

TINIAN, Mariana Islands — At 2:45 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945, the B-29 bomber "Enola Gay" lifted off the runway of North Field at the end of this island bearing a single 14-foot projectile which would level the entire Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing 70,000 with a single blinding flash and mushroom cloud, virtually ending World War II and initiating the nuclear age.

For more than two decades the long coral-and-asphalt runways at North Field have lain silent and abandoned save for an occasional handful of tourists, a few wheeling and screeching tropical birds and the slowly encroaching lushness of a thick green jungle plant known here in the Pacific as *tongen-tongen*. The rest of this natural island fortress jutting out of the sea has been almost as quiet. After the 40,000 American troops went home and their tent and quonset cities were dismantled, Tinian was left to a few hundred Chamorro natives and a few thousand head of cattle.

Now, for the first time since the days of its might and fame, the pace is beginning to quicken. In recent months a procession of U.S. military men has materialized, usually unannounced and sometimes in civilian garb, to inspect the dust-blown runways, the 50 miles of paved roads and the silt-choked harbor. A big and well-connected Honolulu firm is suddenly bidding to reopen the old military quarry which once yielded a bountiful flow of construction materials. Standard Oil of California has made known plans to build a \$50 million oil refinery more suited to the needs of powerful warships and heavy bombers than to the piddling demands of Tinian's 100 antique jeeps and weatherbeaten cars. A week ago Wednesday a retired admiral and a Madison Avenue management consultant swooped down without warning to study the island for a California firm specializing in house-keeping and maintenance contracts for the U.S. military. This week another

America's Island Empire: Trust vs. Territory

By Don Oberdorfer
Washington Post Foreign Service

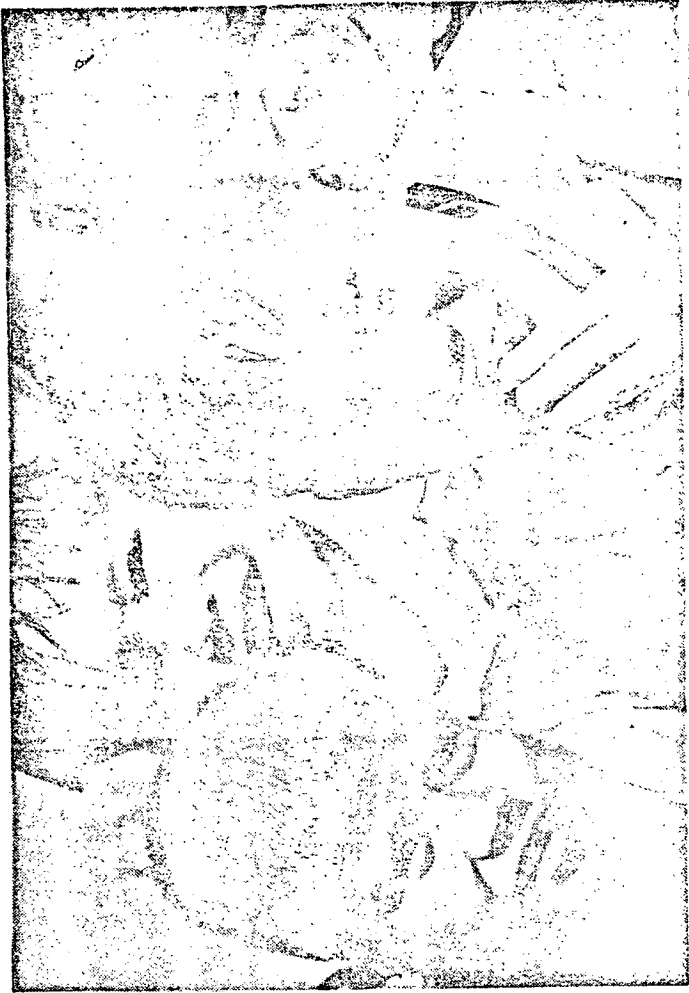
military survey team, led by a general officer, is expected.

Growing Resistance

UNDER A PENTAGON plan to establish a post-Vietnam fallback defense line in Micronesia — the enormous mid-Pacific ocean domain which the United States has ruled as "trustee" for the United Nations since World War II — Tinian is slated to become a joint Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps air base and naval facility. But just as the sundrenched turf of Ti-

nian and the other 2,140 trusteeships is only the tip of volcanic mountains and coral formations rising from the ocean floor, so the Pentagon's plans reflect only the most easily perceived aspect of difficult and complex maneuverings concerning the future relationship of the United States and its Micronesian wards.

After more than three years of preliminary bargaining, U.S.-Micronesian "future political status" negotiations appear to be approaching a critical point. The U.S. government, which has



Children at a territorial school in Tinian: Under what flag will they grow up?

been adamant until now about maintaining complete military control over this vast coconut-and-coral empire, has met growing resistance from island leaders who have taken to heart American-taught concepts of political freedom and self-determination. Sentiment for outright independence from the United States — which was unthinkable to Micronesians a few years ago and is still unthinkable to many American military planners — has taken root and is growing rapidly. And in a

variety of ways, the time for decision is fast approaching:

- The days of United Nations trusteeships are numbered. Of 11 such special mandates at the end of World War II, only two remain today. Australia's trusteeship over the Territory of New Guinea is scheduled to end next year, leaving the United States' Micronesian Trust Territory the only such colonial domain under U.S. supervision anywhere—until an American-Micronesian agreement is reached to dissolve the mandate.

- The Marianas island group, including Saipan and Tinian, has virtually seceded from the main negotiations over Micronesia's future, in hopes of striking an attractive separate deal with the United States. The Marianas islanders have hired the Washington law firm of Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering as well as a group of Washington economic consultants, and are likely to drive a hard bargain. U.S.-Marianas talks are due to get down to business in Saipan in late March or early April.

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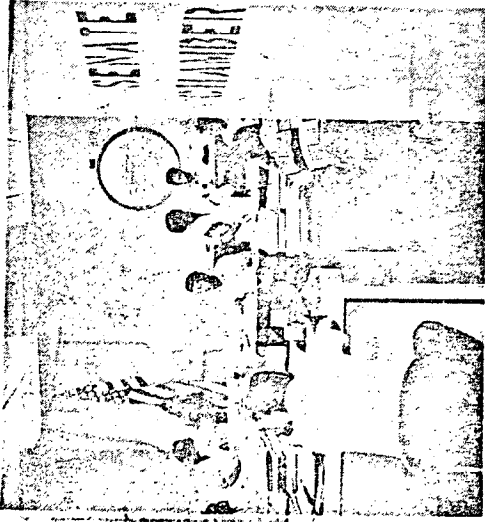


Photo by Don Christy—The Washington Post
The Micronesian Senate in session on Saipan.

Micronesia: Decision Time

ISLANDS. From Page R1
The main American-Micronesian discussions have temporarily bogged down because of the islanders' insistence that they be permitted to opt for independence should the terms of a proposed limited sovereignty deal with the United States seem unacceptable. Micronesia is asking \$100 million a year in American aid in return for continued U.S. military and diplomatic control of the area after the end of the Paul Warburg, former assistant secretary of defense and Washington law partner of Clark Clifford, as adviser in the main negotiations, which are expected to resume in May.

In late May or early June, the U.S. Trusteeship Council will begin its annual public debate on the United States performance of its responsibilities in Micronesia. This year for the first time the inspection team, which is currently traveling in the strategic area, includes a Soviet diplomat. More-



Rep. Cliff Balo: "It is the Micronesians who have the trust and the Americans who have the territory."

various groups already had well-developed local cultures—Micronesia fell under the successive colonial dominion and political and economic domination of Spain, Germany and Japan except for the island of Guam, which was annexed by the United States. The indigenous, handsome Japanese, who seized Micronesia from Germany in World War I and kept the area under a post-war League of Nations mandate, extensively developed many of the richest and most productive islands to produce sugar, fish, copra and other war materials and, as World War II approached, turned the island empire into a bustling strategic fortress.

The vast western Pacific area between Hawaii and the Philippines was recognized as strategically important, and in World War II the United States fought its way through Kwajalein and Eniwetok, Saipan and Tinian, Peleliu and Agaña at a cost of 6,298 American killed in island battles to vanquish the Japanese. Wave after wave of B-29s flying almost around the clock bombed Tokyo and other Japanese airfields before the Enola Gay—and a sister plane which destroyed much of Nagasaki three days later—ended the war with atomic bombs launched from Tinian's North Field.

Secrecy and Delay

AFTER VJ DAY the U.S. military sought to assure continued American control of the western Pacific, but the proposals fell in the face of wartime pledges that America had no territorial ambitions. The compromise result, made in Washington, was a special U.S. "strategic trusteeship" under the control of the Security Council (where the United States has a veto). The United States was given the right to establish military bases in the area, and pledged in return to promote economic advancement and eventual self-government of the islands. Actually, the United States had no idea of promoting independence; the phrase was added to the trusteeship agreement at the behest of the Soviet Union.

The United States established nuclear testing grounds and later a highly sophisticated missile testing area centered on Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, moving thousands of natives off their land with minimal compensation. In 1948, the United States sent 80,000 troops to the islands and later a Central Intelligence Agency built a modern and expensive headquarters (later inherited by the Trust Territory administration) at the Trust Territory base for Saipan. Marine exercises are assigned to raid the mainland. Outside these American enclaves, most of the rest of Micronesia was left to molder by a succession of Navy and Interior Department administrators. For more than a decade, this vast area was closed off to the world behind a nearly impenetrable security screen.

With other colonial areas gaining independence and time running out on the trusteeship system, President Kennedy ordered a secret National Security Council memorandum in April, 1962, recommending that the United States set the area as part of a plan to terminate the U.N. mandate and bring Micronesia eventually under U.S. control. The following year a presidential survey mission refined the plans, which called for extensive educational, political and economic development work. In 1967 or 1968, when the islanders would be asked to vote in a plebiscite on the question of their future affiliation.

Had the timetable been kept, everything might have worked as planned—but a slow-moving bureaucracy in Washington had difficulty deciding the details, and in 1967 and 1968 a balky Congress refused to pass a presidentially sponsored resolution providing the way for the Micronesian vote. Thus it was the fall of 1969 before negotiations began with the increasingly wary representatives of the "Micronesian Congress, which had been established four years before.

"Free Association"

AT THE BEGINNING the United States offered to make Micronesia an American territory similar to Guam or the Virgin Islands. This was quickly rejected by the Micronesians. This was the discussion centered on a plan known as "free association." In which the United States would maintain military and diplomatic sway and the Micronesians would be granted a measure of internal self-government and control, it sounded acceptable at the beginning but as details unfolded, the sticking points have emerged on the Micronesian side.

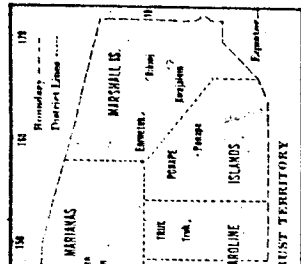
First, the islanders insist on the right to terminate the "free association" arrangement after five years or so and opt for independence. Micronesian sources, the United States proposes at least 15 or 20 years of "free association," and even then would hand the islands by a prior security pact continuing American military base rights and the right to keep out any other foreign powers.

"We're not ready for independence today," but given some five or ten years of "free association," I think we would be ready," says Sen. Lazarus Salih, the 36-year-old chairman of the Micronesian negotiating team, in his view, the movement toward independence began gathering momentum last summer when the islanders began to discover the details of the U.S. terms—until then, it had not generally been considered a feasible possibility. "Nobody is saying it would be just under a year," he says. "The biggest independence nobody would have been there is food and shelter. It's really a question of greater security, financial and otherwise, or of greater independence from foreign domination."

Second, the United States appears intent on paying a relatively small price in dollars for the rights which it seeks to obtain. American negotiators have told the islanders that the \$100 million a year they succeeded in bogged down, the United States has offered substantial cuts in the \$100 million annual budget for the trust islands. American administrators insist this is a routine budgetary cutback due to government-wide trends, but to the islanders it looks suspiciously like economic pressure.

Third and perhaps most important as an immediate issue, the Micronesians continue to be worried about future American military control of their scarce land resources and frightened by past and present U.S. failure to hand back the islands. U.S. failure to hand back the islands and Japan's acres seized by the Germans and Japs. Possibly because there is so little of it, land is dearer to Micronesians than most Americans could ever imagine. In Yap, for example, even a person's name is derived from the name of the piece of land which he and his family possess.

Over recent months, the United States has outlined the military areas which it plans to use under "free association."



By Joseph Matthews—The Washington Post

quest rooms and is never crowded—until very recently, at least.

TRUST AND TERRITORY
ALL THIS MUST WAIT, however, for the completion of the negotiations with the Micronesians and the broader talks with Congress at a whole. And as of today, the future is in doubt.

The traditional chiefs and elected leaders of Palau have declared themselves "unquestionably opposed" to the use of their land by the military, and have refused even to permit a survey team to come for a look.

It is a different story on Tinian, where only 627 people are residing around in 30 square miles of available land. Most of the leaders, at least, are eager to see American troops return, believing that they will bring with them a high school, a hospital and above all a measure of prosperity which the island now lacks.

Mayor Antonio Borja has written to the Secretary of Defense welcoming the armed forces back to "their old home on Tinian" and incidentally offering to rent them some housing and refrigeration facilities. Former mayor Joe Cruz, who points out that the port of Pohnpei is "the biggest port money spender in the world," has already picked four sites for the night rooms he hopes to establish when the GIs come. He is also planning a grand "Tinian Hotel," a World War II relic which served as Gen. Curtis LeMay's headquarters in 1945. It has only three

For now, however, there is no break in the clouds over the future of the western Pacific. The likelihood is that the opposition to U.S. plans will persist and keep under the United States sky a heavy shadow a little more cross, and the Micronesians obtain more territory.



Chief Negotiator Lazarus Salih: "Under independent conditions, we would accept."

SOLIPAN, Mariana Islands — The teeth of some senators are stained black from betel nut, which they sometimes chew during law-making sessions. Others toy now and then with a necklace of tiny seashells which frequently can be found atop the Senate president's wooden nostrum.

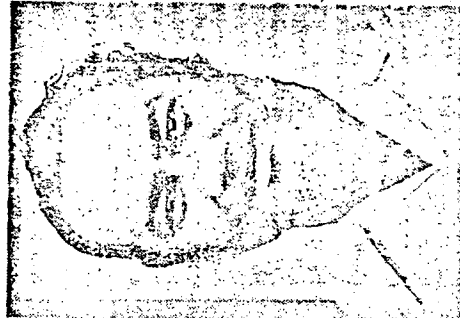
Some of them hold titles of tribal royalty in their native islands, while others are entirely self-made men. One senator was launched on the path to Western education when he energetically fetched coconuts for an American schoolteacher who showed up on his island.

Their origins may be exotic, but the senators of the Congress of Micronesia — who will have a great deal to do with the outcome of the negotiations with the U.S. government — are a shrewd, intelligent and highly impressive group of men. They are also surprisingly sophisticated about both the principles and procedures of the democratic processes which they have recently acquired from their American "trustees." If their public performance and private discussions during the last four days of their just-completed legislative session is a guide, any idea that these native leaders will be a pushover for U.S. negotiators is utter madness.

THE PRESIDENT of the senate, Tostuo Nakayama, was born in 1931 on a tiny spit of coral, and sand known as Piseras, some 150 miles northwest of the one-time Japanese bastion of Truk. His father was a local official of Nippon's "South Seas Development Co." His mother was a native of the area.

The future politician grew up in remote atolls and was 16 years old before he had a chance to go to school. A U.S. naval civil affairs officer chose him as an assistant, but after a few months he decided to return to his native lagoon. In 1951 a

Three Shrewd Leaders



From left: Sen. Tosiuro Nakayama of Truk, Anata Kabua of the Marshalls and John Mangefel of Yap.

ship docked with news that there was one opening for a student from his island group at Pacific Islands Central School, then the only public high school in the vast trust territory. Nakayama boarded the ship and headed for the school — only to find that another young man had already claimed the place. But after a few weeks the other student decided Nakayama should have the seat. He withdrew and went back to the outer islands, where he is now an elementary school principal.

After graduation, Nakayama worked as a clerk in a government office before winning a scholarship to the University of Hawaii in 1955. After he returned, he became an adult education and political affairs aide in the Truk district. He was elected to the Senate in Micronesia's first congressional election in 1965.

Though critical of many aspects of American policy in Micronesia

and a leading advocate of Micronesian independence, the Senate president has high praise for the American political ideals with which he has been imbued. "The United States taught us what we know now, and we can even speak against the U.S. without fear," he observed recently. "That is one of the things we like and we respect. And that is one of the reasons I believe the U.S. will eventually grant us our independence."

Since becoming a prominent figure he has been to Japan — where his father had moved after the war — as well as to the United States and Europe. "Japan would never have thought of anything like this," he says of the political system in Micronesia. "It is a credit to the USA."

A MATA KARUAS, father and mother were the offspring of rival chieftains in the Marshall Islands, where he was born on a coral

atoll near Jaluit in 1928. When the Americans came to the island where he was staying at the end of World War II, Kabua could speak only three or four words of English — but his enterprise and intelligence quickly impressed a schoolteacher from Texas who wanted someone to fetch coconuts and run errands. The Texan put Kabua in a teacher training school on a trial basis, and he learned quickly. He was selected to go to Guam for further training and, after a tour as an elementary school principal in the Marshalls, attended a year of college on the Hawaiian island of Maui.

Later he helped develop the tax system in the Marshalls and was a key organizer of the district legislature. A shrewd businessman, he was the first Micronesian member of the stabilization board for copra, the dried coconut meat product which traditionally has been the principal export commodity of small Pacific

islands. In 1958 he became president and manager of the Marshall Islands Import-Export Co. and is considered among the wealthiest men in Micronesia.

Kabua is grateful for his opportunities from the United States and cautious about independence any time soon. He is extremely unhappy, however, about the U.S. failure to pay adequately for the land which the Pentagon occupies in the Marshalls, including the missile range in the Kwajalein atoll. "The U.S. philosophy is scary, particularly when you read about the American Indians and how their land was taken . . . The people of some of our islands have been waiting 27 years for payment. This is the kind of thing which may divert us from going with the United States."

JOHAN MANGEFEL is from Yap. "The Land of the Stone Mon-

ey," which is probably the most tradition-bound of the six Micronesian island districts. He was born on the west coast of Yap island in 1932 and attended Japanese school briefly before the war broke out. During the war, he and his family hid in the bush to keep out of the Japanese-American conflict.

After the Americans took over, he attended elementary school in Yap and was selected for the Pacific Islands Central School to continue his education. He taught school for a few years and then won a Trust Territory scholarship to the University of Hawaii where he earned his bachelor's degree in English. He was a teacher-trainer and elementary school principal on Yap from his graduation in 1963 until his election to the Micronesian House of Representatives in 1968. This year he moved over to the Senate.

A conservative man from a conservative island, Mangefel argues in the Senate for Micronesian self-reliance and adherence to traditional ways — as when he recently opposed a bill to establish a low-cost housing authority as a vehicle for U.S. housing aid. He declared that every man should provide his own shelter, if only a thatch-roofed hut, and opposed the trend of dependence on the United States. Concerning the negotiations over Micronesia's future, he believes the area will remain under the U.S. wing.

Boeing 727 jets of Continental Airlines Air Micronesia fly between Yap and Trust Territory headquarters on Saipan three times a week, and many of the flights bring small bags of Yapese betel nut for Mangefel and his colleagues from the stone money island. The betel nut from home has a better taste, he says in his letter-perfect University of Hawaii English.

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