political alliance than the "free association" which the rest of Micronesia is asking for. In an unprecedented move, Ambassador Williams agreed to this request, referring to the Marianas' long-standing desire for such ties. He also seemed to give the subject solidarity when he included in his response that "it does not seem that the American policy of seeking a common solution for

the entire Territory is any longer feasible or desirable." A separate agreement with the Marianas District would make possible an apparently ideal solution to our defense land requirements in Micronesia, since those islands offer the optimum in consolidation owing to their nearness to Guam. One may thus envision a strong alliance and centrally located interior position in the Marianas, and a loose "free association" with the remaining five districts which would at least prevent their occupation or military use by a hostile power. It must be emphasized, however, that any agreement regarding the Trust Territory's future is tentative at best, and will ultimately depend on the wishes of the people. The options open to them remain varied.

There has also been much talk of late in the Territory of entering into a "free association" agreement with Japan rather than the United States. This consideration is or should be cause for grave concern by Americans.

When the United States assumed control over the Trust Territory, one of our first moves was to expel all Japanese nationals. While this was considered necessary in order to implement American policies, it created a vacuum of skilled business and economic talent which was not filled by Americans, since it was our expressed desire that the Micronesians manage their own economy. In the years following, while we as administrators established limited education and health programs, we employed a policy of what might be called "benign neglect" regarding the economy, and supplemented it with an annual budget of as little as \$12 million. Consequently, little industry or trade developed, and for many years scrap metal left behind from World War II shared the major export market with the already established copra trade. The lack of development, coupled with the minimal aid from the United States, contrasted sharply with the bustling, prosperous days of Japanese occupation, and caused many islanders of all ages and political leanings to gaze longingly northward. For, while it is true that the Japanese exploited Micronesia, they also created jobs, built towns, sewer systems, numerous airfields, roads, and railways, and their contributions are still very much in evidence. Japan, it is expected, would have absolutely no qualms about assuming the "burden" of administering the islands, and the possibility of their doing so is not imaginary.

In a 1969 article entitled "Is Western Pacific to be Japanese Lake?", Joseph C. Murphy, the Editor of the *Guam Daily News* and a frequent presager of this possibility, wrote that:

"Time is running out for the U. S. in the Western Pacific. The seeds of discontent have been sown among the people because of inadequate money, lack

of interest, and an often inept administration . . . At the same time the new Japanese are moving into the islands in increasing numbers, dollar bills sticking out of their pockets."

We have countered Japan's economic overtures with an increase in Micronesia's budget to its \$60 million ceiling. We have instituted civic action programs which have emphasized new water and electrical projects and the rebuilding of Japanese airfields. And, although we have completely excluded Japanese investment within the Territory to date through the "most favored nation" clause of the Trust Agreement, all this may be too little and too late compared to Japan's peaceful, but no less determined, drive to regain her place in the tropical sun.

On Guam, for example, where Japan is not restricted from investment, she has poured millions into the economy, building hotels, shops, and agencies, and has re-established the area as a favorite tourist mecca. Guam, which it must be remembered has been a U. S. Territory since 1898, has often considered itself "more American than America." It has an unusually patriotic population. Furthermore, almost 40% of the people on the island are U. S. military personnel. Thus, it came as something of a shock when Governor Manuel Guerrero, speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Japanese-financed Guam-Tokyo Hotel in 1969, opined: "Guam is no longer owned by a few people . . . We can't build a wall around Guam."

The same stands true for Micronesia, and the only drawback to such extensive investment in the Trust Territory has been the exclusive terms of the Trust Agreement. When the Territory is granted its new political status, it may well endure a more persistent economic onslaught from Japan, and the dangers of economic and political control which are implicit. Considering the Territory's wavering loyalties and fledgling political apparatus, the results of such an economic assault could—to borrow a Khrushchev phrase—bury U. S. aspirations throughout the area.

Actually, Japan has already made direct moves into Micronesia. Fully 30% of the 26,700 tourists who visited the Territory in 1970 were Japanese, with the bulk of the others coming from nearby Guam. Air Micronesia, which established a new Guam-Tokyo service late in 1970, predicted that Japanese tourism will triple as a result of that service. More subtly, Japan has been allowed to construct war memorials for her World War II dead in the area, similar to the huge million-dollar Peace Memorial constructed by her War Memorial Association on Guam. For instance, a World War II Peace Memorial and Park was recently built at Suicide Cliff on Saipan, where thousands of Japanese nationals hurled themselves to their deaths rather than

face capture by the victorious Americans. Most interestingly, this project was proposed and headed by a prominent Japanese businessman who headed an industrial venture in Micronesia prior to the war.

An even more revealing insight into Japan's interest can be gained by examining the \$10-million war claims settlement for the Territory which Japan and the United States shared as a result of a 1969 agreement. The United States is paying its \$5 million in cash. The Japanese, however, used the payments as a bargaining position to get their foot into the door economically in the Territory. In accordance with the terms of the Agreement which entered into force in July 1969, Japan is providing its half of the payments in "products of Japan and services of the Japanese people" over a three-year period. Additionally, as a result of a diplomatic "exchange of notes" between our two governments following the signing of the War Claims Agreement, Japanese fishing vessels gained the right to call upon the ports of Truk and Palau for the purpose of purchasing supplies and for the rest and recreation of their crews. "The government of Japan and its nationals" were further accorded the privilege of salvaging and freely disposing of Japanese ships sunk in the territorial waters of the Trust Territory during World War II. According to the *Honolulu Advertiser* of 29 June 1970, "some suggest the Japanese will make more from the scrap metal than the \$5 million in goods and services she is giving." Even more significant, Japan has thus taken another subtle but giant step toward re-establishing a firm presence in Micronesia.

Considering all aspects of these Western Pacific developments, plus Japan's strong desire to expand southward, Joseph Murphy summed up many of the experts' feelings when he stated that "In twenty years, Japan could control the area economically and politically."

Another external threat to the comfortable political situation which we have enjoyed in the Trust Territory until recently has periodically come from the Soviet Union. Employing what has been termed their "strategic island concept," the Soviets have used many means to spread their influence throughout the world. These means have taken various forms, including military force, economic, humanitarian, and military aid, and diplomatic and trade activities. Also, they have seldom let an opportunity pass to exploit the rifts which occasionally occur between us and our allies. Even Micronesia has experienced vibrations from this policy. In June 1970, realizing our strategic needs and predictably exploiting the impasse which had developed during negotiations concerning the Territory's future status,

the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, Viktor L. Issreyan, lambasted our policies in the Territory. Speaking before the Trusteeship Council, he accused the United States of trying to perpetuate its grip on Micronesia, and turn it into a "Strategic strongpoint in the midst of the Pacific Ocean." He went on to urge that there be no further activity involving acquisition or extension of military bases "without the knowledge and agreement of the Congress of Micronesia." Although his words were obviously meant for ears other than those of the people of the Trust Territory, they must nonetheless be interpreted as an overture in that direction as well. Similarly, the Soviet Union has periodically iced the cake with scholarship offers to Micronesian students.

Admittedly, these actions have not been cause for grave concern on our part, and the Micronesian question has not been a gut issue between our two countries. However, with the Soviets on the move in so many directions, it is a safe assumption that they would have more than a passing interest in a piece of Micronesian real estate should the opportunity arise and, in any event, would be quite happy to see us lose our rights to bases in that area.

For many Americans, there is the understandable desire to keep the Micronesian pot on the back burner where, as it continues to boil and bubble, the toil and trouble it produces will not affect us. But we must not do this.

Senator Saliu was right in reminding us that this is the Micronesians' home, but he might agree that our military presence would strengthen Micronesia's future prospects by bolstering its economy without attempting to control it.

And Mr. Murphy was right, too, when he warned us that time is running out for the United States in the western Pacific.

But rightest of all was "Pete" Ellis, dead these 50 years. We didn't heed him when he told us how important the region was to us. We dare not ignore him again.

Graduated from the Naval Academy with the Class of 1968, Captain Webb was Class Honorman of Marine Corps Basic Class 3-69, and also received the Military Skills award. He served in Vietnam as a rifle platoon, and company commander, and with regimental operations. Wounded twice, he was awarded the Navy Cross, Silver Star Medal, and two Bronze Star Medals. After serving at Marine Officer Candidate School for a year as an instructor and platoon commander, he assumed his present duties as Senior Marine Corps member, White House Liaison Section, Office of the Secretary of the Navy.