



KODACHROMES BY WALTER MEYERS EDWARDS (ABOVE) AND DAVID S. BOYER © N.G.S.



**On velvety grounds of the Ponape Agricultural Development Station, superior-quality coconuts take root to serve as replanting stock. The station's experiments with pepper and cacao introduced islanders to new crops. A cooperative group markets Micronesian pepper as a gourmet item.**

**Chest-deep in muck, a Palauan woman gathers taro, starchy staple of Pacific islands. After breaking off the bulbous rootstock, she replants the top. Men of Palau disdain such tasks, but in the Truk Islands males work the boggy patches.**



the thousands to build roads, towns with water and electric systems, and hotels for Japanese tourists. Others mined for phosphate, started fisheries, cleared farms, and raised sugar, manioc, pineapples, and rice, all for export.

Japan harbors a continuing interest in her onetime possession. She purchases almost all of today's skimpy exports, including copra—now worth \$2,500,000 a year—and scrap metal left from World War II. She sells, to Micronesians and Americans alike, ships, boats, automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, radios, clothing, and canned vegetables. Plus canned fish—caught in Micronesia's waters!

Most Micronesians, however, are skeptical

of a Japanese return. If they remember money under the Japanese, they also recall menial jobs, a paucity of education, and repression.

Relations among Micronesians, Americans, and Japanese today are cordial but fragile. I witnessed the problem at close range while traveling with a group of Japanese who had been given special permission to return.

The occasion was a voyage on *Yap Islander* to remote Lamotrek Atoll. En route, at Woleai Atoll, we had dropped off the Japanese. They were army veterans come to visit a scene of island warfare that still evokes heartbreak in many Japanese; here they suffered one of the grimmest tragedies of World War II.





Capt. Willie Poznanski, an islander whose name recalls the visit of a whaling schooner's crew a century ago, dropped a stern anchor and secured his bow to a Lamotrek palm tree. The islanders paddled us ashore in outriggers, and moments later we sat cross-legged on the grass beneath the palms, drinking from sweet young coconuts and wearing maramars of welcome on our heads.

Garlanded to receive us was Veronica Lefaioup, stately paramount chief of her atoll. Women can be chiefs on some islands of Micronesia.

"A Japanese fishing boat has been here for three days," she complained. "They fished in-

side our lagoon, then loaded up with coconuts and bananas. When we asked for cigarettes or canned food in payment, they were very rude. They sailed away just before you arrived."

Captain Willie immediately returned to his ship and radio.

"Japanese pirate ship marauding vicinity Lamotrek Atoll," he flashed. The message went out to Saipan headquarters, then to the Navy on Guam. Fishing boats of any foreign nation are forbidden to come within three miles of any island, except for medical or mechanical emergencies, and most Japanese skippers respect the rule.

The violator on Lamotrek made his getaway. When our ship returned to Woleai, however, to collect ex-Army Capt. Nobuaki Koseki and his party of Japanese war veterans, Willie captured a second marauding boat anchored in Woleai lagoon.

After arresting her Japanese crew, the skipper radioed a report. By law, the boat could have been confiscated. Over the years many poachers have been seized and their crews air-shipped home, fares paid by Japan. But Willie received orders to issue a stern warning and let this one go.

#### Bombs Fail, but Starvation Conquers

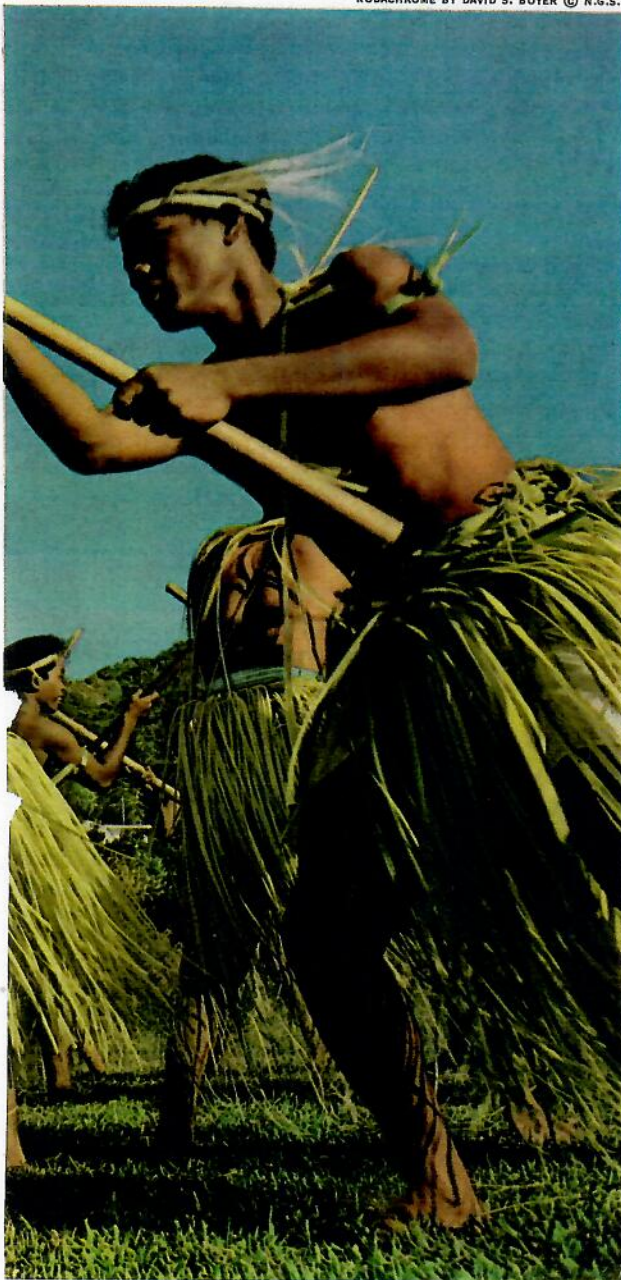
Willie and I exchanged relieved smiles with Captain Koseki, who had come aboard and shared the embarrassment. Koseki had almost completed his pilgrimage. Here on Woleai, 21 years earlier, he had survived one of the most chilling sagas of the Pacific war.

As one of 7,000 Japanese, he had landed here in April, 1944, to reinforce the threatened defenses of Woleai and its airfield.

"Each day, American Air Force arrive," Captain Koseki recalled. "We set our watch, ten o'clock, crawl down in bunker. Twenty-four aircraft, B-24. Two, what you call, tail fin? Make big circle, drop bomb single file, island so small. Each day, almost never fail, 15 month. I remember saying, 'Must be many, many bomb in U. S. A.!'"

**Batons clash, grass skirts swish**, as boys of Truk High School vigorously thrust and weave through the precise motions of a stick dance. Anthropologists believe this popular entertainment of the Carolines originated as military and athletic training, perhaps a ritual prelude to warfare. Both sexes perform the rhythmic exercises, but only young children dance in mixed groups.

KODACHROME BY DAVID S. BOYER © N.G.S.







"But U.S.A. bomb kill very few. Most Japanese die because no food, no supply ship can come.

"Japanese Navy sometime send submarine at nighttime. But submarine not carry much supply, sometime not arrive, maybe sunk by Yankee bomb. So we on Woleai have fever, disease, die from hunger. No chance to fight for Japanese emperor.

"Only 1,500 Japanese ever see Japan again. Very sorry. Now we return, make ceremony in honor 5,500 soldier who die."

Ashore, I watched Captain Koseki and former Sergeants Keiji Okinaka and Haruei Hirano pay their final respects. Hundreds of Japanese had sent letters, prayers, photographs, candles, incense, food, and cigarettes appropriately called "Peace." The three veterans laid out these offerings, one by one, at

the base of a simple wooden shrine. The two-hour dedication ceremony, beautiful, tasteful, brimming with emotion, culminated in the burning of a funeral pyre draped with a Japanese flag (page 739).

Through the smoke, the three old soldiers chanted "Umi-Yukaba," a military funeral march sacred in Japanese tradition for 1,200 years. Their voices were very low, for their heads were bowed.

#### *An Old Soldier Says Sayonara*

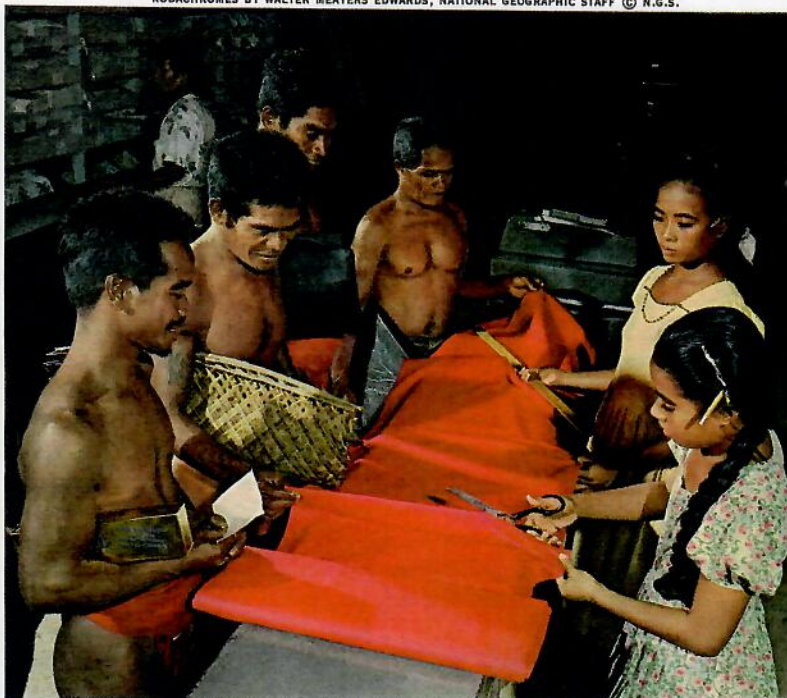
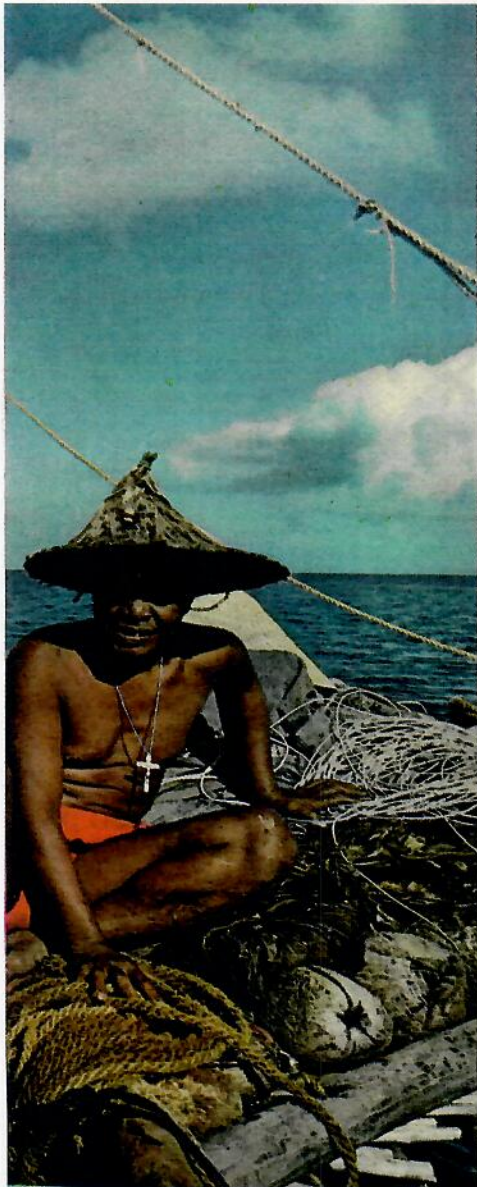
That gripping scene had its intimate aftermath, on which I was the only trespasser; I could not avoid it. At midnight Captain Willie sent a small boat ashore to pick us up. As I leaned against the port gunwale, the bearded visage of Sergeant Okinaka was only a yard away. His glazed eyes were obviously



**Homeward bound from a shopping spree**, men of Puluwat sail through Truk lagoon, their outrigger nudged along by a light quartering breeze. They will voyage across 185 miles of open ocean to reach their atoll. Shelter of mats hangs outboard; coconuts supply food and drink.

**Highlight of a day in town:** Puluwat seafarers buy cartons of cigarettes and bright cotton material for new thūs at the Truk Trading Company—a Micronesian-owned business with headquarters on the principal Truk island of Moen.

KODACHROMES BY WALTER MEYERS EDWARDS, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF © N.G.S.



watching in review those grim events of many years ago.

Staring into the darkness, Sergeant Okinaka removed his military hat. Slowly, in benediction, he extended it out over the water, dropped it into the wake of the boat, then folded his hands beneath his chin. A single great tear slid down his nose, hung there, then splattered across his knuckles.

His lips moved soundlessly, but I read them: "Sayonara!"

Japan's economic influence—and its possible effect on Micronesia's future—was apparent when I visited the Palau Islands.

Here, before World War II, the Japanese brought Okinawan-Japanese tuna fishermen as colonists. Today, an American company has brought some of them back under contract to train Micronesians.

I sailed one sunset aboard the tuna boat *Peleliu*. Her skipper was a boyish Okinawan named Shunsuki Uehara.

We anchored for the night inside the reef that makes Palau a sheltered paradise for such few fortunate swimmers, waterskiers, skin divers, and shell collectors as ever reach this Pacific playground (pages 720-21).

Shunsuki and his crew turned to luring bait fish into a net with an electric light. I turned to one of nature's most extravagant excursions into symmetry, for *Peleliu's* bow, as she rode at anchor, pointed into a regiment of low, rounded silhouettes, dark against the embers of a burned-out sun. They were like loaves of bread against a hot brick-oven wall; as darkness descended, a sliver of moon hung above the scene. I was watching night overtake the unique Rock Islands of Palau.



The Rock Islands may one day become one of the tourist wonders of the world. Geologically, they are the remains of lime-secreting animals and algae. Erosion over millennia has resulted in myriad humpbacked islands—some not much bigger than haystacks. They look, in the curious rows many seem to assume, like ranks of soldiers' helmets.

Seen at low tide, they acquire the aspect of seagoing mushrooms, for they are deeply undercut on all sides. Wave action, one surmises. But that would not be the whole story. Calcareous rubble, scouring the islands' "stems," probably contributes. Limestone dissolves easily, so that heavy tropical rains play an important part.

No doubt by the time the Rock Islands are discovered by the world's tourists, they will also have attracted more of the world's geologists, drawn by the still unsolved puzzle of their strange shapes.

#### Hard Life Faces Apprentice Fishermen

With *Peleliu's* bait tanks deep and silver with sardines, we raised anchor at dawn. A squadron of sea birds pursued us outward through a passage in the reef, breakfasting on the bait that escaped through the openings that keep sea water circulating in the tanks. The crew and I chopsticked our way through rice and *sashimi*, bits of raw fish drowned in soy sauce.

As we ate, huddled on our haunches on *Peleliu's* afterdeck, I listened to a teen-age Micronesian from Ponape Island, which hopes one day to have a tuna fishery, too.

"I'm here to become a fisherman," he declared. "Not to fool around. No luscious Palauan girls for me. But it's a hard life. If we catch 40 tons of tuna a month, we make about \$40; if less than five tons, nothing at all; it takes that much to cover the boat's expenses. Worst part is eating this Okinawan *sashimi* and rice, rice and *sashimi*. If I ever get a night off, I go out and get some nice Micronesian taro root, or pounded breadfruit, or coconut pudding."

We had a fair day, caught a ton of tuna. I was unloaded with the fish at sunset. My friends waved as *Peleliu's* wake curved and then straightened out toward the Rock Islands and another 24-hour quest for tuna.

In the district center of Koror that night, at the Royal Palauan Hotel (not quite royal enough to boast rooms with bath, but one of the Trust Territory's best, nevertheless), I talked to Fisheries Management Biologist Peter T. Wilson. Pete admitted that the training program was going poorly.

"Most of our Palauan trainees have quit," he said. "Only boys from Ponape and Truk are left. They might quit, too, if they weren't so far from home. Micronesians don't like hard work with little pay. Most of them have never had to do anything harder in their lives than walk out in their front yards to collect coconuts for dinner."

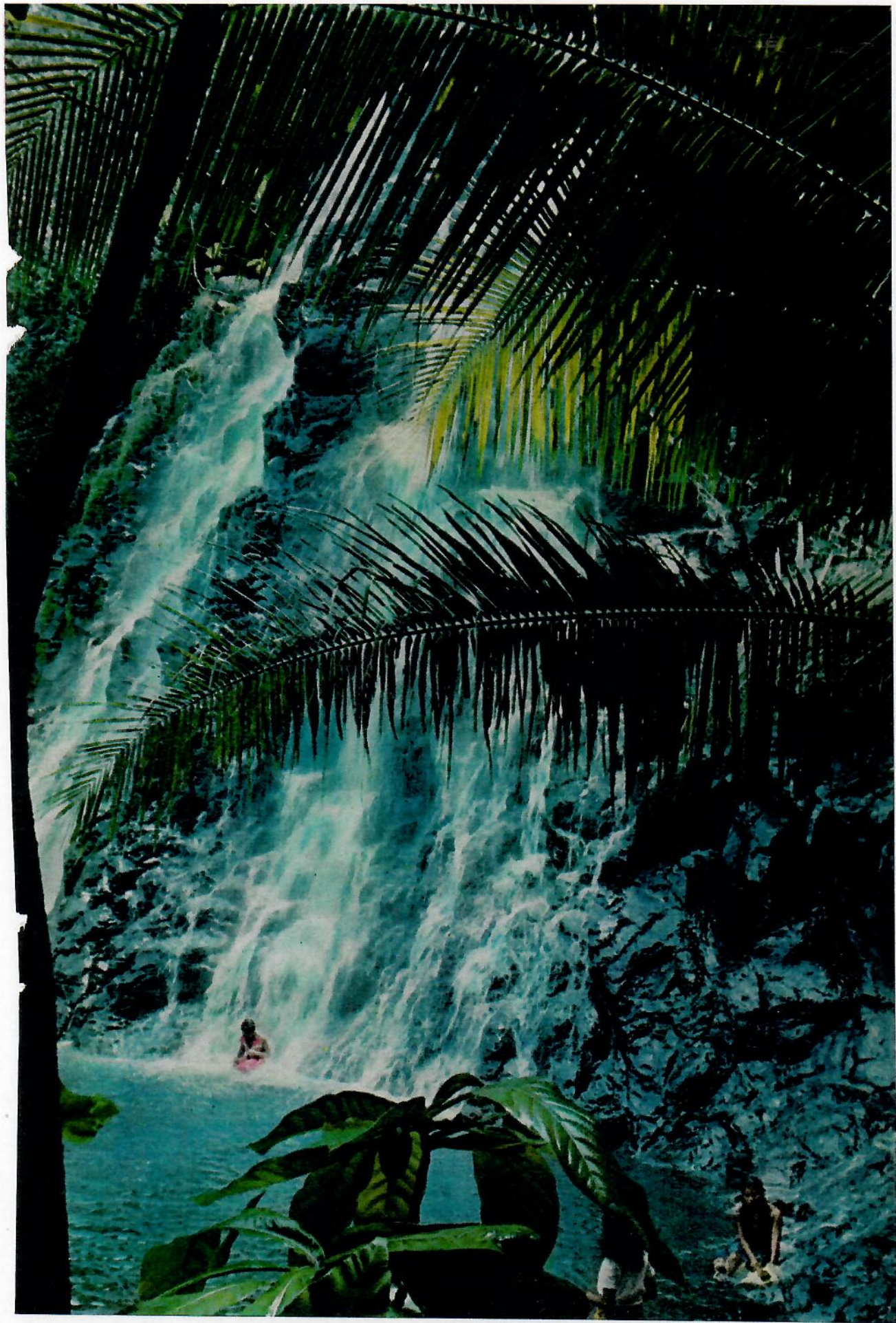
With an imported Hawaiian-Japanese master boat builder and Palauan labor, Pete was building a prototype tuna-fishing boat, the *Emeraech*, or Morning Star.

Screened by a leafy lattice, women bathe and wash clothes below one of the falls that lace the slopes of Ponape. Rainfall here averages 190 inches a year at sea level; perhaps twice as much drenches the 2,595-foot heights of this volcanic island, highest in the Carolines. Dense forest mats the rarely penetrated uplands. Ponapeans live beside coastal bays and coves.

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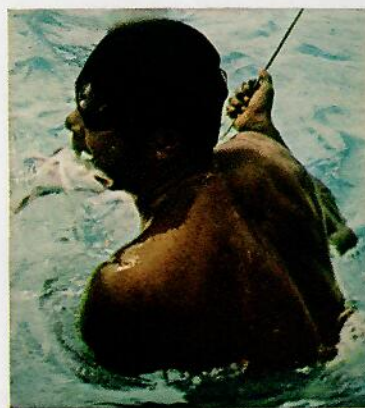
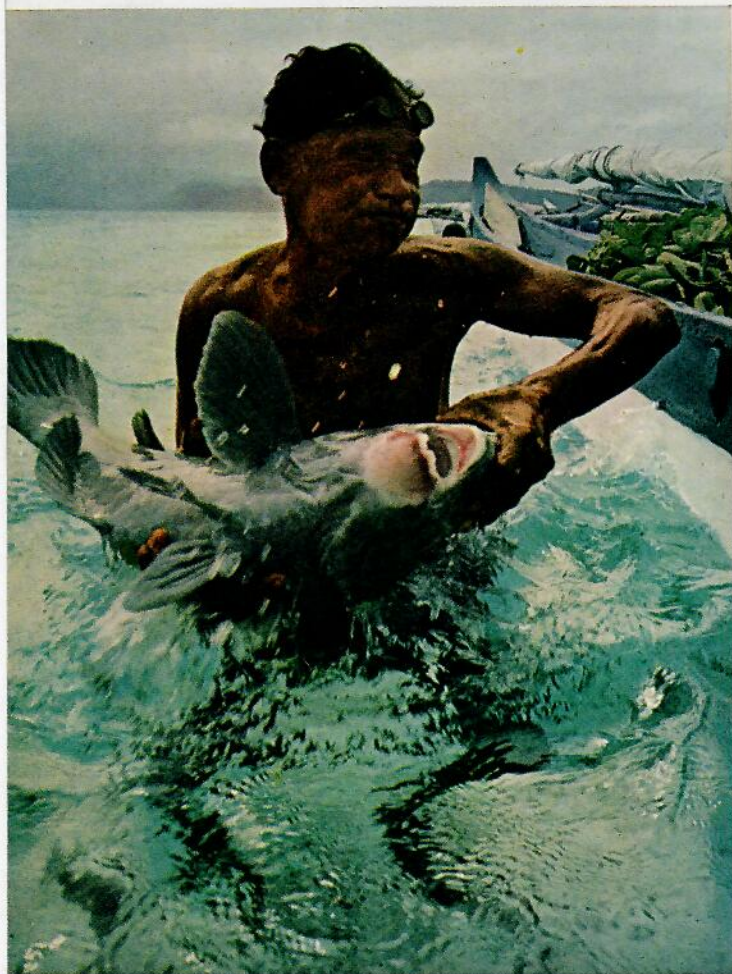


"*Emeraech* will get by with half the crew of an Okinawan boat," Pete said. "She'll have greater speed, more capacity. If she proves out, our boys can make better money. And we'll have a shipbuilding industry, too."

Next morning, under bright new operating-room lights in the district-center hospital, I photographed five Palauan men and women at work, practitioners in one of Micronesia's few real professions (page 713). Chattering a tossed salad of English and Palauan, they removed a woman's gall bladder as neatly as American surgeons might have done.

Most Micronesian doctors got their training at Suva's Central Medical School in British Fiji. Their degrees are not recognized by American medical authorities, so officially they are mere "medical officers."

"They're doctors in my book, though!" Pete Wilson's



**Champion fishermen of Ponape**, villagers of Porakiet reap a bounty from the sea. Boatmen cast a net over shallows for tiny fish. Their catch will bait hooks on hand lines lowered into deep water beyond the island's barrier reef. Hand-carved wooden goggles pushed up on his forehead,

a diver heaves a parrotfish into a canoe. Another spearman kills a small fish with a bite behind its head. Both participate in a huge sweep across the reef. Village men form a circle about a mile in circumference and drive fish toward a V-shaped net, skewering those that try to escape.





KODACHROMES BY WALTER MEAYERS EDWARDS (ABOVE) AND CLAYTON J. PRICE © N.G.S.

cover-girl American wife Ann had told me. "They delivered my three sons. And if I had 13 more to go, I'd want every one born into the hands of a Palauan doctor."

#### Medical Aides Make Do With Little

I talked with Dr. Minoru Ueki (one of thousands of Micronesians bearing Japanese names) as he and I changed out of operating-room garb together after the final stitches closed the gall-bladder incision.

"We do our best," Dr. Ueki smiled. "We'd like to boost our medicine up to at least U. S. minimum standards. But the obstacles! None of us were trained in the States."

The Trust Territory, Dr. Ueki told me, had too long tried to manage on a subsistence budget. "But there seems to be a revolution in U. S. thinking," he said, "especially since the critical report by the U. N. health organiza-

tion in 1966. We may soon be able to send Micronesian doctors and nurses to the U. S. for training. Until then, we'll happily take on Peace Corps assistants to tide us over."

By chance, I headed unknowingly to a second medical rendezvous. Hawaiian Airlines invited me to join their survey trip from Palau to Majuro in the Marshall Islands, a 2,600-mile flight from one end of the Trust Territory to the other (maps, pages 714-15). Hawaiian was hoping to give Micronesia its first tourist and commercial air routes. Pan American, which already operates a contract air schedule for the territorial government, hoped to beat Hawaiian to it.

From the DC-6, I looked down on oval atolls I had visited by ship and sailing canoe—jade necklaces displayed on Pacific blue velvet. A tiny figure waved from beside the sail of a solitary outrigger canoe—probably





**Haunting ruins of Nanmatol** pose a riddle for archeologists. Built on Ponape of rock "logs"—huge crystals of basalt found on the island—such enclosures spread over a hundred islets that fill a swampy lagoon. Local legend hints that the structures' owners were tyrants who

a Micronesian health aide, shuttling from island to island, his equipment a first-aid kit, his qualifications a spoonful of medical knowledge and a heartful of fraternity.

On Majuro, I met a counterpart of Dr. Ueki: Dr. Tregar Ishoda. We toured the Marshall Islands hospital together. Next door stood the Trust Territory's rehabilitation center for polio victims (page 744), housed in salvaged metal barracks from atom-bomb testing days on Bikini Atoll. The center came into being, Dr. Ishoda told me, after a tragic polio epidemic; an American family had brought the disease in 1963.

Dr. Ishoda drove me back to my quarters. En route, he gestured toward a cluster of rust-rotted World War II quonset huts in sundry stages of collapse.

"Until last week, my family and I shared one of those with another doctor's family." He pointed again. "But now we have that

new metal hut to ourselves. It's a step up."

He stopped to let me off before the handsome three-bedroom house to which I had been assigned. Equipped with an electric stove, refrigerator, and shower, it awaited an American doctor or administrator.

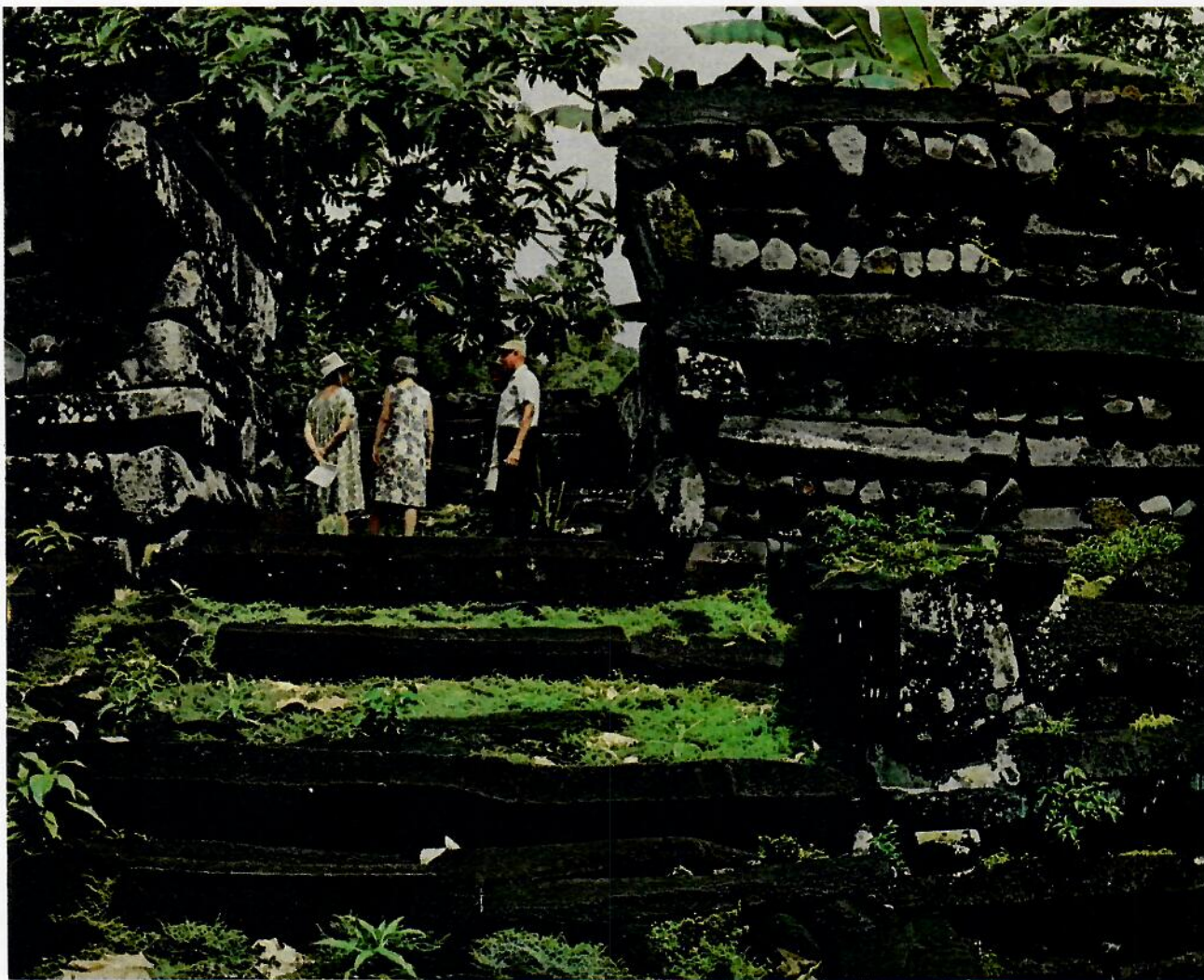
#### **Threat of Disease Stalks Outer Islands**

"But better things are coming for us, we hope," Dr. Ishoda said. "Meanwhile, our hospital service improves all the time. We haven't done much for our outer islands yet, though. Even immunization is not completed. These people are vulnerable to almost any epidemic."

Beyond the hospital, the rest of Majuro was a depressing Micronesian slum. Its future epidemics could be such urban problems as unemployment and juvenile delinquency.

For two nights, Majuro wined and dined the Hawaiian Airlines officials. Talk about Micronesia's future became almost giddy.





KODACHROME BY JACK FIELDS © N.G.S.

exacted tribute from the islanders. But no one knows for certain who erected the complexes, or when. An expedition of the Smithsonian Institution explored Nanmatol in 1963. It recovered charcoal that proved to be about 700 years old when dated by the carbon-14 technique.

"Wait until the tourists discover paradise!"

As I started to leave, our host Dwight Heine, whose German grandfather had been a Protestant missionary here, proposed a parting drink.

"How about one for the reef? I can't offer you one for the road. That mile of pavement you saw in Palau and a bit of worn-out asphalt here are the only paved roads the Trust Territory ever built!"

Heine has the distinction of being the only Micronesian yet to rise to high Trust Territory rank. Working under Commissioner Norwood, he governs the Marshalls as district administrator; a Marshall Islander himself, he truly represents his people.

It turned out that Dwight wasn't so bitter about the past as he was worried about the future. "We've been saved, you know, by the fact the U. S. hasn't developed us yet," he said.

Half a dozen prospective promoters of

Micronesia's future sat upright on the edges of their chairs.

"We're going to be developed now, for sure," Dwight went on. "And invaded by tourists. The question is, have we had enough time to prepare for the coming storm?"

#### Islanders Lack Technical Know-how

I had heard lamentation by scores of Americans and Micronesians about the glacial pace of the region's development. Now here was Dwight Heine sounding strangely happy about it.

"Lots of Micronesians now speak English," he continued. "Some have a smattering of history, literature, or economics. We even have a few professionals. But we've virtually no artisans, mechanics, or tradesmen.

"What will happen to us in an economic explosion? Will we be replaced by Americans who know how to do things? What about our



culture? Steam-rolled? Our natural resources? Exploited and exhausted?

"We can keep from being swallowed, maybe. Vocational education first, for those who want to compete. Then set aside some islands as reservations for those who don't—no tourists, no hotels, no industry, no commercial fishing, nothing. Let them be a refuge for those who don't want to enter the 20th century. There are quite a few, you know.

"The only thing an outer-island refuge needs is a good doctor. And a school—a passport to the modern world—for those kids who want one.

"You'll see a worse slum than Majuro at Ebeye. You'll understand why we want some Micronesian havens left intact."

#### Tight Little Islands Shun Publicity

Ebeye is an island in Kwajalein Atoll, and Kwajalein is one of two major U. S. military areas in the Trust Territory. The other is Eniwetok. Both were prominent on the world's front pages during postwar years as bases for the nuclear-bomb tests that made a desert of a third famous atoll, Bikini.\*

Eniwetok is now an Air Force station, its lagoon a target for intercontinental ballistic missiles test-launched from California. Kwajalein is an Army base for the development of Nike-X antimissile missiles (pages 740-41). The Defense Department tries to keep both bases out of the news as much as possible. No journalist may visit Kwajalein Island.

But I did get to Ebeye Island—part of the giant Kwajalein Atoll. Ebeye is inhabited by a swarm of Micronesians and comes under Trust Territory government, rather than military. I sailed from Majuro to Ebeye on a regular field trip, and so landed a mere mile from the secrets of the missile base.

For two days, I watched the lives of 4,000 souls from all regions of Micronesia who, before the floodgates were shut for reasons of health and sanitation, had funneled into

Ebeye. Some 400 of them hold down precious high-paying jobs on the Army's tight little island. Leaving Ebeye for Kwajalein Island by army ferry at 7 a.m., they return at 4:30 p.m., to lightless, plumbingless shanties.

Here nine relatives, on an average, share the wealth of every jobholder. It is the Micronesian way. What is mine is also my brother's. Or uncle's. Or cousin's. One breadwinner in a clan is usually considered sufficient.

Army authorities, when I was there, had completed several one-level apartment houses, replacing some of the disease-ridden shacks of Ebeye. I inspected a few of these. Though built to house an entire family in each room,

\*See, in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: "Farewell to Bikini," by Carl Markwith, July, 1946, and photographs of "Operation Crossroads," in April, 1947.



**Feast of slithery moray eels in the making:** Men of Porakiet skin and clean the vicious reef predators before roasting them slowly over glowing coals. Their women will add yams, rice, and a pudding of pounded taro and shredded coconut to the banquet. A Polynesian colony on Ponape, Porakiet villagers emigrated from overpopulated Kapingamarangi, southernmost atoll of the Trust Territory.



they did have running water and toilets.

I flew to another historic island that once datelined the most staggering headlines of World War II: Tinian, in the Marianas. Here, on August 6, 1945, the B-29 *Enola Gay* shuddered down a runway bearing an atom bomb for Hiroshima.

#### Jungle Conquers Historic Airfield

To land where the *Enola Gay* took off, I chartered a twin-engine Beechcraft owned by Micronesian Airlines and piloted by its president, Emmet Kay.

We had to park the Beechcraft and walk a quarter of a mile to the bomb-loading area; encroaching jungle had made its taxi strip impassable (page 739). The bomb pits themselves were tangles of wild growth, too, for

no one ever came or cared. Two small bronze plaques forlornly marked the spots where the bombs had been loaded, one for Hiroshima, one for Nagasaki.

We didn't talk much, just made photographs, then followed the *Enola Gay* on her historic Tinian take-off. We banked out over the deep, clean blue of the Mariana Trench.

Emmet turned the nose of the plane toward the Trust Territory's airstrip on the neighboring headquarters island of Saipan.

He didn't ask me what I'd write about the place. He knew as well as I why he had never had any customers for the trip in the past. History might never forget Tinian, but people want to.

Saipan has war memorials that do draw tourists. One is an American tank, only its

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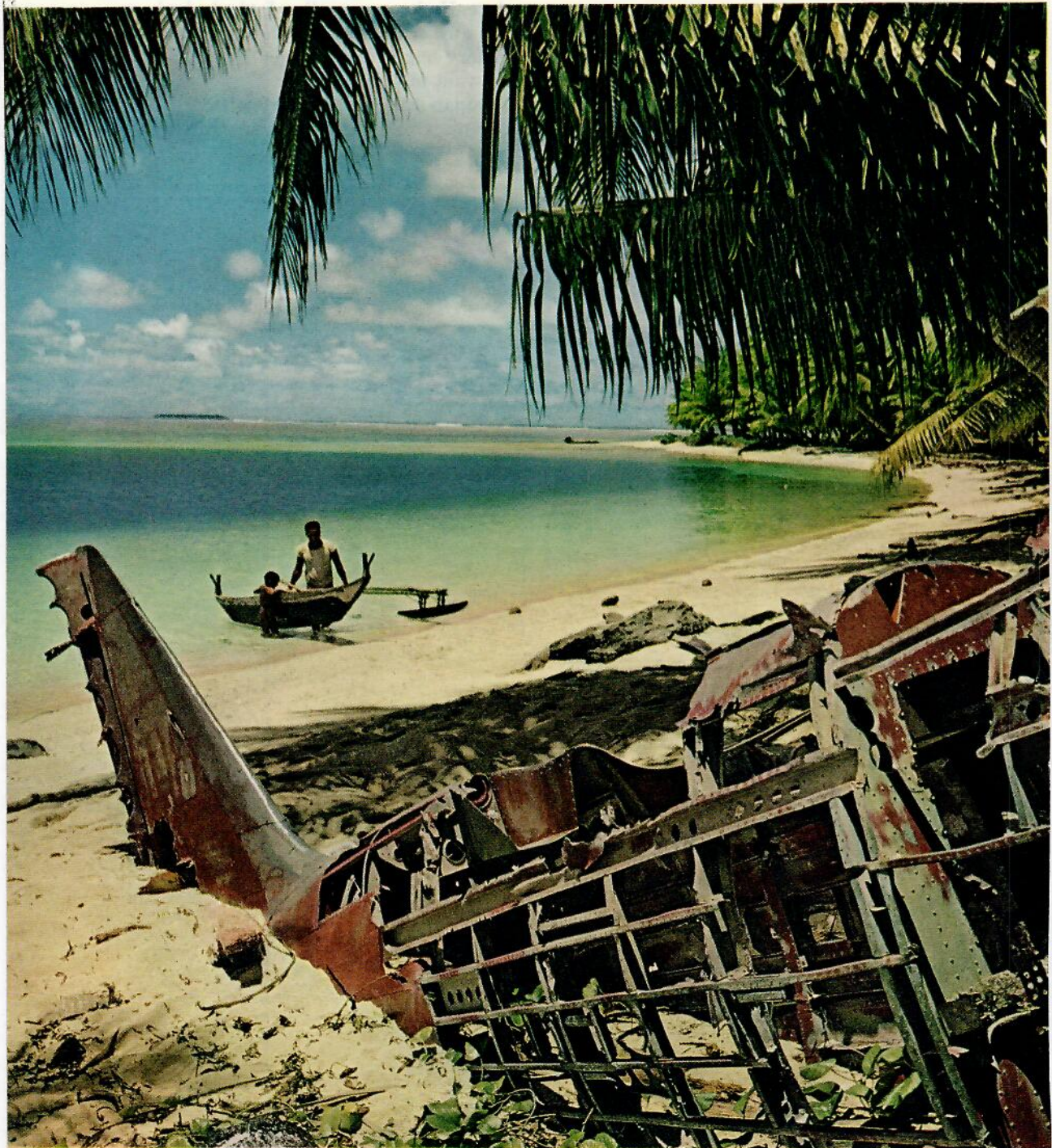


**Moldering skeleton of war**, a wrecked Japanese plane on a palm-fringed isle recalls the nightmare of World War II. So much debris litters Micronesia that scrap metal provides the Territory's second most valuable export, after copra. Though it is illegal, islanders also kill fish with explosives gleaned from live ammunition they find lying about.

From secret Micronesian bases, Japan supported her attacks on Pearl Harbor, Wake, and Guam that opened the Pacific war. In 1944, American forces sealed Japan's doom

by winning the islands in costly, grinding assaults. Even as troops fought for the Marianas, engineers began improving Japanese-built runways on Tinian (right) that launched fateful atom-bomb raids on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On Saipan, visible across a strait, Japanese defenders mounted a suicidal *banzai* charge rather than surrender. Earlier, U. S. naval elements protecting the invasion destroyed 330 Japanese planes and two aircraft carriers in the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot," the war's most decisive carrier battle.

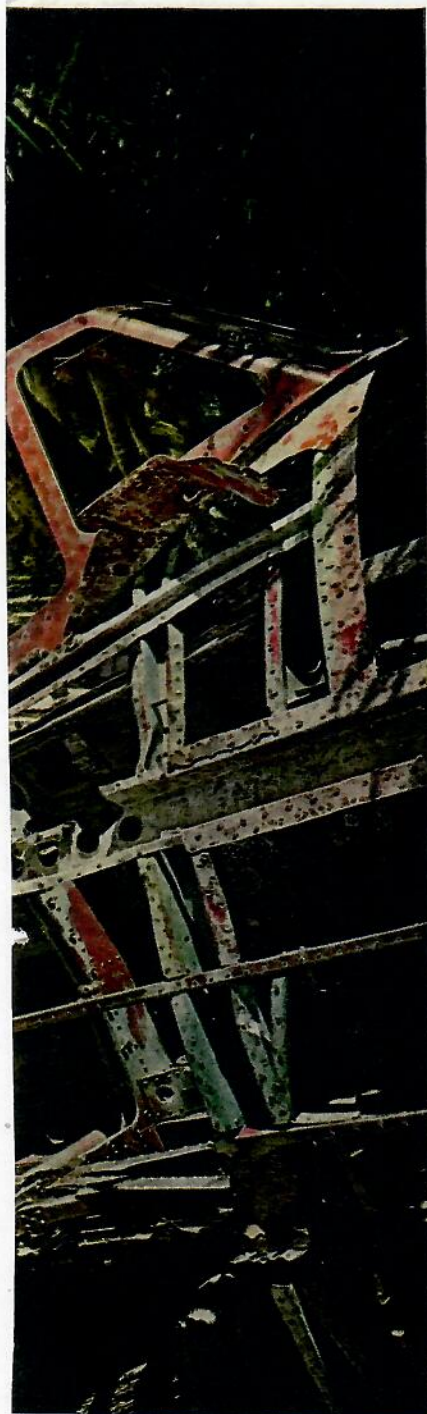
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Today, the Trust Territory government maintains headquarters on Saipan.

Revisiting a scene of sadness (below right), Japanese veterans pay tribute to 5,500 comrades who perished on the Caroline atoll of Woleai. Three of 1,500 who survived, they end an emotion-choked ceremony by singing an ancient military dirge before a symbolic funeral pyre.

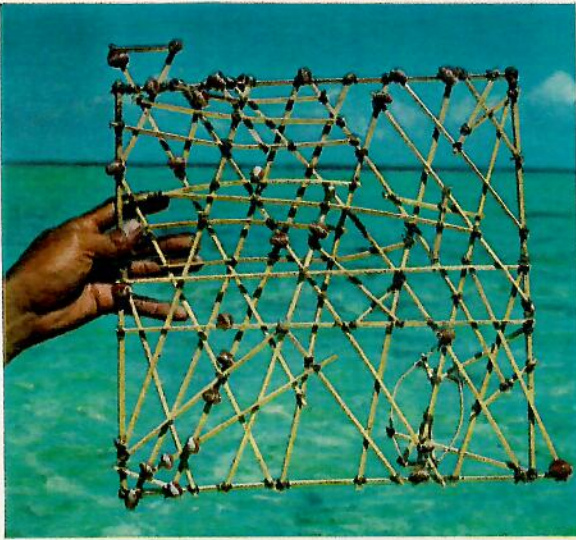


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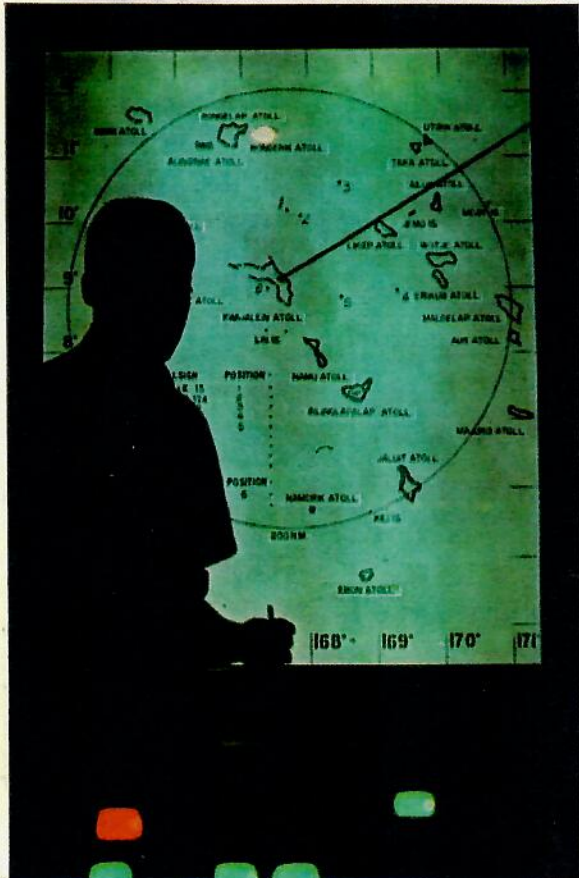




Trail of fire sears Marshall Islands skies as a Nike-Zeus roars up to intercept another missile fired from California, 5,000 miles away. The first of two exposures caught the scene as dusk silhouetted a flapping U. S. flag and a tracking vessel in Kwajalein lagoon; the launching came after dark. Technician (below) plots the path of an incoming missile on a map that shows Bikini Atoll, former atomic testing site, at the upper left corner.

No strangers to long-distance navigation, Marshallese once voyaged by "stick-chart" (above). They fixed positions between atolls—the shells—by interpreting wave patterns indicated by sticks.

KODACHROME (OPPOSITE) AND EKTACHROME (BELOW) BY CLAYTON J. PRICE © N.G.S.



turret gun breaching the water at high tide, still aiming at the Japanese shore defenses that knocked out the tank when U. S. forces landed on Saipan, June 15, 1944.

Another is a pair of cliffs, each known for its Japanese suicides—3,000 in all, I was told. Beneath one of these cliffs, in a thicket of trees, lie the bones of 1,000 civilians and soldiers who jumped rather than be taken prisoner by American troops.

I toured Saipan's battlegrounds—still so littered with live ammunition that it is unsafe to visit them alone—with the best guide on the island. Antonio M. Benavente, now a Trust Territory deputy sheriff, had been a guerrilla fighter and helped U. S. marines ferret Japanese holdouts out of hidden caves.

We walked to the lip of the second suicide cliff, then stepped back from its vertiginous 80-foot drop to the pounding sea.

"Your Navy men stood off there in ships," Tony said, "pleading with the Japanese over loudspeakers, begging them not to jump. They did, though. Some even tied stones around their children's necks first so they couldn't swim. The Navy boys came in, in small boats, to save as many as they could."

#### Ailing Child Survives With Love

No Micronesians committed suicide here, or sacrificed children. First, they didn't believe Japanese propaganda: After all, they had known American and European missionaries before Japanese times. More importantly, the Micronesians' love of children exceeds almost all other values.

On one field trip, I had watched a sick child being cared for during the long days aboard ship before we reached the hospital. Three people—his mother, his father, and his uncle—guarded him. The mother gave him food and such medicine as an island health aide had made available. The father and uncle took turns holding him in their arms, 24 hours a day. He survived—almost certainly because of pure love.

A child in Micronesia is someone to love and care for, however distant the relationship. In a sense, a child is not orphaned by the death of his parents. Even before such a tragedy, he is an integral part of the larger family, and afterward, he is immediately adopted by relatives.

Children play their part in family economy from the day they are able to climb trees for coconuts, help paddle a canoe, or bait a fish hook.

From infancy, too, many now are part of the pervading Christian faith. One Sunday,



## Islanders reach for new horizons

CHOOSING from two worlds, Micronesians build their own. Garlanded with wild-flower *maramars*, Outer Islands High School students pose proudly with a new motorcycle. A friend takes a snapshot for the folks at home.

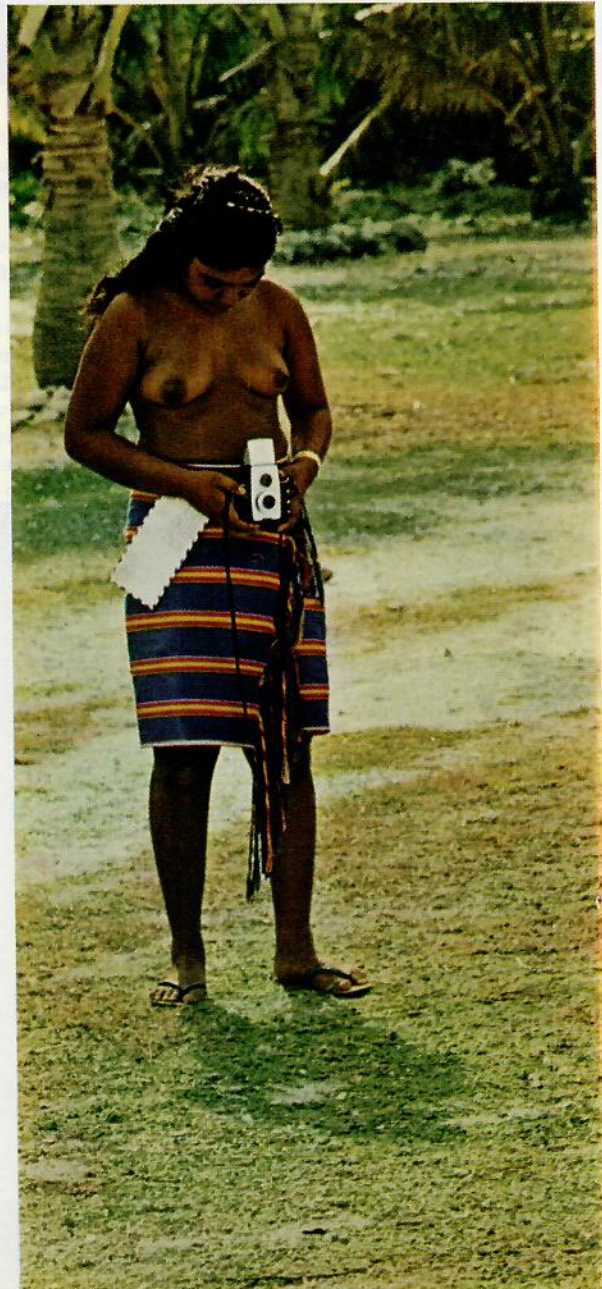
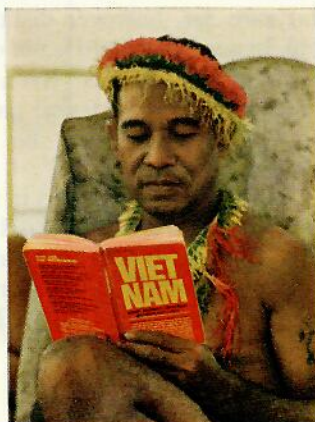
Born and raised in Palau, Francesca Gillham (right) works as secretary to James E. Hawkins, Assistant Commis-



sioner for Community Services.

Islanders tune transistor radios to disc jockeys like barebacked Andrew Ruecho, who spins popular American records four hours a day on WSZA, Yap. Stations in each administrative district help teach English and beam news, public affairs, and educational programs to remote atolls.

Mind attuned to the globe despite his choice of island dress, elementary teacher Robert Gatelmar bones up on an international crisis.



KODACHROME (ABOVE) BY DAVID S. BOYER; EKTACHROME (UPPER LEFT) AND KODACHROMES BY



on the far island of Pata, in the 30-mile-wide lagoon of Truk, I proposed to two boys that they let me make an underwater photograph of them wrestling with an octopus, the local seafood delicacy. They declined. Fishing was forbidden on the Christian day of rest.

American missionary influence, strong throughout all of Micronesia, dates from the 1850's on the island of Kusaie. New England whalers also used to come here for food and water. Reminders of their welcome survive in today's Caucasian faces.

Kusaie faded, however, from the American

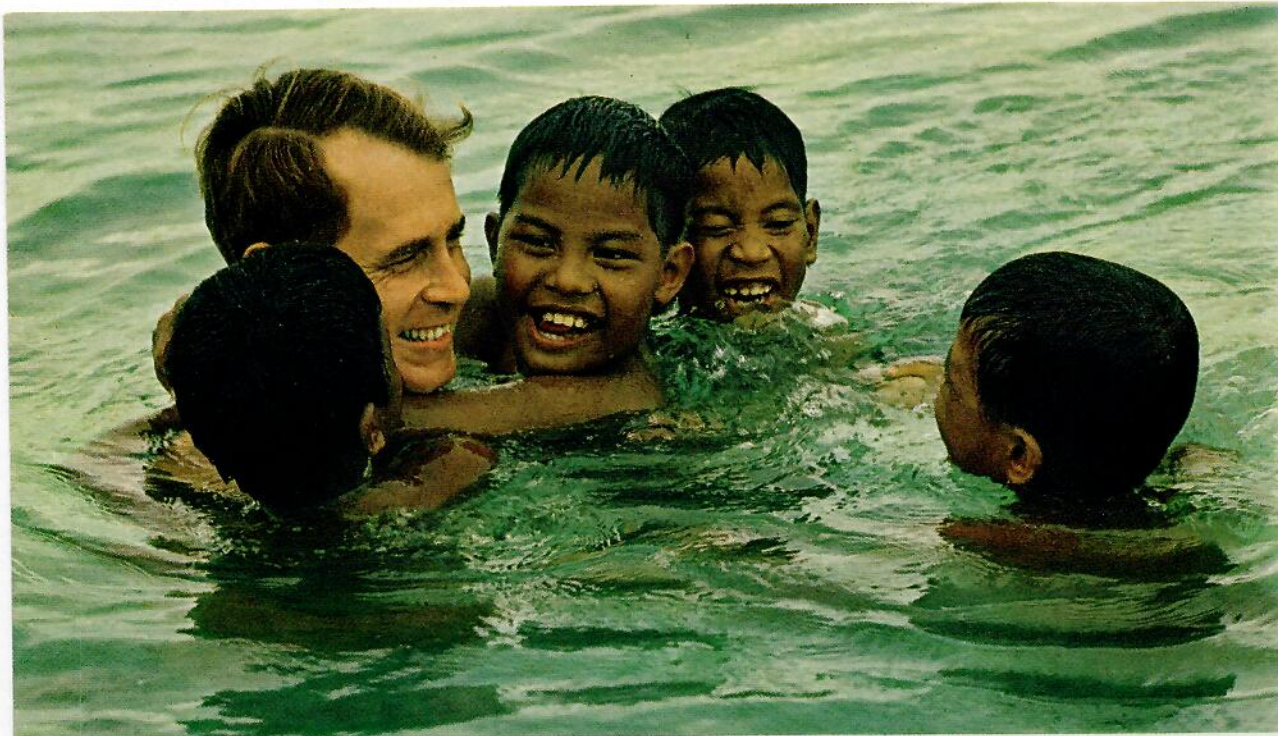
ken. Then, a few years ago, a staff of Trust Territory teachers and an administrator, Fred Muhleman, returned to create a school system and other social services.

Fred and his Kusaiean friends led me back a few centuries when they took me fishing for flying fish. At midnight, in moonless dark, low whistles signaled us down to the shore. Cautioned not to speak a word, for fear of alerting ghosts who would warn the fish of our coming, we stumbled into the outrigger canoes and were paddled off silently toward the open sea.



JACK FIELDS © N.G.S.





KODACHROME BY DAVID S. BOYER © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

**Learning to swim**, polio victims splash with Duncan S. Catling. A former Peace Corpsman in Malaysia, the teacher spends after-school hours with young patients at a rehabilitation center in the Marshalls. The first Peace Corpsmen actually assigned to the Trust Territory began arriving late last year. By next fall, 700 eager mainland volunteers will be helping Micronesians catch up to a century that almost passed them by.

When we stopped, we seemed lost and alone. Then someone struck a match and lighted a palm-frond flare. In seconds a dozen flares came alive in half a dozen canoes around us. Immediately the flying fish began to glide out of the sea, activated like moths by the lights. As they came whistling over the gunwales, they were snatched from the air with long-poled butterfly nets.

#### **Pingelap Enjoys a Building Boom**

"They catch flying fish on Pingelap and Mokil Atolls, too," Fred told me. "You'll stop there en route to Ponape. I think I'll go with you. There's no radio communication, and I get worried between trips. Who knows what might be happening?"

What was happening on Pingelap was the finishing of a new homemade Trust Territory school. The people were building concrete-block houses for themselves, too, at \$1.50 per square foot of living space. Masterminding both projects was Father Hugh Costigan, a Jesuit priest from the Bronx. The good works of this "building priest" are pillars of the entire Ponape District.

On Mokil, former Peace Corpsman David Porter, now a Trust Territory teacher, had two dozen school children in his house on a

Sunday afternoon, all reading U. S. magazines, listening to U. S. music on a tape recorder, drinking Cokes, and speaking English.

"The U. S. is no longer the edge of the world, somewhere out there, for them," Dave said. "It is places and people. And someday soon, they believe, they will really belong to it."

We landed at last beneath the lush rain-forested mountains of Ponape. This highest of the Caroline Islands is considered by many the most beautiful of all Micronesia (pages 730-31 and 734-5). In the few final quiet days before a plane would come, I wandered among Ponapean villages, visiting the people.

These prospective new citizens of the United States would soon have things and opportunities that many of them long for.

But I was glad I had come before the change.

Everywhere I went, in those days, I heard the Ponapean word of greeting. Interchangeable for either hello or goodbye, it is one of the world's loveliest words:

#### *Kasaléhia!*

When you hear it pronounced liltily on the tongue—cassa-LAY-leeah—by a Ponapean maiden with a flower in her flowing hair, as you pass her thatched house under the palm trees beside the deep sea, you feel you have heard the sound of paradise.



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