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TRUST TERRITORY HEADQUARTERS

FEBRUARY 25, 1966
RELEASE: 27-66

TRANSPORTATION

SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, (FEBRUARY 25)...One of the major goals of the U.S. Government as trustee and Administering Authority of the far-flung, tiny islands of the Western Pacific which make up the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is the achievement of Micronesian unity--a concept which, before the U.S. Administration, was little thought of by the Micronesians.

Grouped together, first by discovery and later for the expediency of foreign administration, the Marianas, the Carolines, and the Marshalls archipelagos--so named in honor of a Spanish Queen and King and an English captain--were designated "Micronesia," meaning small islands. Isolated from the great waves of civilizations, shut in by the surrounding expanse of ocean, and untouched by international politics, the once-uncharted yet independent island groups of Micronesia were claimed by European discoverers in the name of their countries. First claimed by Spain, later bought by Germany, and subsequently occupied by Japan, Micronesia was administered primarily for the interest of the colonists, who were indifferent to the concept of creating a political unity among the culturally diversified natives who speak nine different languages

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and who live on more than 100 islands scattered at random over an ocean area of three million square miles. Merely defining geographical boundaries and coining a name for an area cannot enhance the development of nationalism among its inhabitants.

Charged with the responsibility of administering these islands, the United States, who took the area from the Japanese only after a bitter and costly war, is now confronted with the difficult task of creating a unified Micronesia. The vastness of the ocean area, in which the 90,000 Micronesians are dispersed, makes transportation one of the vital links in their progressive development toward political sophistication, economic prosperity, and educational maturity. Indeed, it was the very lack of a regular transportation and communication system in the area that made these people live for centuries in isolation from one another before the advent of foreign administration.

Hampered until 1962 by a meager budget (approximately \$6 million annually) with which to administer Micronesia, the Trust Territory Government has made major efforts during the past three years to develop all phases of the Territory's transportation system--sea, air, and land.

With his long experience and association in the development of transportation system in his native state of Alaska and his broad background in Washington, D.C., while serving on the Maritime Committee, High Commissioner M. W. Goding immediately grasped the importance of transportation in the overall development of Micronesia, when he took over the Administration in 1961. His experience and the spirit of the 'New Frontier' which he brought

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to Micronesia have been of an inestimable value to the people of the Trust Territory. Along with other areas of endeavor, the development of a sound transportation system became one of the policy objectives of the Administration, for Mr. Goding believed that any major progress in other fields was contingent upon a good transportation system in an area such as Micronesia. Today, the people of the Trust Territory enjoy better transportation than they ever had in their long history.

The problems involved in shipping activities in the Trust Territory are enormous. Since the population is widely scattered, it is hardly feasible to make frequent calls at islands with less than 25 inhabitants. Nevertheless, the Government endeavors to reach all the outlying inhabited islands at least once every six weeks to two months, as it is essential to maintain administrative contact with the people, to provide them with medical and public health services, to learn of their particular interests and problems, to deliver building and construction materials and educational supplies, and to conduct commercial transactions--deliver needed trade goods and merchandise and to pick up copra, the major export crop in the Trust Territory and the second largest source of income to the inhabitants.

In order to conduct all these activities, the Trust Territory Administration employs six intradistrict field trip vessels, which provide the needed service to the people of Micronesia. Owned by the Trust Territory Government, these vessels are operated by Micronesian firms under contracts with the Administration. Additionally, there are about 10 ships

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privately owned by Micronesian firms, which also provide additional transportation service to the people of the Territory. These vessels are frequently chartered by the Administration for field trip purposes, when one of the government-owned ships is in drydock or when an emergency arises.

The most recently constructed vessels in the Territory's field trip operations are the 100-foot YAP ISLANDER and TRUK ISLANDER, which operate in those two districts. Each is a 270 gross-ton, steel-constructed, double-bottom, diesel-powered vessel. Earlier, a 65-foot lagoon-type vessel, the M/V FEIOCH, was constructed for field trip services within the Truk Lagoon. For the past year emphasis has been placed on the construction of smaller vessels to replace the old AKL type which have been proven uneconomical for field trip operations between small islands with only a handful of inhabitants.

Additionally, the Trust Territory Government owns three major logistic vessels, which provide scheduled cargo-passenger services between Japan, Guam and all the district center ports.

The M/V GUNNERS KNOT, which was obtained from the Maritime Commission and has been operating in Trust Territory waters for over 10 years, runs between Japan, Saipan, Guam, Truk, Ponape, and Majuro, and regularly calls at Kusaie and Kwajalein. Another major logistic vessel is the PACIFIC ISLANDER. Formerly the NORTH STAR, the 320-foot PACIFIC ISLANDER, with more than 4,000 gross tonnage, was transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She joined the Trust Territory fleet in March 1963. Like the GUNNERS KNOT, the PACIFIC ISLANDER provides logistic services between

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Japan, Saipan, Guam and the eastern districts of the Territory. The vessel also has a capacity for carrying 42- first-class cabin passengers.

The extension of an additional 36-foot on the former M/V ERROL, now renamed the PALAU ISLANDER, has more than doubled its cargo capacity. Presently, she serves as one of the three logistic vessels and calls at Palau, Yap, Guam, and Saipan fortnightly.

The Trust Territory's three logistic vessels are operated by the Micronesian Line, a subsidiary company of the United Tanker Corporation of New York, under a contract with the Administration. Formerly, all the Trust Territory vessels were operated by the Pacific Micronesian Line, Inc., a subsidiary of the Pacific Far East Line, under a contract with the Government which terminated last August.

Perhaps the busiest port in the Trust Territory is Saipan, for it serves as a transit port for cargos destined for Yap and Palau as well as cargos from the western districts destined for Japan. Occasionally, one can see 2 or 3 ships at Saipan port at a time, with loading and unloading activities going on simultaneously on all the ships. Yap and Palau bound cargos from Japan are unloaded from the GUNNERS KNOT or the PACIFIC ISLANDER at Saipan, where the cargos are later picked up by the PALAU ISLANDER for further discharge at their final destinations. Similarly, copra and other export items from the Western Caroline districts destined for Japan ports are off-loaded at Saipan and later transferred to either the PACIFIC ISLANDER or the GUNNERS KNOT for unloading in Japan. Cargos for eastern districts are carried by either the GUNNERS KNOT or the PACIFIC ISLANDER

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and are discharged at each port-of-call.

Scheduled air services in the Territory consist of three flights each week by 59-passenger capacity DC-4 aircraft from Guam to Saipan, stopping at Rota twice a week; a weekly flight by DC-4 from Guam to Yap and Palau; a by-weekly flight to Kwajalein and Majuro via Truk by DC-4, with SA-16 aircraft making shuttle run between Truk and Ponape, and a by-weekly flight by SA-16 from Guam to Truk, Ponape, Kwajalein, and Majuro. Special flights, either by DC-4 or SA-16, are also provided whenever there are backlogs of passengers waiting to travel from district to district. Emergency flights for medical or other urgent reasons are also made from time to time between the outlying islands and the district centers.

The Micronesian Airline of Guam, a commercial passenger and cargo charter aircraft, operates on a non-scheduled basis between Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

During 1965 Trust Territory planes flew 8,054,758 passenger miles and carried 141,563 tons of air cargo. The DC-4 and two SA-16 aircraft that provide regular air transportation service in the Territory are operated by Pan American Airways from its Guam base under a contract with the Trust Territory Government. An additional DC-4 aircraft, with 65-passenger capacity, has been purchased and is expected to arrive in February 1966. Although the Territory's air transportation service is necessarily subsidized by the Administration, it provides inestimable benefits to the people and residents of the Trust Territory.

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Airfield construction has been considered of high priority in the development of air transportation service in the Territory. Up until late 1962, water landings had to be made in three of the six administrative districts--Palau, Yap, and Ponape, and the DC-4 aircraft could not service these districts, which meant that they had to depend on the SA-16 with a limited cargo and passenger capacity. The opening of 4,800-foot airfield in Yap Proper in early 1963 and the completion of the 6,000-foot Palau Airfield in Airai, Babelthuap Island, have enabled the DC-4 aircraft to serve these two districts with increased cargo and passenger loads. Work is already underway for an airfield for Ponape, the only district in the Territory which is still serviced by SA-16 aircraft. When the Ponape Airfield is completed, all the districts in the Territory will enjoy greater benefits in terms of rapid transportation of mail, cargos and passengers.

A corollary development of airfield construction in the Trust Territory has been the expansion of new roads and improvement of existing roads, particularly in Babelthuap Island where six miles of road were completed to link the air terminal with the district center. An additional 35-mile road is being planned which, when completed, will open up the island of Babelthuap for economic and agricultural development. The coastal villages of Babelthuap will be connected with the main road, being planned to stretch across the island lengthwise, by tributary roads. This will permit the residents of Babelthuap to use land transportation and not solely depend on water transportation by small boats and canoes, which is sometimes difficult especially during rough seas and inclement weather.

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A new 18-mile road on Jaluit Atoll in the Marshalls was also completed during the year. During the past three years 96 miles of road have been rehabilitated or built in the various parts of the Territory. Major emphasis in the Trust Territory's community development program is being placed on the improvement of roads and causeways leading to marketing centers.

On Yap Islands Proper, the Yapese people through community effort have achieved excellent results in rehabilitating roads and bridges. This came about through assistance from the Yap Airfield Project. Using equipment on loan basis whenever available, the people of Yap have rebuilt many miles of roads on their own initiative. Today, it is possible to traverse the entire length of Yap Island by road.

Roads in the Territory range from concrete and macadam in excellent condition to dirt roads which are little more than footpaths. While it is recognized that road maintenance is difficult, especially in the high islands where heavy rainfall washes out roadbeds, limited budgets in the past made it doubly difficult to provide upkeep on roads outside the district centers. Current road construction and maintenance work is carried out through a grant-in-aid program as well as direct Administration construction work. In 1962, a policy was initiated which provided for free use of government heavy construction equipment for community projects. Results have been impressive; rehabilitation and improvement of roads have been carried out by local municipal governments.

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A designated road system has been established throughout the Territory. Primary roads are the basic responsibility of the Territorial Government, with the work being done through the district administrations. Building of secondary roads is carried on through support from the district administrations and district legislatures. The municipal roads are maintained by the local municipal governments. The Territorial Administration works cooperatively with local communities and governments to develop all three types of roads.

Although there are only 90 miles of paved road in the Territory, most of it in Saipan, and a total of 350.7 miles of unpaved road, the number of wheeled vehicles owned by Micronesians is becoming impressive. At the last approximate count taken in June 1965, there were 75 trucks, 240 pickups, 350 sedans, 451 jeeps, and 678 motor bikes and scooters owned by Micronesians.

One of the policies of the Trust Territory Administration is to promote the development of private enterprise in Micronesia. In keeping with this policy, an important objective was initiated several years ago by High Commissioner Goding, calling for encouragement of Micronesian participation in the development and operation of the Territory's transportation system. With this new concept, the Administration has been turning over many former government functions in the field of transportation to private Micronesian enterprises. Today, shipping agency functions, stevedoring services, and other terminal operations in all the districts of the Trust Territory are all handled by Micronesian firms.

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The first major development came in February 1964 when the Saipan Stevedoring Company was formed to handle cargo stevedoring and warehousing in Saipan port. The Micronesian-owned company capitalized at \$25,000 has been a money-saving service to the Government and an economic asset to the Saipan community. The second development came in September 1964 when the Saipan Shipping Company was awarded an agency agreement for Pacific Micronesian Line. When the new Micronesian Line took over the operation of the three Trust Territory logistic vessels, the Saipan Shipping Company continued to carry out agency functions.

These developments were followed by other district Micronesian firms taking over stevedoring and warehousing services, and other terminal operations, for the Administration's Supply Department.

With the arrival of six Japanese-made diesel buses, the Saipan bus Company assumed operation of the island's bus system under a permit granted by the Trust Territory Government. Private bus companies now operate in four districts--Palau, Truk, Marianas, and the Marshalls.

The Palau Boat Yard in Malakal, Koror, has built a number of small boats for private as well as government use. Presently, a 75-foot Hawaiian-type tuna fishing boat is nearing completion. The boat will be manned by Micronesian fishing crew who have been undergoing tuna fishing training in Hawaii under the auspices of the Hawaiian Tuna Boat Owners' Association.