

GENERAL

9751



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

MAR 18 1964

Dear Mr. Wright:

The White House has brought to our attention the comments you made to President Johnson about the article which appeared in the Saturday Evening Post entitled "America's Neglected Colonial Paradise."

We have received several letters regarding the article and have prepared the enclosed statement which outlines the current programs within the Trust Territory. We have also enclosed for your information a brochure which we hope will be helpful to you.

You may be assured that we are determined to press forward with our programs to improve conditions in this area.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) John A. Carver, Jr.

Assistant Secretary of the Interior

Mr. F. E. Wright  
111 E. Hampton  
Stockton, California

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Charles E. Johnson ✓

Nothing else sent to  
Central Files as of 3/24/64

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## Developments in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

March 1964

It is unfortunate that the recent Saturday Evening Post article on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was not better balanced and more accurate. For example, the article reports two deaths and 239 illnesses resulting from infectious hepatitis in Koror. The fact is that during the last year a total of 37 cases of infectious hepatitis were reported for the entire territory. We regard this as 37 too many. The article does not report on the mass polio immunization program which has now been completed and the programmed immunization program for other communicable diseases which will soon begin.

The article is misleading in its comparisons between the territory under the Japanese and under American administration. Prior to World War II, the territory was an area of Japanese colonization; in 1938 the colonial Japanese population outnumbered the native Micronesian by 70,000 to 50,000. The political and economic life of the territory was in the hands of the colonists. Micronesian participation was minor. The economy was, in turn, subsidized so as to lessen the dependence of the Japanese Empire on non-Empire sources of supply. Lastly, it should be remembered that the territory was fortified in violation of the League of Nation's Mandate and, thereby, played a bloody part in the history of World War II.

When the United States occupied the islands during and at the end of the war, we found the Micronesian people poverty-stricken and in ill-health, with great numbers displaced from their home islands. The Japanese-built economic base had been destroyed in the fighting. Micronesians were left untrained, uneducated, and unable to begin in any significant way to rebuild even a shadow of the pre-war economy. It has been the task of the United States, as Administering Authority, to attempt to help the Micronesians to help themselves in the modern post-war world. We are not operating the islands, as the Japanese did, as a colony.

At the time the Interior Department assumed responsibility for the administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in 1951, stateside standards were thought to be beyond the capacities of the territory to sustain self-sufficiency. During this period, appropriations were limited by statute to \$7,500,000 a year.

But, in 1961, we concluded that appropriations had not kept pace with the needs of the growing population in the territory. Our obligations toward the inhabitants and the development of the economic potential of the territory require more than "minimum" services.

As the first step of acceleration, the late President Kennedy in July 1962 signed Public Law 87-541 which raised the appropriation ceiling to \$15,000,000 in 1963, and to \$17,500,000 annually thereafter. In May 1963, the full \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 1963 was appropriated. A few months later the Congress appropriated \$15,000,000 for the current fiscal year. We have requested \$17,500,000 from the Congress for the next fiscal year.

The support of elementary education had been almost wholly the responsibility of local communities. Our new education program is changing this picture. We are replacing inadequate elementary schools, half of which were single-room buildings with classes taught by one Micronesian teacher, with more than 500 new classrooms. Qualified American teachers are being recruited to help staff these schools. About 70 were hired for the current school year and more will be recruited for the next year.

In the meantime, intensive training has been initiated to upgrade the teaching capabilities of the Micronesian teachers. Improvement is also being made in other educational programs--secondary, college scholarships, and adult education. A major increase in these programs is contemplated for fiscal years 1965 and 1966. We have estimated an expenditure of \$3,316,000 in 1965 for further expansion and improvement of the secondary school program. Beginning with the 1962 school year, all districts except Yap opened the first year of public high school. The Yap high school program started one year later. With the opening of the 1964 school year, full four-year public high schools will be in operation in all districts. High school training will thus be available to all qualified Trust Territory students in their own Districts.

Of no less importance is the provision of adequate health and sanitation services. Thanks to the action of the Congress in approving in the 1963 and 1964 budgets, large increases for public health services and hospital construction are available.

One of our goals has been replacement of old, outmoded hospital facilities with modern plants. During 1963, two new hospitals were opened; a 90-bed hospital in the Mariana District, and a 68-bed hospital in the Marshalls. An additional unit of the Marshalls hospital and new hospitals in the Palau and Mariana Districts are under construction. Also planned for early construction are new hospital facilities in Yap, Truk and Ponape with a total capacity of 350 beds. We have also started a program to rebuild all sub-hospitals and dispensaries in the outlying islands. All hospitals in the Trust Territory are being equipped with modern equipment, and dental and laboratory facilities. All now have wards for tuberculosis, a major health program.

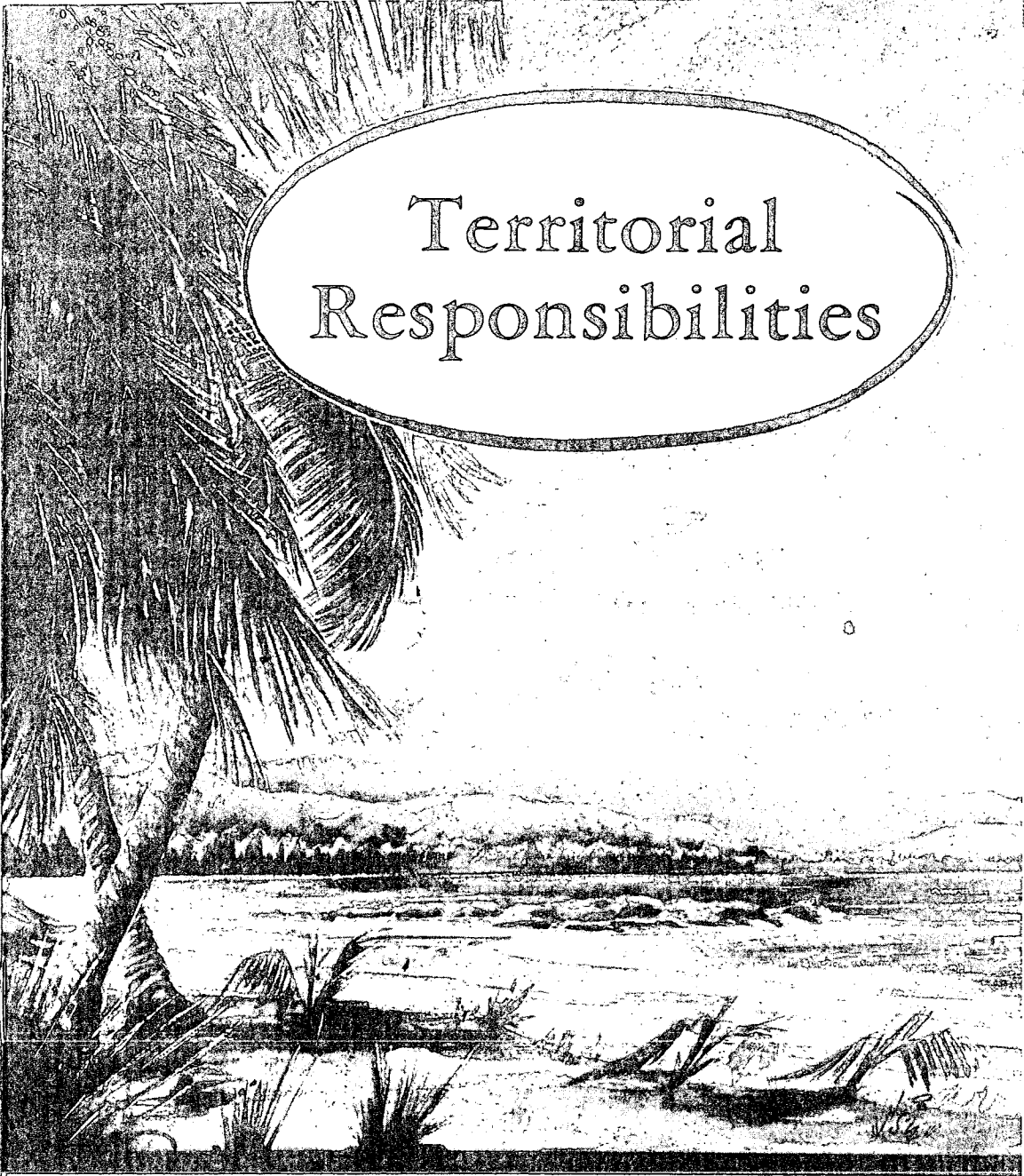
The increases in health appropriations have enabled us to recruit senior medical officers from the United States to work in each district. They have bolstered the level of training of Micronesians who are now at the "practitioner" level. Additional medical education, leading to full medical degrees, now is being offered to Micronesians.

A third important goal in our administration of the Trust Territory is economic development geared to meet the growing needs of a population which has increased by about 30,000 in the last twenty years. Micronesian investment in business enterprises is being stressed and was given a tangible boost with the establishment in 1963 of an Economic Development Loan Fund, with an initial capitalization of \$100,000 to provide loans for local processing and service businesses. It is planned to increase the Loan Fund until it reaches a capitalization of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.

Another important step to stimulate new economic activity was the opening of the territory to United States' capital investment in August 1962. All such investment is subject to controls which will provide maximum Micronesian participation, and safeguard the Territory's limited natural resources. The first result of this action was the signing in 1963 of a contract with a major American seafood corporation for the development of a commercial fishery enterprise in Palau including the training of Micronesians both ashore and afloat. Other United States firms are exploring the possibilities for commercial ventures.

In addition to the school and hospital construction, the long-range public works program calls for major construction or improvement of airfields, roads, water and power facilities, cold storage plants, dock and harbor facilities, and other activities essential to the establishment of an economic base for the Trust Territory.

The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is not a territory of the United States, and certainly not a colony. The United States administers it in accordance with a trusteeship agreement between the United States and the Security Council of the United Nations. In signing this agreement the United States undertook to promote the political, social and economic development and the educational advancement of the people of Micronesia. Each year the United Nations Trusteeship Council reviews our administration. While there may be honest differences of opinion as to the appropriate rate of development at any given time, American development programs in the Trust Territory have been, and are, directed toward providing the maximum benefits to the people of the territory.



Territorial  
Responsibilities

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE  
**INTERIOR**  
OFFICE OF TERRITORIES

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands



## INTRODUCTION

America's department of natural resources, the Department of the Interior, administers thousands of islands, large and small, in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, some of them thousands of miles distant from the continental United States. Among the most prominent areas are the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Department of the Interior responsibilities regarding the territories are centered in the Office of Territories, Washington, D.C.; but the islands conduct much of their own administration, participating with the Department in a concerted effort to improve living conditions, education, health, and the economy of the island peoples. These islands have a population of nearly 200,000, almost as many people as Alaska, itself a former territory. The Office of Territories makes the needs of the islands known to other Federal agencies; studies the economic, social, and political situations of the territories; and proposes policies, programs, and other actions for improvement and solution of problems. Two former Territories, Alaska and Hawaii, are now States. Puerto Rico has commonwealth status, and the Philippines are independent. One of the objectives of the Department of the Interior is to develop the Territories into self-governing areas.

The Office of Territories headquarters organization is in Washington, D.C.

# Territorial Responsibilities

Stewart L. Udall  
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Richard F. Taitano  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF TERRITORIES



Native boats and canoes dot a Yap harbor.

## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Micronesia, "land of small islands," aptly describes the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The three archipelagoes which it embraces—the Carolines, Marianas, and Marshalls—include more than 2,000 islands (approximately 100 inhabited) covering less than 700 square miles of land, set in some 3,000,000 square miles of ocean.

This area, under Japanese mandate from the League of Nations before World War II, is administered by the United States under a trusteeship agreement with the United Nations.

The smallness of the islands and the immensity of the ocean expanse over which they are scattered, constitute a characteristic of major significance, helping to explain the variances of culture and language, and pointing to the importance of transportation and communications. The two main types of localities—the low coral atolls only a few feet above sea level, and the sharp volcanic uprisings of two and three thousand feet elevation—each have their own subsistence pattern.

The encompassing ocean surface extends in width some 1,500 miles, and in length approximately 2,700 miles. The Philippine Islands lie to the west, only 500 miles distant at one point; to the east is Hawaii, some 1,800 nautical miles from the Marshalls' eastern border. To the southeast are the British-administered Gilbert and Ellice group (also counted as a part of Micronesia, but not in the Trust Territory), and to the south are New Guinea and Australia.

The Trust Territory almost encircles Guam but does not include it; Guam, the southernmost island of the Mariana chain, is a United States territory.

Soil formations have their basis in land elevations emerging from the ocean floor. A vast submarine volcanic ridge stretches southward from Japan along the western perimeter of the Trust Territory. Its highest peaks form the islands and island clusters of the Marianas, Yap, and Palau islands. East of this ridge lie a series of submarine elevations on which stand the rest of the Caroline and all the Marshall islands. Except for the remnants of volcanic outcroppings at Truk, Ponape, and Kusaie, the Caroline and Marshall islands are of coral formation, mostly in the form of atolls. The high islands or volcanic units, in general, have the better soils. Volcanic activity of recent years has occurred only on Pagan in the Marianas.

The islands of the territory generally have a tropical rainy climate characterized by small seasonal changes. Both the temperature and the barometric pressure are remarkably uniform throughout the year. Temperatures average 75°-85° F. in the Marianas and 79°-92° F. in the Carolines and the Marshalls. Compared to United States standards, rainfall and humidity are high. The humidity averages about 80 percent. Rainfall is generally heaviest over the southern half of the Trust Territory, averaging 120 to 160 inches a year and rarely totaling less than 10 inches in any one month. In the northern half, the rainfall varies from 60 to 90 inches a year with more pronounced wet and dry seasons. However, there are a few islands which have extremely dry weather year-round.

Vegetation is lush and verdant through the region. The flora is tropical and includes coconut, breadfruit, pandanus, orange, lime, papaya, mango, mangrove, various hard- and soft-wood trees, hibiscus, ginger, banana, pineapple, taro, sugar cane, tapioca, and adapted vegetables such as sweet potatoes, yams, squash, and corn. Not all, but many of the temperate climate plants also can be grown in the area.

## History

During the 16th century, a period of exploration and discovery in the far reaches of the Pacific, the islands now included in the Trust Territory were visited by Spanish, German, Dutch, and English explorers and adventurers. Magellan visited the Marianas in 1520.

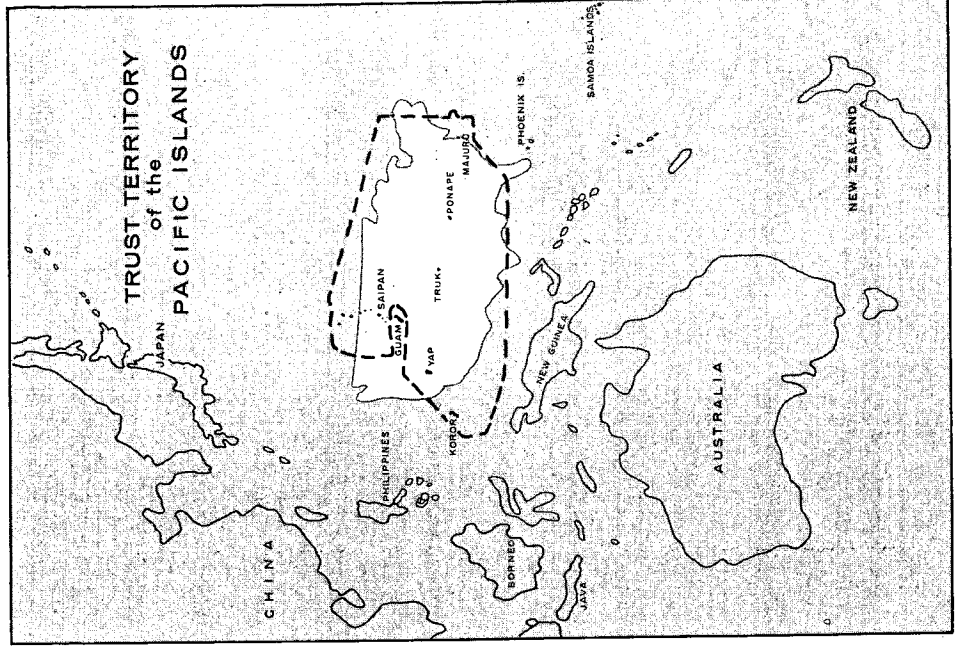
When in 1668 Spain began colonizing the Marianas, her sovereignty and control were undisputed. Two attempts were made by Spanish missionaries to establish themselves in the western Carolines between 1710 and 1731, but both were complete failures, ending in massacres. Later, both England and par-

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particularly Germany showed an interest in the Marshalls and the Carolines. In 1886 the conflicting claims of Spain and Germany over the Marshalls and Carolines were resolved through the mediation of Pope Leo XIII, with Spain retaining title to the Carolines, and Germany securing undisputed control of the Marshall Islands.

In 1899, following the Spanish-American War, Spain sold the Carolines and Marianas (except Guam, which had been ceded to the United States) to Germany. German rule over these islands was terminated in 1914 when the Japanese, soon after entering World War I as an allied power, occupied the islands.

After World War I, Japan retained the islands as a League of Nations mandate. In 1935, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations, but continued through 1938, to submit reports to the League on the mandated territory. During the second World War, these islands were the scenes of famous naval and military battles. The names of such places as Kwajalein, Saipan, Tinian, and Peleliu became world famous. Beginning early in 1944, the United States





captured many of the islands from the Japanese and isolated others from further effective participation in the war.

## Government

From the termination of the Japanese control in 1944 until July 18, 1947, the islands were under military government administered by the United States Navy. On that date, military government was ended by executive order and, under a joint resolution of the Congress, the President approved a trusteeship agreement between the United States and the Security Council of the United Nations placing the islands under the international trusteeship system. Under that agreement, the United States became the administering authority for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and accepted obligations to the United Nations for the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory. Under the agreement, the United States has authority to establish military bases in the territory and to close all or part of the territory for security reasons.

A report on the administration of the Trust Territory is submitted annually by the United States to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. The latter considers and makes recommendations concerning the administration. A visiting mission is sent to the territory by the Trusteeship Council at least once every three years.

On July 1, 1951, the President transferred the responsibility for administration of the Trust Territory from the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of the Interior. All civilian government functions are concentrated under the Secretary of the Interior while military installations are administered by the Navy Department.

The executive authority of the government of the Trust Territory, and the responsibility for carrying out the international obligations undertaken by the United States regarding the Trust Territory, are vested in the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory appointed by the President.

Headquarters of the High Commissioner and his staff are on Saipan. District administrative centers are at Majuro in the Marshalls, Ponape and Truk in the eastern Carolines, Koror and Yap in the western Carolines, and Saipan in the Marianas.

Local governments function in municipalities and districts. Of the 102 municipalities in the Trust Territory, 44 were chartered by July 1, 1962. Elected congresses or councils are established in all districts, and these serve as legislative bodies whose resolutions become law upon approval of the High Commissioner. The magistrate in all municipalities is elected to office.

Micronesian leaders meet annually in conference with the High Commissioner; in 1961 this assemblage of delegates representing all districts became identified as the Council of Micronesia, and a Micronesian member was elected chairman. Law and order are maintained by uniformed, armed, and trained insular constabulary units in each district. Local customs are respected in law and practice.

The judicial system of the Trust Territory consists of: (1) community courts in each municipality or in individual communities, if the district administrator determines that a court should be constituted; (2) a district court in each of six administrative districts; and (3) a high court for the Trust Territory.

## People

Approximately 80,000 people inhabit the Trust Territory. They are classified as Micronesians with the exception of about 1,000 inhabitants of Kapingamarangi and Nukuoro, who are considered Polynesian.

The basic cultures have been grouped into nine major classifications, each defined by certain general geographic boundaries: the Chamorros in the Mariana Islands; the Yapese of Yap; the low-island inhabitants of the Carolines; the Palauans in the western Carolines; the Trukese, Ponapeans, and Kusaicans of the eastern Carolines; the Polynesians of Kapingamarangi and Nukuoro Atolls, and the Marshallese of the Marshalls. The Marshallese are a particularly integrated group, traveling frequently among the islands, and speaking one language. The Chamorros, similarly, share customs and a single language.

Many anthropologists believe that the inhabitants are Malayan in origin, that they probably reached the Pacific Islands by hazardous journeys over long distances of water.

Citizens of the Trust Territory are generally brown-skinned, of medium stature, with black hair. They are low-voiced, friendly, kind and generous. Many are expert navigators.

The past several years have seen a distinct change in the attitudes of the residents of local communities, islands, and districts toward inhabitants of neighboring or distant communities, islands, and districts of the Trust Territory. A growing sense of unity and of cooperation is apparent. Formerly, the Micronesians were wont to think in terms of clan or family groups. Today they are accepting the concept of a united district and territory, and expressing pride in Micronesia as a homeland. There remain in certain local areas, however, some class distinctions which make it difficult for a man of a lower class to receive recognition and to participate in community life on an equal basis with those of a higher class. The effect of mingling together at the district junior and senior high schools, and at various schools abroad, is blurring such sharp class distinctions, making it easier for "low-class" individuals to rise in their professions and to be treated with the consideration and recognition accorded those of the "high-class."

Changes in legislation are being sought to permit citizens of the Trust Territory to travel freely to and from the United States.

## Economy

Traditionally, the economy of the islands has been bound to the coconut, and the copra which is made from it. The resources of the ocean, however, are almost unlimited, and the United States is fostering the development of marine commodities.

A pilot fisheries project for training Micronesians in commercial-type operations is in progress, fishing cooperatives have been established, and a School of Fisheries to teach the specialized skills of large-scale fishing was established in 1961. In addition to offering possibilities for increasing the cash income, fishing provides a main source of protein to the majority of Micronesian families.

Agriculture experiment stations are maintained in all districts, and a Trust Territory Farm Institute in Ponape District trains young Micronesians in scientific agricultural practices adapted to conditions existing in the Territory.

A program of coconut replanting with high-quality nuts from selected mother palms is being carried on throughout the Territory to assure a plentiful coconut supply for continuing copra production. In some cases the replanting is in rehabilitation of typhoon-affected areas.

Cacao for use in chocolate and cacao products is being promoted as an export industry, to supplement the income from copra and fish. It is suitable to Trust Territory soils, and the quality has been judged good in world market tests. Planting of cacao has increased rapidly under the Government's promotional program. Black pepper also is cultivated along with a variety of other tropical spices, trees, and crops.

Handicraft items are produced in all areas, but not in large quantities. Most articles are individually designed. Pandanus floor mats, grass skirts, woven purses, and carved objects are the chief handicraft products. A Micronesian Products Center in Guam serves as an outlet for handicraft products of the Territory.

Credit unions and various types of cooperatives have been established. Chartered trading companies continue to function in all districts, carrying on import, export, and retail trade. Independent business concerns are increasing.

## Education

The educational program is geared to equip the youth for living in Micronesia—preparing them for occupations which will offer opportunities for a livelihood in fields ranging from shop skills, electronics, agriculture and fishing to clerical work, accounting, teaching, and administration.

A Government-financed scholarship program is providing higher education annually to some 60 young people, while approximately the same number attend institutions of higher learning under other scholarship or fellowship grants and through private sponsorship. Fields of study include medicine, education, agriculture, law, home economics, public administration, and general academic courses.

The free public school system includes elementary schools. Junior high schools, a trade school, and district high schools are supported by the Trust Territory government. Dormitory facilities are provided at intermediate schools and the high school. In addition, there are several thousand students at the nearly 50 mission schools.

Most of the teachers in the Trust Territory are Micronesians; they are guided by educational administrators and education specialists, some Micronesians, and

others recruited from the United States. Two district educational administrators are Micronesians holding degrees from United States colleges.

An accelerated and expanded educational program is under way.

## Health

Upper respiratory diseases including the "common cold," intestinal parasites, skin infections, injuries, and tuberculosis are the most frequent health problems encountered. Such tropical diseases as malaria, cholera, plague, and yellow fever are not found in the Trust Territory.

Some of the former disease problems have been controlled under the new programs of preventive medicine, and improvement of the general health of the Micronesians has resulted.

The Trust Territory operates nine hospitals—one at each of the district centers, and two in outlying areas; 106 dispensaries and health centers, and a leprosanium at Pingelap. Technically difficult cases which cannot be adequately handled at the district hospitals are referred to the United States Naval Hospital at Guam for consultation and care. The medical, dental, nursing, and sanitation staff consists principally of Micronesians who have been graduated from the Central Medical School at Fiji, or the Trust Territory School of Nursing at Palau. Each hospital maintains its own training program for health aides, nurses aides, laboratory workers and other district health personnel. Post-graduate refresher training is carried on by small groups rotating in sequence at the United States Naval Hospital, the United States Naval Dental Clinic, and other facilities on Guam.

## Transportation, Communications and Postal Services

A small fleet of vessels supplies service between Trust Territory Headquarters on Saipan and the districts, also inter-district and intra-district. Additionally, air service is provided to the districts on a weekly basis. Radio-telephone service also is available between the Headquarters and most of the district locations.

United States post offices located in the district centers provide regular mail service including parcel post and registered and insured mail. United States postage is used throughout the Trust Territory, and United States postage rates apply.

Along with the flags of the United States and the United Nations flies the banner of the Trust Territory, recently selected by the Council of Micronesia. The flag was designed by a Saipan resident and native of the Islands, and consists of six white stars, representing peace and the six Trust Territory districts, on a blue field, symbolizing loyalty and freedom.

Additional information about the Trust Territory may be obtained by writing:

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*The High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands, or the Insular Division, Office of Territories, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D.C.*

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