

W

Pipe Dreams

By Joe Murphy



So, how did your Monday morning start off?

Frankly, it was not one of my better days. First, it was raining, and my wife's itsy-bitsy Volkswagon wouldn't start. So, I got my biggie behind her car (I've done it before) to give her a push to get it started.

Unfortunately, my bumper slipped off, and smashed up the back end of the bug pretty good, raising havoc with the tail-lights, etc. In fact my car stuck there, and the thought crossed my mind that we might be mating Fords and Bugs. Eventually I got a jack out, unhooked the two, and went back to my mission, cutting tangantangan with a chain saw behind my house.

Even that didn't turn out very well. Way down there in the midst of the jungle, a quarter of a mile away from the nearest aid, I chopped up my leg with the chain saw. Blood was gushing out pretty good, and I envisioned the possibility of crawling through the boonies, up a hill, with a tourniquet between my teeth. But, I had seen all of this on TV. I managed to make it into the house, where I ripped up a bed sheet in the proper style, and stopped the bleeding. At least enough to enable me to get to work.

My day was complete when Jim Adkins, of East-West Rental Center called to tell me that they would have to charge me more for the rental of the chain saw, because they had to spend so much time cleaning off the blood off.

Nobody can keep a secret anymore.

And so somebody told you that Yap was sort of an isolated place, out of the mainstream, so to speak.

Not so. I received a letter mailed only two days ago from a businessman there. He thought that I would like to hear the "rumor of the day on Yap."

"It seems that Howard Hughes is living in a shipping van on the Yap docks with Patricia Hearst."

Now if we can only confirm this remarkable piece of information, we could put it on the wires, and Yap would become famous.

Sunday was a big day for my license-plate watchers club. Within a few minutes I saw one plate with 33,000 plus on a car, and one with a 7,000 plus on a pick-up truck. Together they total 40,000, and we've still got a week left before the license deadline. No wonder I find it difficult to even get out of my office, much less trying to drive on Marine Drive.

I know that GovGuam is sending out notices to owners of old, unoccupied buildings, fire traps all, telling them that they must be torn down, and not left for the rats to accumulate. But, I suspect that the law doesn't have much in the way of teeth, or GovGuam doesn't have any method of notifying the owners that their buildings must go.

I'm thinking right now of that long-abandoned eyesore between that sparkling new building, owned by Manuel Jose, at the corner of Martyr and Saylor streets in Agana, and the Daily News building. A bulldozer was in there a couple of weeks ago clearing out a vacant left, but they left the building standing to my bewilderment. I don't think it has been used for the past six years.

For those islanders who think that the United States is moving too slowly in the area of self-government, they might consider the case of American Samoa. Twice in the last year and a half, the people of American Samoa have had a chance to vote on an elected governor measure, in which they would elect their own governor instead of having appointed by Washington. Twice the Samoans have rejected the idea, apparently because they feel a Washington appointee can get more goodies from Uncle Sam, or possibly because they feel no Samoan is qualified, or because the islanders aren't ready for self-government.

But, the big men in Washington aren't taking this rejection sitting down. They have pushed for still another election, probably in the next couple of months, giving the Samoans still another chance to choose their own leaders. It looks like the Department of Interior is really trying to make the people more independent. Maybe, they'll wind up having an election on the matter every two weeks, until they finally wear them down.

What does this island need in the way of capital improvement money over the next six years—which would take us up to 1980? Would you believe only about \$733,000,000—give or take a few bucks.

I've got a copy of some projections, a summary of Capital Improvement Requirements for 1974-1979, from the 1970 Application for Federal Aid, which lists money needed. Number one prospective money grabber would be highways, with \$141 million; closely followed by the Guam Power Authority with \$130 million. The Department of Education will need \$61 million for new schools and facilities, while the Guam International Air Terminal would like \$63 million for new facilities. Others on the wish list: PUAG, \$20 million for water, \$44 million for sewers, \$14 million for telephone (already obsolete); GMH \$35 million; U of Guam, \$32 million; Administration \$9 million; Public Safety \$10 million; Parks and Recreation \$35 million; Guam Housing \$26 million; Urban Renewal \$32 million; Guam Economic Development, \$32 million; and Commercial Port \$15 million. That figures out to \$7,330 for every man, woman, and child. This is just for new facilities, not to say about debt repayment, maintenance, or regular budgeting for operation or personnel.

Well, at least it's nice to know that we are thinking ahead: In the projections 1977 would be a big year for capital improvements with \$142,000,000 needed.

I took one look at that list of what Guam needs over the next six years and decided not to run for office.