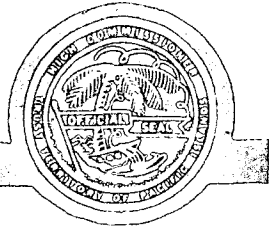


# PRESS RELEASE



## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

96950

RELEASE: 200-66

### EBEYE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM MOVES AHEAD

Marianas

Truk

Ponape

Marshalls

Yap

Paleu

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Nov. 30 . . . The Ebeye Improvement Program, the largest community rehabilitation project in the Trust Territory, is moving ahead with the construction phase of the program approximately one-third complete. The program includes construction of 308 apartment units with modern plumbing and electricity, a completely chlorinated fresh water distribution system with two-million gallon catchment and storage facilities, a pressurized salt water flush and hydrant system, underground sewage lines and lift stations, a power plant and electrical distribution system to service the entire community, maintenance shops, warehouses, pier and road repairs, etc. The total cost of the project, \$7,000,000, is being financed by the Department of Defense.

Based on the recommendations made by the Trust Territory Administration and the Marshallese leaders, the master plan and specifications for the entire project were developed by the Honolulu District Corps of Engineers. Martin-Zachry Company is the Honolulu District Corps of Engineers Contractor assigned to complete the project by November 1967.

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Ebeye is a small coral island of seventy-six acres at the southern tip of the Kwajalein Atoll where the Army's Nike-X Missile Test Site is located. Every workday 600 commuters sail  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles across the lagoon to work at various occupations at Kwajalein. The commuters use a former LCU boat that the Army specially designed and converted to a double-deck ferry boat with comfortable passenger accommodations. These Marshallese employees of Global Associates, the Test Site Contractor for Logistic Support, are a well-trained, highly skilled group. They are also the most affluent citizens in the Trust Territory. Their average pay is about three times greater than the average pay of other skilled Trust Territory workers because they are covered by U. S. minimum wage scales. Their earning in 1967 will pump well over \$1,500,000 into the economy of the Marshall Islands. This is more than all the income realized from copra production throughout the entire Marshall Islands last year.

Prior to World War II, Ebeye was just like any other low coral island of the Pacific. However, after the war when the Navy selected Kwajalein as a Base, the population had gradually increased from about 200 to over 3,000 people. Marshallese citizens from all parts of the district have been settling on Ebeye for the past ten years to take advantage of Department of Defense training programs and job opportunities at Kwajalein. In 1964 when the population of Ebeye was approximately 2,600, the Department of Interior and Department of Defense recognized

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that action had to be taken to improve housing and sanitary conditions on Ebeye. As a result, in conjunction with Marshallese leaders, they developed plans for what is commonly known as the Ebeye Improvement Program.

When High Commissioner W. R. Norwood recently visited Ebeye, he declared that the rehabilitation of Ebeye would be one of his highest priorities. To spearhead this project, Dr. William V. Vitarelli, former Community Development Officer and more recently Adult Education Supervisor on the Headquarters staff, was appointed to serve as the High Commissioner's representative. With the close cooperation of Mr. Dwight Heine, District Administrator of the Marshall Islands, and members of his staff, the new rehabilitation project at Ebeye will concentrate on using the latest methods of community development to establish a self-reliant community geared to the economic potential of the Ebeye people. Peace Corps volunteers, who have been trained in community development, will be participating also in this improvement program which will cover such aspects as developing small local industries, establishing community recreation and adult education programs, improving social services, and landscaping and beautification of the island.

With the Department of Defense financing, HD Corps of Engineers construction know-how, the Trust Territory's administrative skills, and Peace Corps support, both High Commissioner Norwood and Colonel Frank Healy, Kwajalein Test Site Commander, are confident that Ebeye will emerge

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as the most modern, prosperous and well-organized Micronesian community  
in the Trust Territory.

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