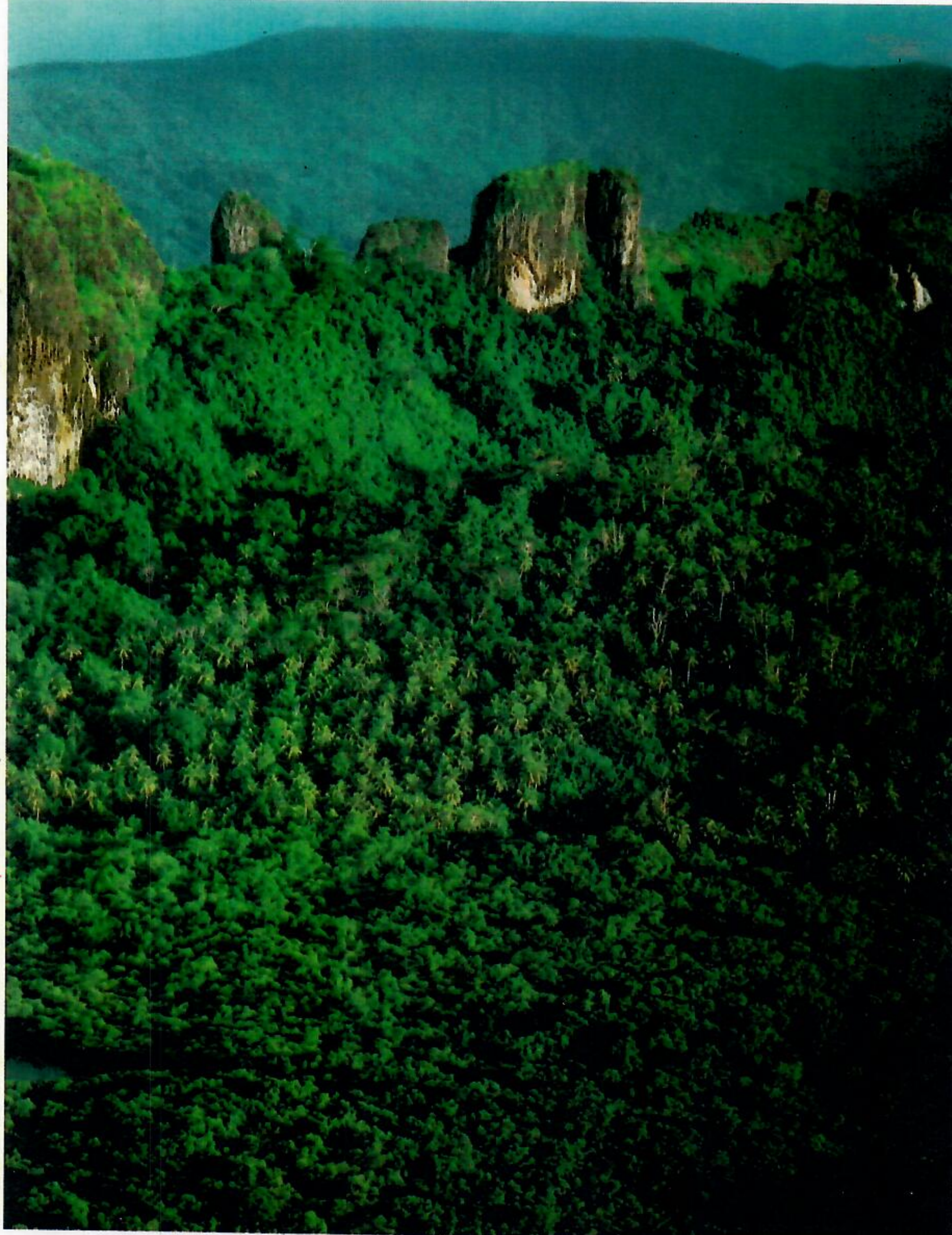
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

POHNPEI

"Diamond Head of Micronesia," the volcanic plug known as Sokehs Rock helps guide ships to Pohnpei's harbor. The island's tortuous terrain and heavy rainfall contributed to the U. S. military decision to bypass the island during World War II, thus sparing



MELINDA BERGE

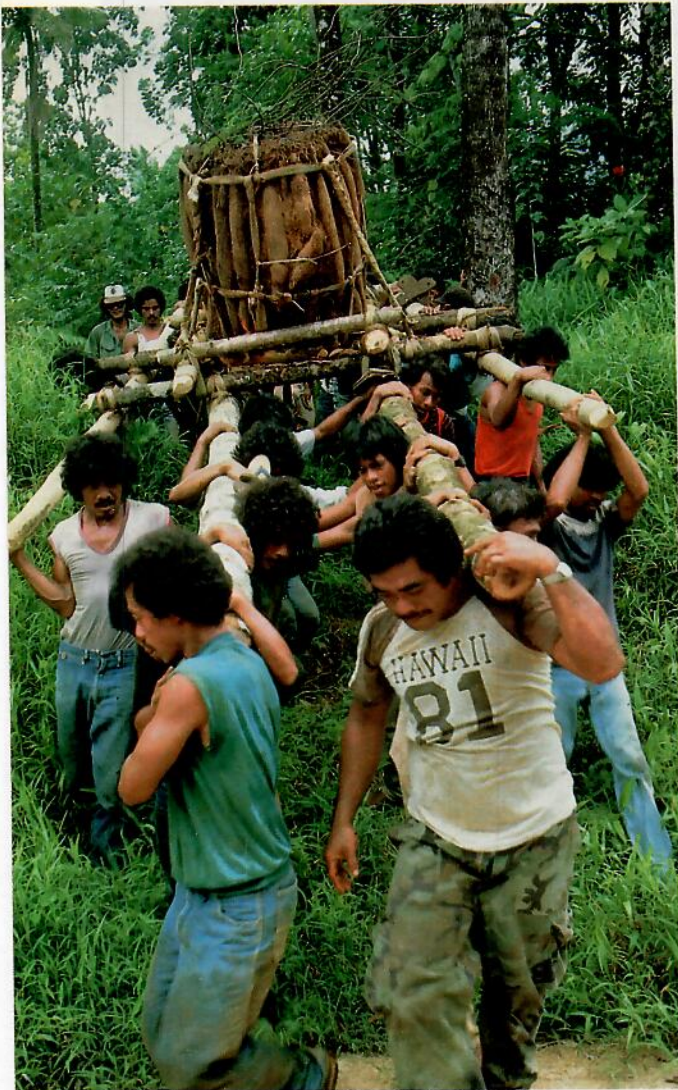
it the ravages of combat. Torrential rains continue to play a beneficent role in the life of Pohnpei, nourishing its lush foliage and floral displays and feeding the countless waterfalls that keep the sound of rushing water often in earshot.

President Tosiwo Nakayama of the Federated States of Micronesia often decries the underdeveloped state of his nation. "Alas," he told the author, "we have no bargaining chips to get more aid for development, because the FSM has nothing the American military wants." But he added, "That's not all bad either."

The way of death *on Pohnpei speaks to a way of life steeped in family care, traditional values, and long-revered ceremonies. The body of 80-year-old Tadius Fricht* (**below right**) *lies in state at his home on Mwahnd Island, a reef just off Pohnpei, as the women of his family keep vigil. Money on his casket is contributed as a token of respect. Although Mr. Fricht will be buried within 24 hours of death because of the island's hot climate, other gifts demonstrating respect will pile up at his home throughout the four-day funeral feast. Most are gifts of food, such as pig, taro, dog—regarded as a delicacy on Pohnpei—and yams.*

This 1,500-pound yam (**below**)*, in a cradle borne by 25 men, was grown especially for funeral use. With the feasting, Pohnpeians drink* sakau*, a slimy, mildly narcotic beverage made from the root of a pepper plant pounded into pulp and strained through hibiscus fiber. After the funeral, in the tradition of sharing, the leftover food is divided and sent home with the mourners.*

Although mostly Christians, many of the people of Pohnpei still revere the 700-year-old ruins of Nan Madol (**right**)*, an immense complex of 93 man-made islets walled by "logs" of basalt, that spread across 150 acres. Its canals still filled with water, this Venice of the Pacific is similar to Leluh on Kosrae but less damaged by time. Nan Madol has been declared a U. S. National Historic Landmark as an aid to its preservation. Here the last light of day lingers on part of the city's outer wall, a shield before a burial vault of Nan Madol's kings.*



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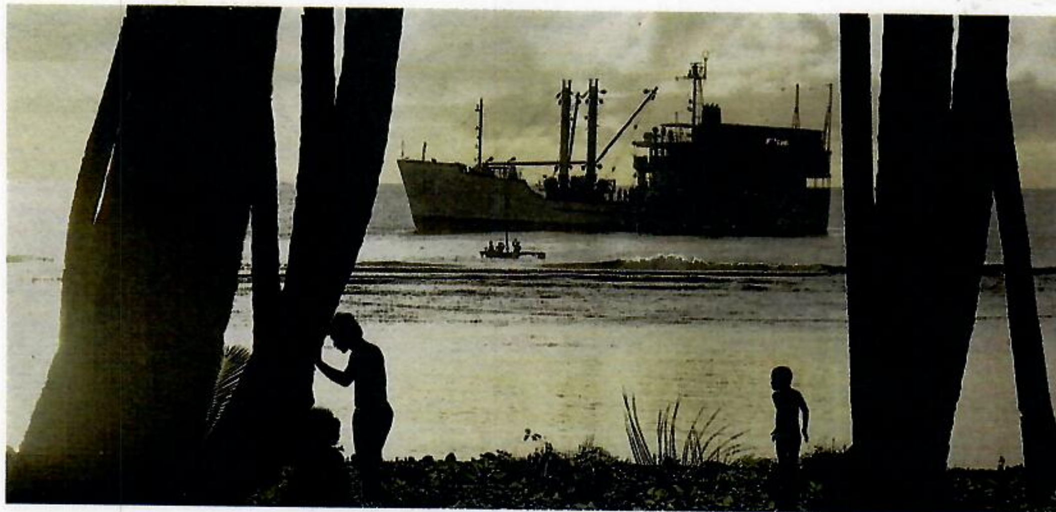


FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

TRUK

Only link to the outside world, save for radio, the Micro Dawn rides the swells off Pulusuk **(above)**. *Such government ships irregularly*

sail from Moen, capital of Truk state, to its various islands, bringing food, supplies, and services. They pick up copra and handicrafts made for sale by the islanders.

Outrigger canoes once carried commerce between islands but are now used for lightering cargo, local fishing, or simply for pleasure. Canoe building is still an art on Puluwat **(below)**, *where Aidnor Bisalen uses an adz to fashion a 14-foot vessel from a breadfruit log. The secrets of canoe building are closely held and passed from father to son.*

Change exacts a heavy price in Truk state, which has one of the world's highest suicide rates for males from 15 to 24. Authorities cite anger and fear of shaming the family as the major causes. The family of Atarino Pau, a 24-year-old suicide, gathers atop his tomb **(right)** *near the family home.*

ALL BY DAVID HISER

REST IN PEACE
PAU ATARIN
PRIL 14, 1958
SEPT 26
Winston

(Continued from page 477) and people and pick up island produce—copra, woven mats, handmade rope, and the like. The trips last from one to three weeks, depending on distance.

Sam McPhetres warned me: "*All* field trips are late getting off, *all* take longer than expected, and there is no regular schedule." On a tight schedule myself, I had hoped for a one-week trip out of Moen, the capital of Truk, and was assured that I would have it. Sam volunteered to go along. And the governor of Truk assigned John Uruo to accompany us, my first meeting with the young man from Puluwat. Things looked good.

ON THE SAILING DAY we moved on board the *Micro Dawn* and watched it being loaded. Into the forward cargo hold went the stock for island customers to buy after they had acquired some cash from the sale of their copra. Into the main hold went box after box of canned goods and other foodstuffs from the United States: sweet potatoes, peaches, evaporated milk, soy sauce, mixed vegetables, shortening, green beans, and huge bags of rice, flour, and sugar—much of it destined for the school-lunch program.

Then came the passengers, the men in their *thus* with sleeping mats and lethal-looking machetes; the women with coconut-frond-wrapped parcels of food and bags of coconuts for drinking; the children, racing madly around the ship.

The cabin passengers were a dedicated little band of government people working to bring some services to the islands: two educators testing students, a nutritionist checking on school food programs, a health officer examining needs of the handicapped, and a young American physician, Dr. Don Preston, a graduate of Oregon Health Sciences University serving in the Public Health Service, accompanied by a health aide. They would inoculate the infants and tackle any medical problem that arose.

Another cabin passenger, Father John Fahey, a Jesuit, joined us at railside. He ministers to the people of Pulap, Tamatam, Puluwat, and Pulusuk, an island group in Truk state collectively called the Westerns.

"But isn't the *Micro Dawn* going to Namonuito?" I inquired. "Yes, but *after* the Westerns," replied the priest. And sure enough, that night we sailed for Pulap, home island of the ship's captain.

I tried to see things as philosophically as Father Fahey, who laughingly explained: "Out here we are constantly faced with either a crisis or an emergency. We are often chagrined but not surprised."

We stayed at Pulap four days, living out a pattern that would repeat itself at each stop. Outside the island's encircling reef the *Micro Dawn* launched two deck boats with outboard motors that shuttled back and forth throughout the day.

We all went ashore, leaping from a ladder on the side of the ship into a small boat as it bobbed up and down in the heavy swells, hoping not to fall into the sea and attract the four enormous sharks that hung around the stern feeding on ship's garbage.

On the island the men loaded copra onto the boats while the women barbecued a delicacy, turkey tails, bought frozen from ship's stores. The doctor set up a clinic, and the government people went about their respective assignments.

We sailed for Tamatam, 15 minutes away, and spent another two days—a delay that killed any prospect of reaching the rest of the Westerns, much less Ulul, in the hoped-for span of a week. So, we radioed Moen to send a chartered boat to pick us up at Puluwat, the *Micro Dawn*'s next stop, and were told that a 40-foot fishing boat, *Miss Namonuito,* would come.

Then on to Puluwat, where John Uruo was clearly a star as the local boy who made good. He introduced me to Eric Sanford, a Peace Corps volunteer, who told me a story. After a 1982 cholera epidemic in Truk, a campaign to provide all the islanders with latrines got under way. Eric himself helped install 60 of them.

"I spoke to each family, emphasizing the importance of toilets to everyone's health," Eric said. "Yet today only 10 percent of the islanders use them." On the other hand, Eric also helped build 29 water catchment tanks and improve seven others, providing healthier drinking water and the frequent showers that everybody loves to take.

And the islanders are ambitious for their children. Although Truk state supports an elementary school on the island, junior and

senior high school students once had to go to Ulul for classes. To keep their early teenagers at home, Puluwat built the Puluwat Middle School, a cluster of cottages with thatched roofs, latticed walls, and sand for floors. Puluwat's own college graduates have returned to staff the school.

On our third day at Puluwat, the chartered boat *Miss Namonuito* finally turned up after having been lost. Since the boat's radio didn't function while the motor was running and the 26-year-old first-time captain failed to inspire confidence, we decided to stay with the *Micro Dawn,* despite whatever time it took.

After a stop at Pulusuk the *Micro Dawn* lost an engine as well as its radar and ran low on both food and water. Under the circumstances the captain decided to return directly to Moen to refit and resupply. We sailed into Truk's capital 11 days after leaving it. I never did get to President Nakayama's island of Ulul.

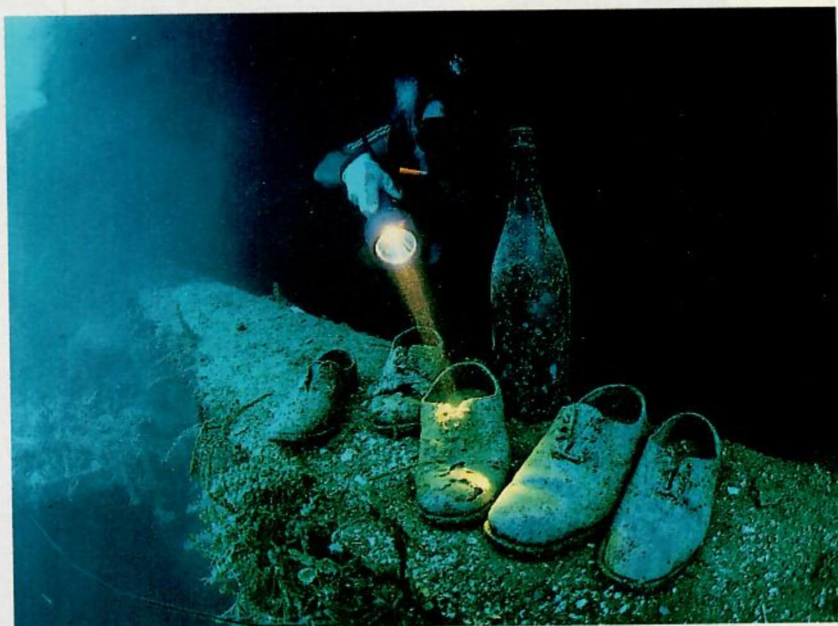
But a footnote. A report came to me from Moen: "I thought you'd like to hear what you missed by not taking the *Miss Namonuito* back to Moen. Once more the crew got lost, and this time wound up in Ulul. Then they set out from Ulul and got lost again. At last radio report the captain was going to give up sailing. When we stopped by Ulul this trip to drop off the high school students, there was the *Miss Namonuito,* resigned to exile."

WHEN WE LEFT TRUK, we flew, of course, on Air Mike, the nickname for Continental/Air Micronesia, the only jet service linking all the new nations of Micronesia. But Air Mike is more than an airline, it is a lifeline. Dividing planes into cargo and passenger sections, it carries everything, including automobiles.

The airline's "island hopper" is a kind of trolley car of the Pacific, with the downhome flavor of the neighborhood streetcar. Stopping at island after island, the 727 picks up presidents and governors, missionaries and teachers, entrepreneurs and lawyers—all of whom know one another. To travel on Air Mike is like being at a party—daily evidence of how small the vast Pacific truly is.

For Air Mike's arrivals on Yap, the last of the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia that I would cover, the sense of party heightened. A crowd of Yapese, led by Governor John Mangefel, met the plane, to welcome incoming passengers and visit with those on-going, who invariably debark for just such talks during the short layover.

The air terminal is a metal-roofed shed divided by woven bamboo half walls. Its gift shop is a counter where trays of betel nuts are sold; a snack (*Continued on page 492*)



DAVID HISER

***Tragedy of war** turns into a windfall. During World War II American aircraft sank a fleet of some 60 Japanese vessels in Truk Lagoon. The sunken ships entombed many of the possessions of the dead, while live coral and tropical fish gradually turned the graveyard into a choice destination for hundreds of scuba divers from around the globe. These shoes and a wine bottle may well have been set out by a guide for a diver to "discover," before being stored away for the next visitors to "find."*

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

YAP

No female eyes may watch these male dancers in the village of Omin on Yap as they dance out

the erotic story of the capture of a young woman from another village and her fate in the men's house of her captors. Many people of Yap state, the most traditional of the islands of

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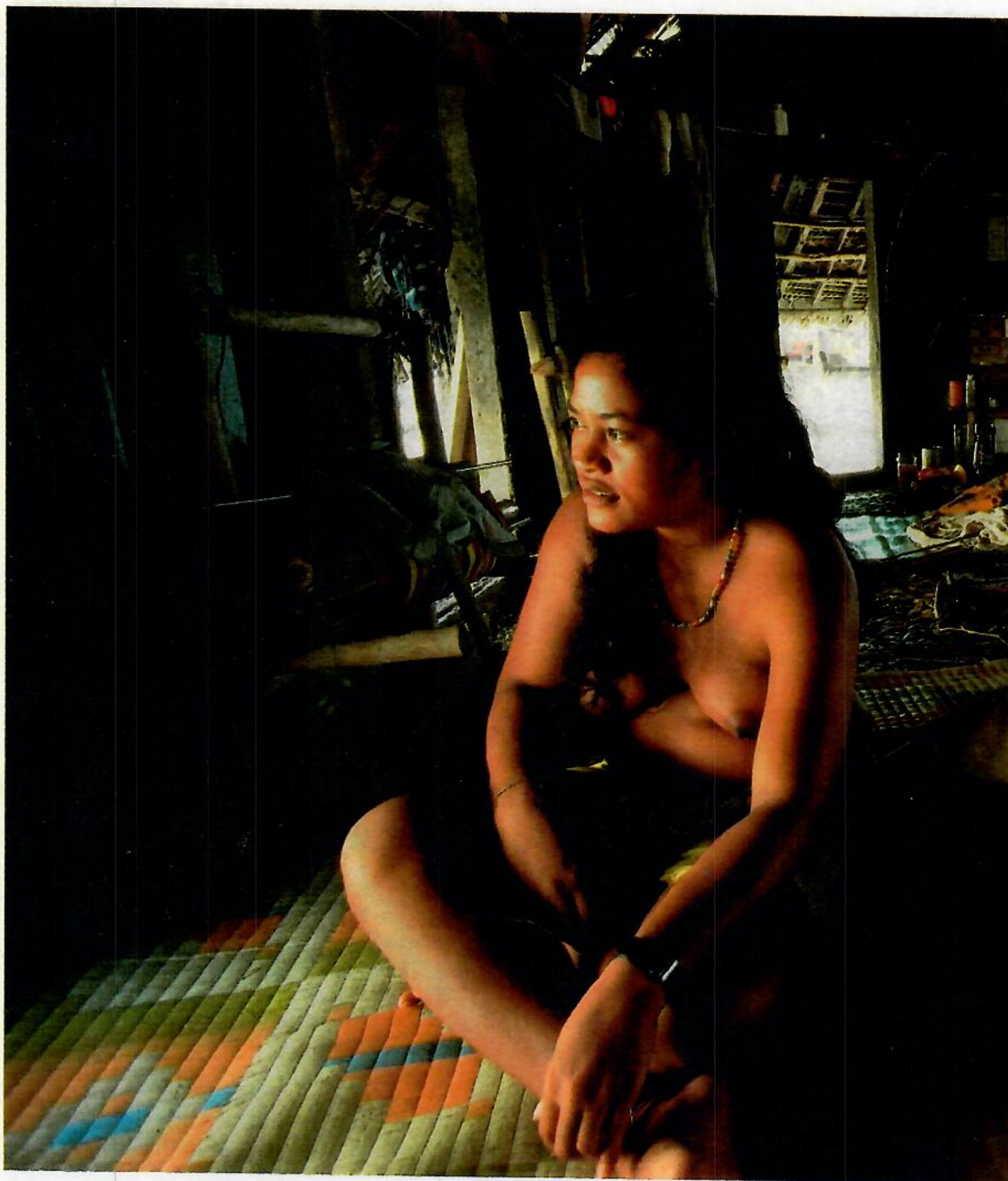
Micronesia, still cling to their own island dress and abide by old-time taboos that separate villages by caste, with the upper, or "pure," caste expecting menial labor from the lower, "polluted" caste.

Except in the most educated families, women of both castes are regarded as below men, and many live today much as their ancestors did. But change is coming. An American-style high school enrolls both boys and girls, and bright students often have a chance for higher education, regardless of their village background. There is even a troop of Girl Scouts on Yap.

Ruled by custom, *women of Mogmog, an island in Ulithi Atoll, while away the day in the ipul, or women's house, where they must remain during their menstrual period. Most women enjoy this break from their normal labors and spend the time happily talking or weaving on looms, at left and upper right.*

The onset of puberty once called forth a far-reaching set of taboos throughout the islands of Yap. Today only the most remote still require a young girl, at the first sign of her first period, to head immediately for the women's house. As she approaches, the women within begin to chant loud enough for the village to hear: "The menstruating one, ho-o-o!" This triggers hours of erotic dances by both the women in the house and the men of the village. Living in the women's house, the girl may not cook food for the men or eat with others for eight days; after another six days she may leave, but then only to live apart in her own hut.

As these taboos disappear, so too do bamboo and thatch building materials give way to more typhoon-resistant concrete walls. These men ***(right)*** *raise such a wall for a new house on Mogmog.*



BOTH BY DAVID HISER

(Continued from page 487) bar stocks Ziploc bags of pepper leaves and lime for enhancing the pleasure of betel-nut chewing.

Governor Mangefel, his mouth blood red and bulging with betel nut, wore informal attire: thongs, shorts belted below a bulging tummy, and sport shirt barely closed with a single button.

His appearance deceives. The first college graduate from Yap, with a major in English literature from the University of Hawaii, John Mangefel is a writer of wit and learning; he also has winning charm.

Yap is famous for its money, big stone disks first cut and brought from Palau centuries ago and intermittently transported since. I saw hundreds, in all sizes, lining garden paths, adorning home platforms, and congregated in the yards of lofty meetinghouses. Yap has more than 6,000 pieces of this traditional stone money, whose histories and owners are known and whose value is calculated by the difficulty of the trip and the cost in human life to bring the disks across the sea from Palau by sailing canoes.

Yap is also known for its caste system, possibly the greatest wall still separating it from the modern world. In times past, high-caste villages, with chiefs, nobles, and commoners regarded as "pure," were expected to take care of the low-caste villages, whose servants and serfs were considered "polluted." In exchange, the low-caste villages provided goods and services, usually menial. In both castes women were in a class below and apart, not even expected to eat from the same taro patch as men.

While this feudal system is eroding, some caste distinctions remain, with gratuitous services still demanded of the lower caste.

I heard the story of a high-caste, college-educated government official whose mother had an old man of low caste working in her yard, even though blind. "Why," he asked his mother, "do you keep this poor old man struggling to serve you?"

"Because it's God's will!" she cried.

When I talked to Henry Worswick, principal of the 400-student high school on Yap, I learned that he has seen "tremendous social change" since starting in education 20 years ago. Yet: "I find the situation alarming," he said, "when people are denied educational and job opportunities, promotions, prestige—all because of being low caste."

Bidding for importance, *the small state of Melekeok in Palau lobbies to become capital of the republic. Here Governor Thomas Tellei, left, and Andrei Demei, speaker of the state legislature, show off a model of their plan for a 250-million-dollar city, with a capitol, hotels, hospital, schools, airport, and roads. The road they stand on stretches only 2.7 miles, its entire length marked by a double yellow line to prohibit passing, despite the fact that almost all traffic is on foot or motorbike.*

DAVID HISER

Governor Mangefel is a conservative and wants to preserve what he considers the best of Yap's cultural heritage: respect for elders, the extended family, and reliance on private initiative rather than government subsidy.

On my last night in Yap I went with New Yorker Becky Hynicka, of the Girl Scouts of

the U.S.A., to the community center at Colonia, the capital, to witness the investiture of Girl Scout Troop No. 34. The governor came in his usual dress, with a betel-nut bulge in his cheek, and sat on the floor until the moment called upon to assist in pinning his daughter, Geneivie, one of the new Girl Scouts. Just before the ceremony, the girls sang "Paddle, Paddle Your Own Canoe."

It was all something of a wall-jumping experience: that these little girls, growing up female in a society still rooted in feudalism, could each yet aspire to paddle her own canoe. I was touched.

THE WESTERNMOST among the emerging nations of the Pacific, the Republic of Palau (or Belau), population more than 15,000, is divided into 16 separate states, each with its own governor, lieutenant governor, and legislature. Most state populations are very small, and one wonders if anyone has time for anything but government, American style and democratic though it may be.

An example is Peleliu, the tragic island where more than 13,000 Americans and Japanese died during less than three months of fighting, often hand to hand, in the autumn of 1944. Pat and I went to Peleliu from Koror, the republic's capital, by speedboat, a wave-tossing, rear-slapping 45 minutes, and arrived to discover it was the state's election day, with five candidates running for governor. Although Peleliu claims a population of 2,000 people, only 400 actually live there. More registered voters live in Koror than on their home island, and 800 send votes from Guam. The situation is similar in Palau's other states.

A current joke puts a laugh in the truth. A man walks into a bar in Koror and calls out, "Hey, Governor!" And half the men in the place stand up.

But that's only the state story. The national government is headed by President Lazarus Salii, followed by a vice president, a cabinet responsible for five ministries, a judiciary, and a legislature with a 16-member house and a 14-member senate.

Then there's the hereditary leadership. Each village has ten chiefs, ranked in importance. And, dividing the island group, there are two paramount chiefs. Never, I thought, have so few been so governed by so many.

With all these people on government salaries, it is not surprising that at least half the paychecks stem from the government. But I did find two people independently swimming against the tide.

Masahuru "Max" Moros of Koror, about 50 years old, gave up a government job in the marine resources department to go it alone as a fisherman and farmer. On his small plot he raises Chinese cabbage, sweet potatoes, cassava, bananas, papayas, coconuts, three varieties of limes, and betel palms, saving the three dollars a day needed to supply his wife with betel nut. For protein and extra cash, he goes fishing or crabbing.

"Since I stay home," he told me, "I make four times as much money as working for the government. The other night I trapped 35 coconut crabs and sold 20 to make $180.

"Palau imports as much as 75 percent of its food today," he lamented. "But the people could grow or catch everything they need, just like they once did." He failed to mention that beer is Palau's second leading import, after fuel oil, and that its dollar value is twice that of all the country's exports.

Harson Shiro, a young man who went to school in Michigan and Texas, returned to his native state of Ngaraard, determined to help young people find meaningful work—and dignity—at home. He was building a hotel virtually single-handedly.

We went on another tooth-jarring boat ride to see how he was coming along. On a sandy strand shaded by magnificent old trees stood Harson's first unit, a single room under a thatched roof, decorated with staghorn corals and carved storyboards, equipped with a pool table, and set up to serve drinks and food. Nearby, thatched roofs already covered sites for six guest cottages, and planking lay stacked for walls.

"Before cutting a tree for the planking," Harson told me, "we dance beneath it to pay respect for the life of the tree and the lives of the people who have passed beneath it." He and his young assistants plant ten trees to replace each one cut.

Harson's big push was for money to pour concrete floors in the cottages. "Tourism," he said, "is the hope of our future."

In Koror, President Salii agreed. He invited us to a picnic *(Continued on page 498)*

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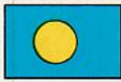
REPUBLIC OF

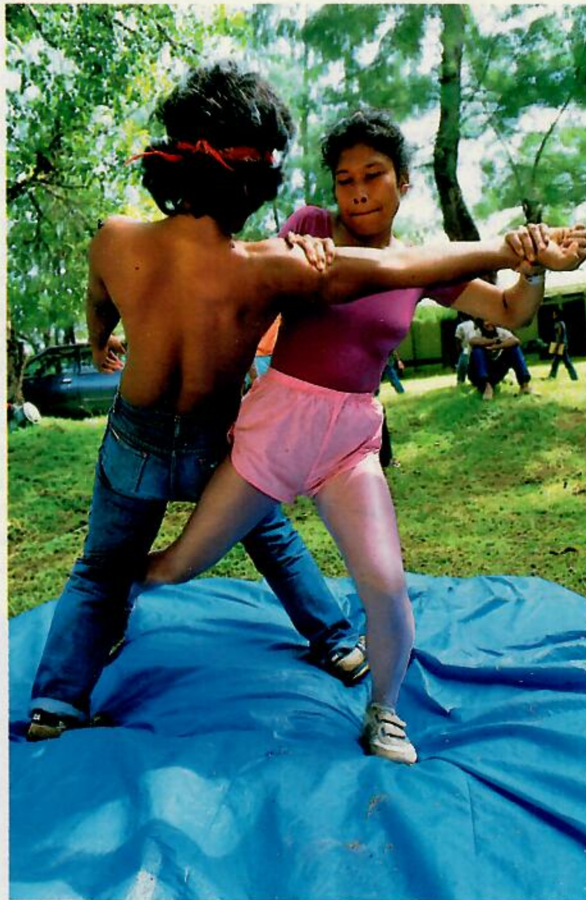
PALAU

*Second only to fuel oil in import value, beer comes by the containerful to Palau (**left**). Of more lasting value, the*



*Micronesian Occupational College in Koror, capital of the Republic of Palau, offers practical courses in a part of the world where technical skills are limited, and the arrival of an electrician on an island is welcome news. Young men and women taking the police-science course break tradition by training together. Virginia Ikeye (**right**) practices defense against an assault.*

*Putting his talents to work while serving time in the Koror jail, a prisoner carves a Palauan legend in wood to earn income (**below**). The concept of storyboards was introduced by a Japanese artist during Japan's occupation of Palau and adapted by the islanders to record their traditions.*



ALL BY DAVID HISER

***Geography added to the carnage** in the battle for Peleliu, one of the bloodiest in the Pacific in World War II, costing more than 13,000 Japanese and American lives. From the air, island heights looked like rolling hills, but, bared of foliage by shelling and flamethrowers, they showed up as a horror for attacking Americans—jagged coral in bizarre shapes pocked with caves that the Japanese had fortified (**right**). Now Peleliu is dotted with memorials (**lower right**) to men of both sides, and many survivors return for visits that give the island a steady income. A downed Japanese Zero (**below**), near Koror, lies in waters shallow enough for visitors to drop into the cockpit.*

Another important source of Peleliu income is illegal: the growing of marijuana, usually in 50-gallon oil drums. During one raid in 1983 police identified 16 fields from the air. On the ground, they counted 216 plants in one plot alone. "They were laid out in perfect rows," recalls police officer Bill Stinnett, the leader of the raid. Recently it was estimated that authorities on Peleliu in one raid seized marijuana worth several times the entire annual budget of the state—$120,000.

Government is a third source of island income. When the author visited Peleliu on election day last year, she learned that although only 400 Peleliuans live on the island, five candidates were running for governor, with an undetermined number standing for lieutenant governor and the state legislature—a situation similar to that in Palau's other 15 states. "The most overgoverned place on earth," says Fred Radewagen, publisher of the Washington Pacific Report *and a longtime observer of Micronesia.*

ALL BY DAVID HISER

(Continued from page 493) one Sunday, showing us, himself, the incredible beauty of his realm. In white shorts and shirt, devil-may-care at the wheel of his own speedboat, President Salii took us darting among the myriad Rock Islands, onetime coral reefs that through time have been lifted above the sea, carved by wave action, and dressed in tropical foliage (pages 462-3).

"There are a thousand private beaches here, just a quick boat ride from our hotels," he said with a smile that transformed his face. "And a million wonders in the water."

Snorkeling, I saw live soft coral waving in a rainbow of hues and tropical fish in a fantasy of sizes, shapes, colors, and markings, representing at least 1,500 types. We paddled over giant clams, some four and a half feet in diameter and weighing 200 pounds, believed to be more than 60 years old. We marveled that these beautiful creatures grow so huge, thanks to symbiosis with tiny but abundant one-celled algae. This natural food production encourages several Micronesian islands to farm the clams for human consumption.

President Salii may be fun-loving on his day off, but he takes his job seriously. After Palau's first president, Haruo Remeliik, was assassinated in June 1985, Salii ran for president, promising to resolve the impasse with the United States that had prevented the negotiation of a compact.

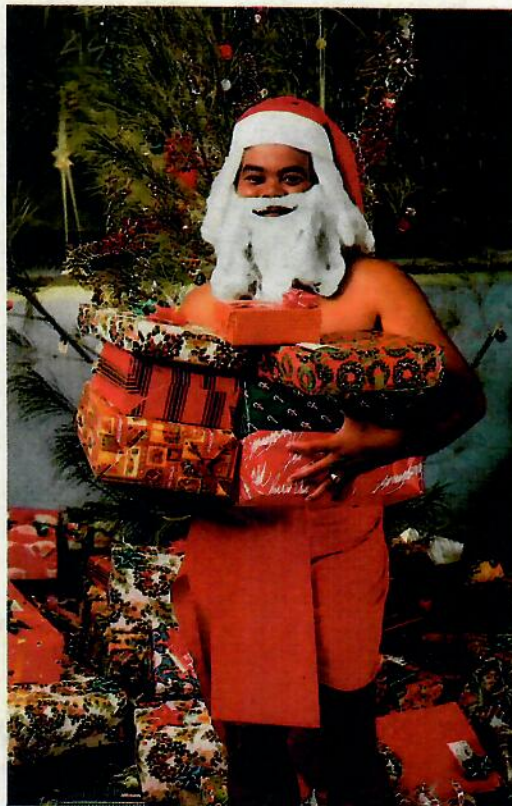
The problem? The Palauans had voted for a constitution that banned nuclear devices. Salii then initialed a compact agreement with the U. S. allowing American ships and planes of all types to operate in Palau. A court ruling held the compact illegal without a 75 percent referendum vote, a constitutional stipulation.

Salii dissented, arguing for a more flexible interpretation of the constitution: "It does not say we cannot allow nuclear-powered ships if they are *in transit*." If an appeal fails, he could ask his countrymen to give him the 75 percent endorsement at the polls. Difficult? Maybe. But the agreement won a 72 percent referendum last February.

The Palau compact also allows the American military the option of using the nation's big island of Babelthuap for bases if the U. S. should lose those in the Philippines.

At the end I returned to Saipan and sought out Governor Pedro P. Tenorio of the new Northern Marianas commonwealth. We lunched together looking out on the gardens of a luxury hotel filled with Japanese honeymooners, as are most hotels in Saipan. Japanese money had built the hotels with foreign labor, because the labor force on Saipan, as elsewhere throughout Micronesia, is meager and largely untrained.

"The Japanese didn't treat us badly before World War II," said Governor "Pete" Tenorio. "Their policy, I believe, was to keep us native Chamorros out of harm's way. Before the Americans invaded Saipan in 1944, the Japanese had us move from our home on the coast to our farm in the hills. We kids never knew about the suicides until later."



DAVID HISER

***At gift-giving time** at Xavier High School on Truk, Santa Claus, wearing a traditional* thu, *hands out gaily wrapped practical gifts such as corned beef, toothpaste, and soft drinks. This school, offering a liberal-arts education to some of the best young minds in Micronesia, and the Pohnpei Agriculture and Trade School are run by Jesuits. Both are sorely needed in the Pacific's emerging nations.*

Believing surrender dishonorable and fearing that victorious Americans would kill, torture, and rape, hundreds of Japanese settlers and soldiers leapt to their death from cliffs now known as Banzai and Suicide.

I had stood atop Banzai Cliff, rising sheer from the foaming sea, and, in my mind's eye, saw the horror. Whole families came to jump, the children lined up by age with the youngest at cliff's edge. On command, each child pushed off the one in front, until the father pushed the mother and he turned and jumped with his back to the sea, so as not to lose his nerve. And all the while, Americans in small boats offshore broadcast pleas in Japanese for them not to jump and attempted to save those who survived.

The governor grew up to go to high school and college on Guam, working his way. He started his business career on Saipan with a single gas pump that led to a rental agency for jukeboxes and electronic games, then slot machines, and now poker machines, a popular hotel entertainment.

But politics is Governor Tenorio's deepest interest, as I observed firsthand during his run for a second term as governor. The campaign was a corker, with public debates turned wild with accusations, massive rallies fueled by free beer and food, newspaper crusades, and illustrated posters nailed to every tree and post. The political tempest was brewed in the teapot of a mere 7,000 voters, 90 percent on Saipan, virtually all the rest on the islands of Rota and Tinian.

AS AMERICAN as the election was, however, Janet McCoy, the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific, sees the islanders as little changed by the U. S. presence in fundamental values and sense of identity. "Of course, I've seen the improvements brought by our country," she told me, listing airplane runways and COMSAT stations in each capital, maternal and child health-care programs, Head Start classes, and many college-educated young people. "But what I see most is a group of people who, down the centuries, through occupation by four totally different governments—Spanish, German, Japanese, and American—have managed to retain their own culture. They have remained true to their own beliefs and ways of life, have never truly been assimilated, and are now, at last, free to govern themselves, to make their own decisions, to handle their own affairs.

"The best thing we may have done is to help educate and train exceptional island leaders," she said. "In the four and a half years I have been here, I've seen them grow and mature, at home and at the UN."

Lazarus Salii too had spoken of these leaders. They had all once served together in the territory-wide Congress of Micronesia—FSM President Nakayama and Bethwel Henry, Speaker of the FSM Congress; Governor Resio S. Moses of Pohnpei, Governor Mangefel of Yap, Governor Tenorio of the Northern Marianas, President Kabua of the Marshalls, and President Salii himself. The Congress of Micronesia had limited power, subject to veto by the U. S. high commissioner but with an advise-and-consent voice in appointments. It was their training ground—and they had all been together.

"There was a time when many of us hoped," said Salii, "that we could have a United States of Micronesia—one nation. But it was not to be. . . ."

I remember my last meeting in the Federated States with Tosiwo Nakayama, Bethwel Henry, and Resio Moses. I had invited them and their wives to lunch at The Village on Pohnpei, and we were served delicious fresh crab and breadfruit salad in the big, breeze-swept dining room. As we lingered over glasses of white wine, a tropical storm blew up, and in the fury of wind and rain we seemed to draw closer to one another.

Once I had mentioned to President Nakayama that I had heard the American administration of the trust territory described as the "scandal of the Pacific." And he had been quick to respond. "Not so. We owe everything to the United States. You gave us our freedom, the right to speak our minds. And education."

Now he spoke again of the United States and the difficulty of having a brother so big, so powerful, so flaunting with nuclear power. But it was of a family that he spoke; people in the islands understand about families.

As for me, I felt I had been witness at a birth in that family. The birth of nations that are forever bound by memory of the days they were one, in trust. □

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