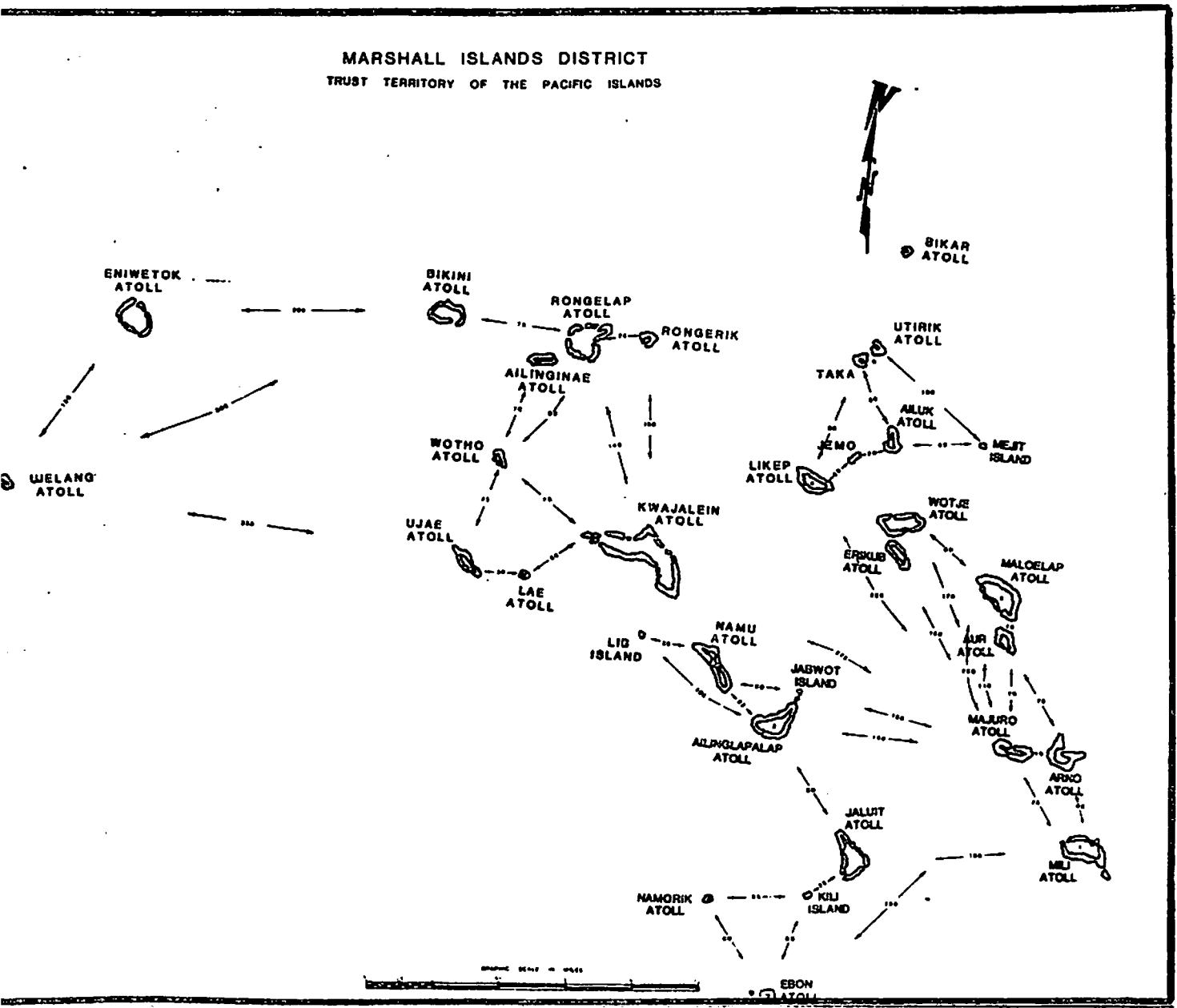
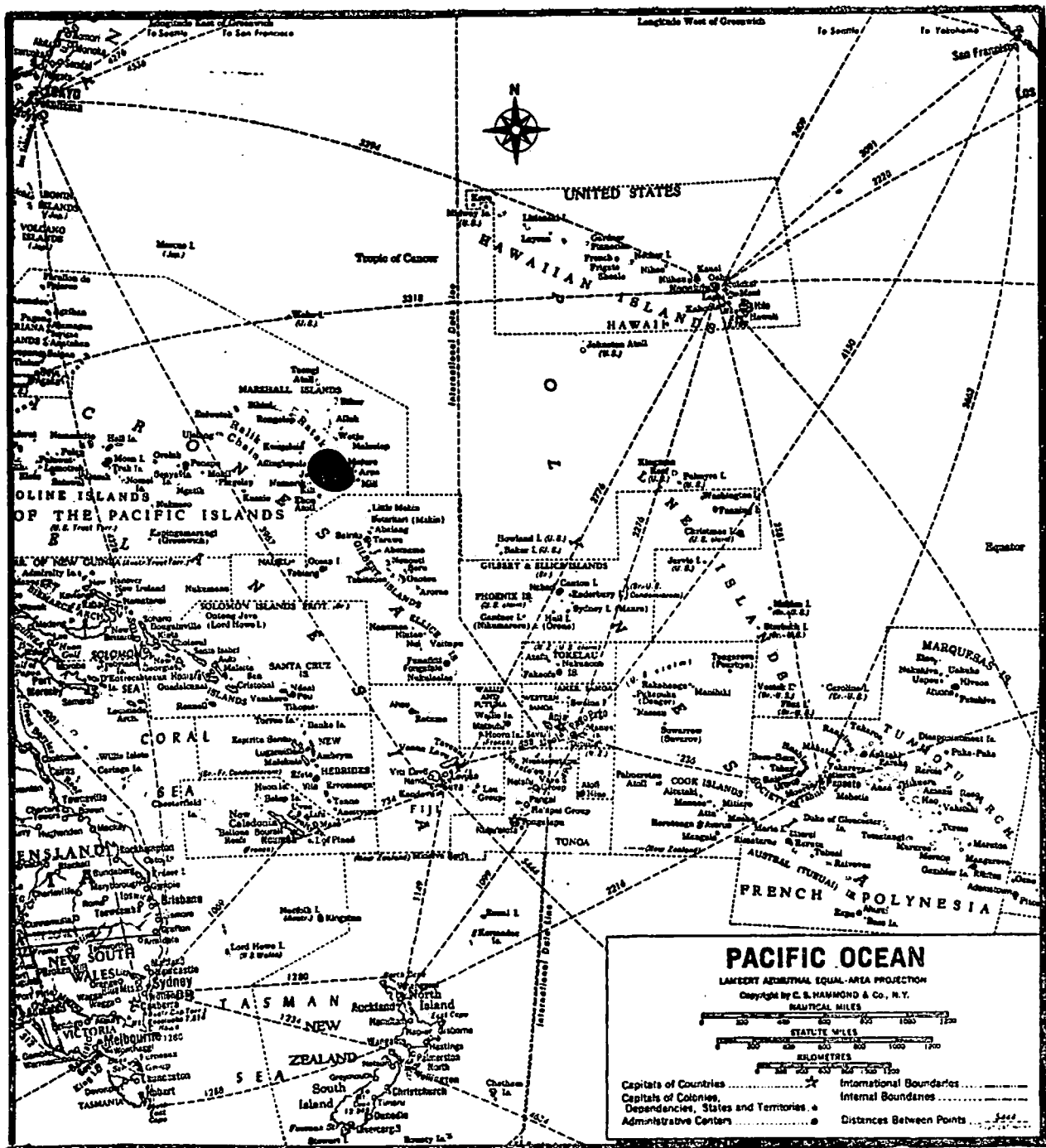


# LOLWE LAPLAP

MARSHALL ISLANDS DISTRICT  
TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS





### PACIFIC OCEAN

LAMBERT AZIMUTHAL EQUAL-AREA PROJECTION  
Copyright by C. S. HAMMOND & Co., N.Y.

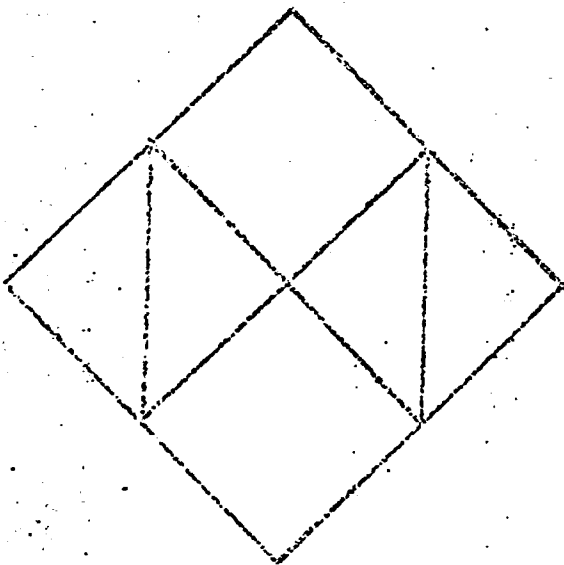


- Capitals of Countries
- Capitals of Colonies, Dependencies, States and Territories
- Administrative Centers
- International Boundaries
- Internal Boundaries
- Distances Between Points



THE DIAMOND OF THE PACIFIC

Tune: Itsy Bitsy  
Spider



Enin juon diamond  
1000 miles dalden  
Raik in Raikak  
Rej ajes ilo lajrak  
Majato ko fe  
Aniolo in monin  
Jikin ko relap  
Majuro in Ebeye

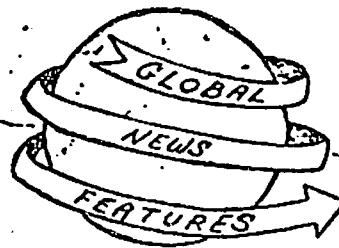
Inem koba tok  
Eng/Rak, Rear, Kabiting  
Arno, Bikini  
Notje in Jaluit  
Jerbai jban drom  
Ewa/Gen bok ad kajur  
Diamond of Pacific  
Eromak ilo torefin

This is the Diamond  
1000 miles each side  
Raik and Raikak  
Mountain chains in line  
This shows the climate -  
Wet and dry  
This shows the urban centers -  
Majuro and Ebeye

Then come all the centers  
For North, South, East and West  
Arno, Bikini  
Notje, Jaluit  
Working together  
Is how we get our power  
Diamond of Pacific  
Shining in this hour

HIGH TIDE  
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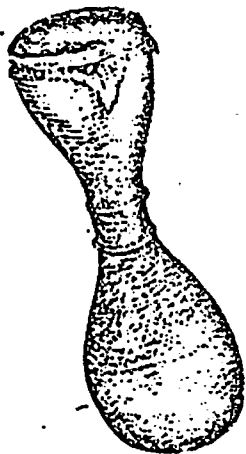
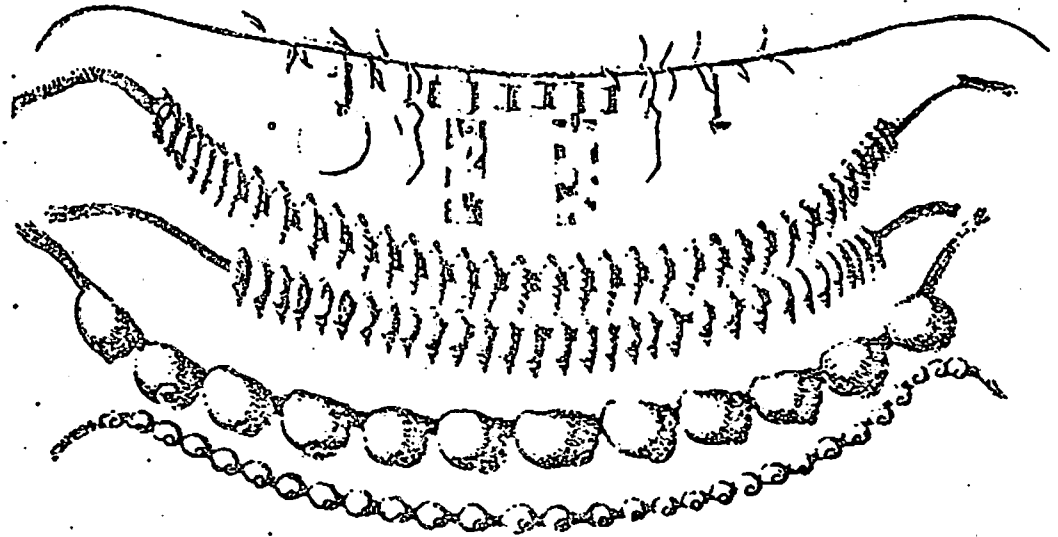
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Volume I Number 8

GLOBAL NEWS FEATURES

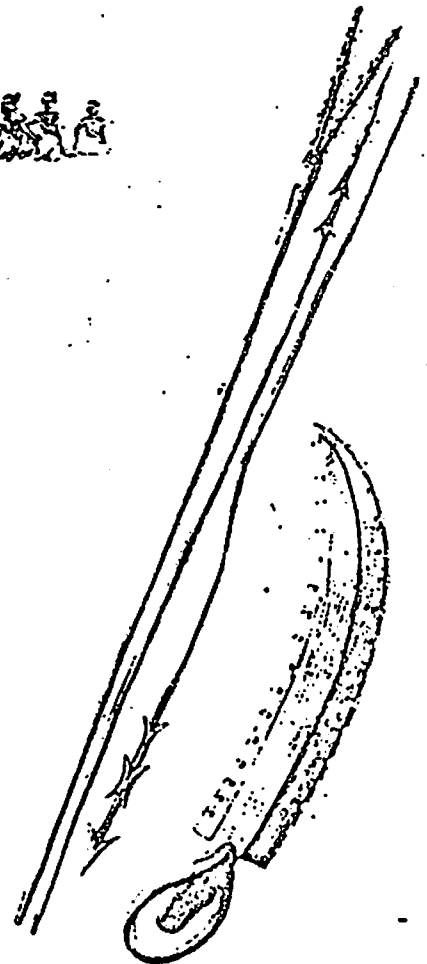
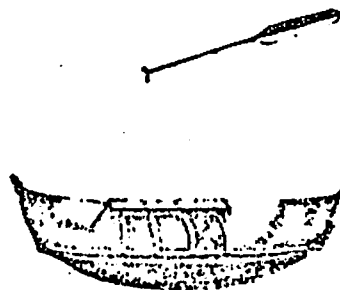
Sunday, June 15, 1960



### Marshallese Kings



**Waste**  
**Wiretap**  
**Elections**  
**School Business**



# Hereditary Kings of the Marshalls

## Then and Now

By Pat Cataldo

Marshall Islanders now living can recall the days when the *Iroi*j were absolute monarchs, with life-or-death power over their people.

And, though Americans familiar with such democratic institutions as the Legislature of the Marshalls may be surprised to learn it, Marshallese babies now being born will grow up to honor and serve their *Iroi*j in many of the same ways their ancestors have for generations.

Even today, all the land in the Marshalls belongs to one or another of the hereditary kings. Most of it is owned jointly by an *Iroi*j and an *alab* (head of a branch of a family); this land is called *weto*. Some land is owned solely by an *Iroi*j; this is called *mo*.

At one time there was a great deal of *mo* in the Marshalls, because the king could place a *tabu* for as long as he wished on any beach, fishing place, coconut grove, section of land or entire island, thus making it *mo* — his alone and a sacred place to the Marshallese people. Now, however, *mo* is found only on Ailinglaplap.

### Up-To-Date Ideas

On *weto*, the *alab* is responsible for managing the land, but must share the proceeds with the king. The system is ancient, but incorporates some surprisingly up-to-date ideas.

In the Ratak, or Eastern, Chain, *alabs* give the king 1c per pound of copra produced on each *weto* in exchange for a "hospitalization plan" under which the *Iroi*j assumes full responsibility for all hospital bills of all people on the *weto*, including both the *alab* and the *dri* *jertal* (members of the clan of the *alab*, who belong to his land).

Here in the Ralik Chain, the *alabs* give only .003c per pound of copra per *weto*, because *alabs* and *Iroi*j have agreed that Ralik Marshallese will pay their own hospital bills.

### Ancient Prerogatives

*Iroi*j Lejolan Kabua is a familiar sight on Kwajalein, always ready with a friendly greeting or handshake in the American manner.

But on Ebeye, Namu, Ailinglaplap and other islands on which he is king, his people do not stand when he is standing, nor sit higher than he when he is seated, unless he gives them permission to do so.

In the olden days, no Marshallese man could approach the house of the king when he was not at home. Even today, Marshallese men do not walk

near the bedroom of *Iroi*j Lejolan's home if he is away. It is *tabu* to yell or whistle near the *Iroi*j. Even the boldest children will not run or play close to his house.

When one of *Iroi*j Lejolan's people catches a fish, the head is given to the best of the stalk of bananas (the two or three bottom rows, growing by the stem); and a share of all other food.

When there is a death in the community, an *alab* must have the permission of the king to arrange a burial on his *weto*. When, as often happens, two *alabs* petition for the same burial, the *Iroi*j decides between them.

Marshallese tradition dictates that the dead must be buried within 24 hours. But the funeral cannot begin until the *Iroi*j or his designated representative arrives, even if the *Iroi*j delays far beyond the customary 24 hours. And when the *Iroi*j does go to pay his final respects to the dead, his people, without exception, must go with him, even if he chooses to go in the middle of the night.

Changing times and changing ways have nullified some of the ancient prerogatives. Courts and judges now settle disputes in which once the king would have been both judge and jury, with no appeal of his decision. The *Iroi*j no longer conscripts men and women for war, though he can and does conscript men for work and women for pleasure.

Once, the secrets of ocean navigation and the knowledge made visible in the wonderful Marshallese "stick charts" were known only to hereditary

times are changing

Little of the history of the Marshall Islands has been written. Only since the mid-1800's have the Marshallese had a written language, devised for them by early missionaries. School children of these islands can study no texts about their own people in their own language, for none exists. The "history books" of the Marshalls are the old people of the islands who remember what they learned from other old people long ago and add details of the great events of their own lifetimes.

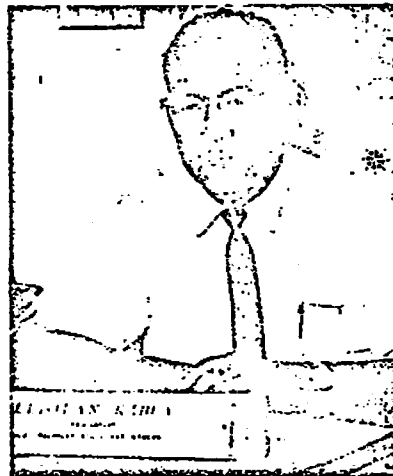
The HourGlass here presents a history and genealogy of the *Iroi*j (hereditary kings) of the Ralik (Western) Chain of the Marshall Islands.

The information was gathered by Rev. Jude Samson of Ebeye and written by Pat Cataldo. Among Rev. Samson's sources were two Kwajalein men living on Ebeye, Jimotlok and Lasto, who are repositories of the history and legend surrounding the *Iroi*j.

Jimotlok, about 84 years old, holds the hereditary title *Dri* Kean, which is translated as "Mouth of the King," or "King's Counselor."

Lasto, also a *Dri* Kean, died recently at about 75. He was one of the dwindling band of artisans who fashion Dreka in Nin (the pandanus powder).

As small boys, both Jimotlok and Lasto served in the retinue of Kabualaplap, Kabua the Great, grandfather of *Iroi*j Lejolan Kabua.



*IROI*J LEJOLAN KABUA... One of the four kings of the Ralik Marshalls now living. The others are *Iroi*j Kabua Kabua, *Iroi*j Albert Loeak and *Iroi*j (Queen) Neimoro. This line of *Iroi*j goes back more than 100 years.

the *Iroi*j. He is also given the best coconuts; the best part of the breadfruit and pandanus (the middle and lower part, not that near the stem);

the best of the stalk of bananas (the two or three bottom rows, growing by the stem); and a share of all other food.

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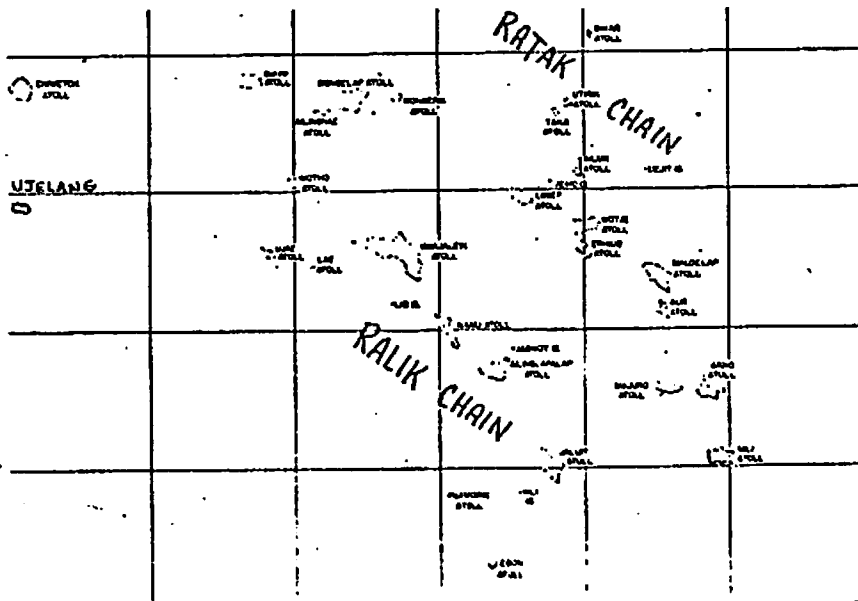
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### Times Are Changing

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Once, the secrets of ocean navigation and the knowledge made visible in the wonderful Marshallese "stick charts" were known only to hereditary

(Continued on Page 4)



## Kings of the Marshalls...

(Continued from page 3)

kings or their close relatives. Later, a few commoners were permitted to learn the closely-guarded secrets, but only with permission of the highest Iroij.

### Precious Possession

In days gone by, the Iroij might make a commoner an *alab*, give him an island or other property, in exchange for the very precious, very valuable possession called *Dreka In Nin*, the pandanus pounder. The pounder was shaped from the thickest part of the huge *tridacna* shell or from very hard white coral rock found deep in the lagoon. In a painstaking process that could take as long as five years, the artisan used a stone adz to chip and smooth the shell into the heavy, beautifully-functional instrument used then, and used today, to prepare pandanus fiber for weaving. All *Dreka In Nin* once belonged by right to the king only, who might then give one to his most loyal family, or present one to all the women of a certain village.

Nowadays, while some people still give *Dreka In Nin* to their Iroij, many keep them or make them for sale.

Once, too, golden cowries and trumpet shells belonged by right to the Iroij, and were given to him as soon as they were found.

### Kings Were Tattooed

In the olden days, when the Iroij called a meeting of his people from Kwajalein to Eniwetok, he assembled them at Bojar, Namu. When he assembled a meeting from Jaluit down to Ebon, they gathered at Buoj, Ailinglaplap, the place of the Council meeting. Buoj was also the place of the tattoos. In the old days, *eo*, body-tattooes, belonged only to the Iroij, their wives and children. It was at Buoj the kings



The pandanus pounder... painstakingly shaped from *tridacna* shell or coral rock, once belonged by right to the king alone. They here demonstrate a pounder to Lasto, from whom Rev. Samson gathered much information for this article. Lasto, only ruler of pandanus pounders on Ebon, died recently at the age of 75.



HUMAN "HISTORY BOOKS"...were consulted by Rev. Jude Samson of Ebeve, second from right, to collect information about the kinds of the Marshall Islands. Jimotlok, left, and Lasto, second from left, shared their knowledge and memories with Rev. Samson. Pat Cataldo, far right, wrote the article.

endured the process that decorated them on face, thighs, chest and back, to make them beautiful for their wives.

### Family and Clan

Stories of the olden days in the Marshall Islands are woven through with intrigue and violence. To appreciate these stories of clan politics and warfare, it is necessary to understand something of the structure of the Marshallese family and clan.

Every Marshallese at birth becomes a member of both a *buoj* and a *jowj*. *Buoj* may be translated as "family," but it is quite different from what an American thinks of as his family. A Marshall Islander includes in his *buoj*: his parents, brothers and sisters; his mother's parents; his mother's sisters, their husbands and children; his mother's unmarried brothers and possibly, though not necessarily, grandparents, great aunts and uncles, near and distant cousins, all on his mother's side.

*Jowj* is the Ralik Marshallese word for "clan." A clan is made up of all those who trace their origins matrilineally to the same ancestor. Two members of the same clan cannot marry; children are born into their mother's clan. A husband is therefore in a different clan than that of his wife and children. Representatives of many *jowj* are included in a *buoj*.

According to old Marshallese custom, a man owes primary loyalty to his sisters and their children, rather than to his wife and his own children. At the same time, his wife would look to her brothers for assistance for herself and her children in time of crisis.

### In The Time of The Whalers

In the early 1800's, before the missionaries, in the time of the whalers, the most powerful clan in the Ralik Marshalls was the Ejjowa, in the southern islands of Ebon, Jaluit, Kamorik, Kili and Ailinglaplap. In those days, everyone in the Ejjowa Clan was an Iroij or had the blood of Iroij. The name of the great Ejjowa king was Jelallut.

Then a cunning, ruthless and powerful king arose from the Ijdiril Clan in the northern islands of Kwajalein,

Ujae, Lae and Wotho. He was Lannini of Wotho, who was to gather a great war party and conquer the Ejjowa.

Lannini is sometimes known as *Lannini kabal* (Lannini the Smart) for the ways he outsmarted his enemies. For instance, he made a special point to have some of his blood in the Ejjowa Clan in order to gain control of that clan. He arranged marriages of some of his sisters (including, by custom, his mother's sisters' daughters) to Ejjowa Clan *Prirak* who controlled the eastern islands of Ebon, Kili and Nanorik. (*Prirak* are sons of an Iroij father and a commoner mother; while not so powerful as those whose parents are both of royal blood, they are nevertheless members of royalty and landowners.)

Because of Marshallese custom, sons born to these sisters regarded their uncle, Lannini, as their chief. Thus through his nephews, Lannini gained control of these Ejjowa islands.

### Lannini the Hypocrite

This wily king is also known as *Lannini Etao* (Lannini the Hypocrite), and the following stories show why.

It was typical of Lannini to kill anyone in his clan who became too powerful. One time he made up his mind that the husband of one of his own sisters must be eliminated.

First, he privately told some of his subjects to bring him five or six coconut shells filled with *jenneb*, a very nourishing, satisfying liquid food made by mixing water with a dried cake of boiled pandanus juice. Then he secretly dispatched a warrior to behead his brother-in-law.

When reports of the death reached him, Lannini refused all food for two weeks, limiting himself to what everyone supposed were sips of water from the coconut shells. In reality, he was sustaining himself very well on *jenneb*. His sister assumed that Lannini was fasting to join her in mourning, and so no trouble arose between them.

### Two With One Blow

Another time, Lannini was living on Woja, an island in Ailinglaplap Atoll where there lived two other Iroij, one of whom was very powerful. To

(Continued on page 5)



## Kings of the Marshalls...

(Continued from page 4)

eliminate both kings, Lannini devised a sly plan. When he caught a big fish, he sent the head to the powerful Iroij, and only the tail to the other. When he sent breadfruit, Lannini sent *bataktak* (the best kind) to the powerful chief, and *majwan* (the poorest kind) to the other.

Then Lannini had his people report to the lesser Iroij that he was sorry he could send only *majwan* and the tails of fish, but he was afraid of the powerful Iroij and must send the best to him.

Enraged by these humiliations, the lesser Iroij gathered his warriors and killed the other chief. Free from the threat of his powerful enemy, Lannini soon killed the remaining Iroij.

### Strange Idiosyncrasy

Lannini had a strange idiosyncrasy, the memory of which is preserved in a Marshallese saying. *Ejaraakrok in Lannini*, which means, "Lannini's kind of sailing." It is told that Lannini would announce, "Tomorrow we sail from Kwajalein to make war on the South." Everyone would hurry to collect supplies and meet on the beach...only to find that Lannini really meant, "We will sail any time from now on," perhaps as much as a year later. *Ejaraakrok in Lannini* might be the response of a contemporary Marshall Islander to someone who off-handedly suggests, "Let's sail to Ailinglaplap tomorrow."

### Lannini's Descendants

Many of the most important figures in Marshallese history are descended from Lannini. His grandson, Kaiboke, was the Iroij on Ebon who saved the lives of the first Protestant missionaries to the Marshalls when they landed on his island in 1857. The missionary group, including Dr. and Mrs. George Pierson, Rev. and Mrs. Edward T. Doane and Konakole of Hawaii and his wife, had come from the mission at Kusaie to establish a station on Ebon. The islanders wanted to kill them, as they did all strangers who landed on their shores. But Kaiboke adopted the missionaries as his children, accepted the Christian religion and forced his subjects to take Christianity as the island religion.

Kabua the Great, recognized by German authorities in the late 1800's as

the King of all the Ralik Marshalls, was Lannini's great-grandson.

Iroij Lejolan Kabua, Iroij Kabua Kabua and Iroij Albert Loek, three of the living kings of the Ralik Marshalls, are all Lannini's great-great-great-grandsons.

### Preparations for War

To attack the Ejjowa Clan in the south, Lannini gathered a great war party from Kwajalein, Ujae, Lae and Wotho, and came to Kwajalein Atoll to make preparations for battle.

It is told that Lannini's army numbered 1,000 warriors, with a fleet of 50 war canoes. The war canoes of that day were very large -- perhaps 50 feet long and seven feet wide -- and so slow that it might take two days to sail the eight miles from Ennylabager (Carlos) to Kwajalein and as long as half a year to sail from Ebadon to Kwajalein.

Feathers decorated the masts and woven-pandanus sails. The canoe of the Iroij was decorated in a special way so as to be easily recognizable to his warriors. During the day, the Iroij sailed in the lead, but at night his canoe was the last so that he could help any of his fleet that ran into difficulty.

### Women Accompanied Warriors

Each canoe carried 20 men and three or four women. Women accompanied the warriors into battle to beat the drums that made the spirit for war. They were appointed by the Iroij, and it was considered a great honor to be selected. The war drums were made by hollowing two- or three-foot sections of palm or pandanus and covering the top with shark skin.

There is a Marshallese proverb, *Kora-Lejmarjuri*, which means, "A woman should be between two warriors, not behind them." Marshall Islanders feel that a woman should be between warriors of opposing sides to create the spirit of fighting so that the enemy will be killed. They also feel that, should bad blood arise between two men of the same side, a woman should stand between them to step them from fighting each other.

The problem of supplying food for large war parties on lengthy voyages was met by the Marshall Islanders in ingenious ways. Hundreds of years before modern science developed "tube and cube food" for the astronaut, the Marshallese had learned to make a food that would occupy relatively little space in transit and last for years.

They prepared *jenkun*, a dried cake of boiled pandanus juice, which re-

mains edible for as long as ten years after preparation and is so nourishing that a single slice suffices for an entire meal.

*Jenkun* is still made, as it was in Lannini's time and for untold generations before that, in rolls about as long as a man's arm and three or four inches across, wrapped tightly in pandanus leaves and bound solidly with sennit (coconut fiber rope) into a nearly air-tight package. For ceremonial occasions, *jenkun* is formed into enormous cakes, six feet tall and more than a foot in diameter, weighing as much as 300 pounds. Traditionally, the end slices of these huge *jenkun* are given to the Iroij.

Mixed with water, *jenkun* becomes *jenneb*, the nourishing liquid food with which Lannini craftily sustained himself during his two weeks' "mourning fast."

The war parties also prepared and carried with them quantities of dried fish and coconut.

### Many Wells in Kwajalein

Drinking water was collected and transported in big coconut shells plugged with pieces of wood wrapped in pandanus leaves. Collecting water was easy in Kwajalein Atoll for there were many good wells. One of the main "filling stations" was Ebadon Island, where a hole dug right on the beach would fill up with drinkable water.

### Marshallese Weapons

Of course, an arsenal of weapons was also prepared. Marshallese war spears were carved from coconut and iron wood, varying from as long as a man's arm up to 12 feet. The long, very sharp tip was surrounded at its base by three or four backward-curving hooks. It might not kill an enemy to stab him with such a spear, but when the weapon was pulled out, against those hooks, that killed him!

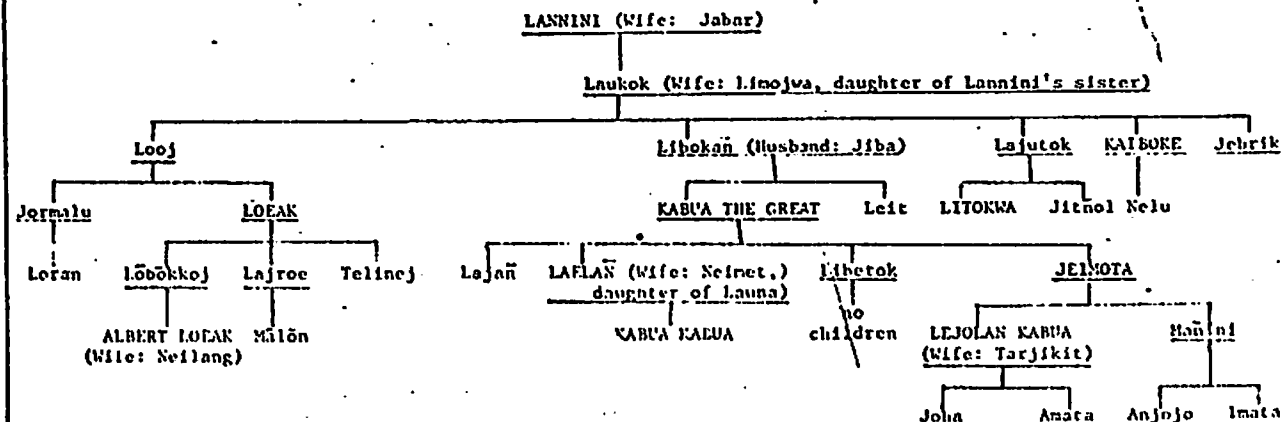
Another type of spear, called *raifraif* was flat, with a row of shark teeth on each edge.

Quantities of coconut oil were very important for war. Most of the fighting was done on the water, leaping from one canoe to another. Marshallese warriors rubbed themselves with the oil to make it difficult for the enemy to get a fatal grip.

### Conqueror of the South

With war preparations made, Lannini sailed for the south at the head of his great army. He led the Ijirik Clan in many battles against the Ejjowa and eventually conquered all the southern Marshalls. When the battles

(Continued on page 6)



## Kings of the Marshalls...

(Continued from page 5)

were over, the Ijidik became the Iroj clan and the Ejjowa were captives and slaves.

For the first time, the Ralik Marshalls were nominally under the control of one high chief. But, though he had made himself the most powerful king in the Ralik Chain, Lannini could not prevent inter-clan warfare. The power struggle intensified until it culminated in the last great war in the Ralik Chain, in the latter part of the 19th Century. Not until the time of Kabua the Great, Lannini's great-grandson would there be peace in the Ralik Marshalls.

### "Launa's War"

The last war in the Ralik Marshalls was fought between two great-grandsons of Lannini, Kabua and Litokwa. Kabua's mother was Litokwa's aunt; the two men were cousins.

Fighting with Kabua was Launa, a great warrior from Kwajalein Atoll, who served as Kabua's "chief of staff." Because Launa's advice turned the tide of battle and won the war for Kabua, the Marshallese call it *Launa Tarikaa*, "Launa's War." (Kabua's father, Jiha, was Launa's uncle. Launa, in turn, was the uncle of Jeimota, the father of Iroj Lejolan Kabua.)

Fighting for Litokwa was his uncle, Kaiboke, grandson of Lannini and powerful Iroj in the south -- the same king who saved the lives of the missionaries on Ebon Island.

Kabua considered himself king of all the Ralik Marshalls. He attained the title *Kabuolaplap* (Kabua the Great) during the time of the missionary Dr. Benjamin Snow on Ebon (1857-1872).

### Show of Force

To firmly establish Kabua's authority, Launa advised him to tour the northern and southern islands with a war party in a show of force. After spending about a year in the north, Kabua, Launa and the war party sailed from Luoj, Ailinglaplap, to Ebon to tour the southern islands.

The kings of Ebon were of the Erreja Clan (which is also Rev. Jude Samson's clan). Kabua's son, Laelan, who was then just a young boy, was also an Erreja. Kabua was of the Iroj clan, but his father was Ijidik, as was Launa. The Erreja Virgs resented Kabua bringing people of the Ijidik Clan to 'ber. After Kabua had been on the island for a time, the people of Ebon conspired to kill him and his party.

Kabua wanted to flee when he learned of this plan, but the people of Ebon had blocked the narrow passageway out of the reef.

Launa told Kabua to take the war party to Mwinck, another island in the atoll, and stay there five days. Then Launa told the Iroj of Ebon that he, too, was going to Mwinck for a war council. The people of Ebon were to watch Mwinck; if they saw it burning, it would be a signal that Kabua, Launa and their warriors would be coming to Ebon for battle.

Launa knew when a high wind would come and when the tide would be high enough for Kabua's fleet to go over the obstructions in the pass. Then

he got to Mwinck, he told his men to load up the canoes with food, water, spears and rocks (to stone the warriors from Ebon), and to put all the women and children on board. He ordered his men to follow him and do exactly as he did. Then he set fire to Mwinck.

The people of Ebon had fortified their beach in preparation for battle. They stood watching Mwinck, but could see nothing but smoke and fire.

### Dr. Snow's Book

It is told that Dr. Snow, the missionary, tried his best to stop the war. When he saw the war party approaching through the smoke, he sat down and wrote it all in a book.

Launa led his party toward one end of Ebon. The warriors on the shore, following his course, gathered at the spot on the beach where they thought he would land.

Suddenly, just offshore, Launa reversed his course and sailed back along the length of Ebon island and out the passageway, leading the fleet away from Ebon Atoll.

To Kabua, he said, "You don't have to fight these people, for Ebon is yours. Your son Laelan is Erreja; when he grows up, Ebon will be his

jumped overboard.

Launa, in the next canoe with Kabua, saw what had happened and sailed over to pick Laela up. "What shall we do with these violent men?" Launa asked Kabua, who answered, "Let's not bother with these drifting *kejoke* (logs)." But Launa sailed toward them and, when he was close enough, he jumped into their canoe. He had forgotten his battle ax and shouted for his men to throw it to him. As the warriors were attacking him, Launa caught his ax and killed the men one by one. The last one jumped overboard, so Launa jumped in after him and killed him in the water. Thus Launa saved Laela, the grandfather of Iroj Albert Loek.

When "Launa's War" ended, representatives of the German government stepped in and recognized *Kabuolaplap* as King of the Ralik Marshalls.

### Four Living Kings

Four hereditary kings of the Ralik Marshalls are now living, representatives of a line of Iroj that goes back well over a hundred years and that will continue to exist through their children.

They are:

IROJ LEJOLAN KABUA, son of Jeimota (Jeimota was Launa's nephew); grandson of Kabua the Great; great-great-grandson of Lannini.

IROJ KABUA KAPUA, son of Laelan; grandson of Kabua the Great; great-great-grandson of Lannini.

IROJ ALPFI ICLAP, son of Letokkoj; grandson of Loek; great-great-grandson of Lannini.

LEROIJ (QUEEN) NEIMERO.

The real home of the three Iroj is Ailinglaplap; however for business reasons, Iroj Lejolan and Iroj Albert frequently live on Ebeye, while Iroj Kabua Kabua is Trust Territory Associate Judge of the Marshall Islands District, living on Majuro. Leroij Neimero lives in Ebon Atoll. She is the mother of Iroj Albert's wife, Keilang, who will inherit the title upon Neimero's death.

### Clan and Land

Life in the Ralik Marshalls is much different than it was in the time of Lannini, but many of the privileges and responsibilities of the Iroj have remained the same.

The same two factors that made their ancestors powerful make the Iroj powerful today: clan and land.

The fathers of all the living Iroj came from the great Ijidik and Errebra clans, to which belongs most of the land of the Ralik Marshalls. Now, as it was generations ago, land is power.



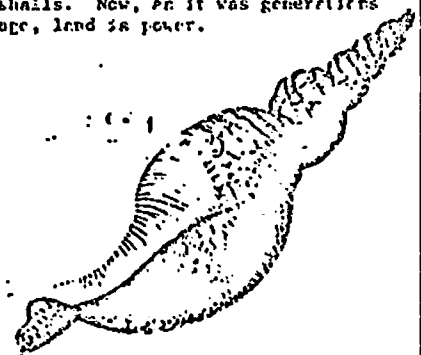
IROJ ALBERT LOEK... whose grandfather, Loek, fought with Kabua the Great in "Launa's War," during the latter part of the 19th Century. Iroj Albert lives on Ailinglaplap and Ebeye.

property -- and if it is his, it is yours." His advice turned out to be right, because today Ebon is entirely owned by Iroj Kabua Kabua, son of Laelan and his wife, Neimet, who was Launa's daughter.

### Drifting Men of Woleai

As the war party sailed from Ebon to Jaluit, they came across seven Woleai men drifting in one canoe. (Woleai is one of the western Yapese Islands.) Iroj Loek, who was riding in the first canoe of Kabua's fleet, sailed for the drifting vessel. His men asked if they should kill the Woleai men, but Iroj Loek said, "Don't kill them; I will take them to Ailinglaplap and adopt them as my sons." So they took the drifting canoe under tow.

The rescued men did not understand that Loek wanted to help them. After a few hours they suddenly leaped aboard Loek's canoe, killing everyone aboard except Loek himself, who



MICRONESIA  
THE BREADFRUIT REVOLUTION

by Byron Baker; East-West Center Press, Honolulu; 1971

POSTWAR DISLOCATION

Jaluit, in the Marshalls and Dublon, in Truk, the former Japanese administrative centers, had been heavily damaged by war-time bombing, so the United States created new centers. In the Marshalls, Majuro became the district capital. The facilities established there by the American military when the lagoon was occupied during the Central Pacific campaign were inherited by the new government.

LEGEND

On many islands, particularly the low coral atolls, there is little in the way of suitable material for heavy construction. Marshallese legend describes what would be an interesting exception. It is said that the Ralik and Ratak chains of the Marshalls were peopled from basalt pillars, one in each chain of islands. Luatonmur, a pillar on Bojar Island in Namu Atoll, supposedly bore the first Ralik chief, and her sister, Liribribju, on Aur Atoll, the first of the Ratak chiefs.

The Marshall Islands themselves are said to have been created after a tree growing in the head of the first human, a man named Uelip, split his skull. From the broken head emerged two boys. Etau and Djemlut. Etau subsequently became angry with his father and flew off one day with a basket of soil to build his own home. Earth falling through holes in the basket sprinkled the Pacific waters, and formed the Marshall Islands.

ADMINISTRATION

East of Ponape are the Marshalls, an administrator's nightmare of small remote atoll communities scattered over a region of ocean larger than California. They are the eastern end of a long sweep of atolls that begins far to the west, near Yap: Ulithi, Woleai, Ifalik, Lamotrek, the Mortlocks, Kapingamarangi, Mokil, to name a few.

There is much that is similar throughout the area, though folkways and political relationships differ from place to place. All of the islands are small, generally no more than a mile or so long, a few hundred yards wide, a few feet above the sea. Life there is a recurrent round of taro and breadfruit raising, fishing, and copra harvesting. The great sailing canoes of the islands are made here from the trunks of breadfruit trees.

Overhead is the great bowl of the sky, blue and fleeced with thunderheads, or grey with tropical drizzles or squalls; on every side the sea, pulsing in the lagoon, crashing on the reef. There is a closeness, an intimacy with the elements on these ribbon-like atolls that is never sensed where life is more robust, resources more plentiful.

The Marshallese of old had words to describe the relationship of the men of the atolls with their scant, sandy soil, their vulnerability to stormy seas. Soil was strong or weak like a man. The land had sinews if it was good. It was talk that was full of bone and blood, an eloquent testament to the delicate environmental balance.

These islands are largely self-sustaining. If there is a long drought, if a blight hits the breadfruit, if the fish are poisonous, people probably will go hungry. Except for such travels as the islanders may undertake in their outrigger canoes, their only contact with the rest of the world is the Trust Territory's

subsidized "field trip ship" service and small radios with which they maintain tenuous contact with district center. The ships are small and too few. In most regions they make their circuits of the outlying islands once in about three months, depending on how much they are diverted by storms, mechanical failures, grounding on the numerous reefs, diversion for emergency medical service to other islands, epidemics at district center, contract negotiations, or lack of cargo.

On this slender lifeline depends the outer islander's ability to sell copra, have tobacco or alcohol, obtain medical service beyond the skills of a corpsman, get an education, receive mail, obtain tools, and buy any food he cannot grow or catch.

#### LEGEND

According to Marshallese legend the sail came to the outrigger canoe as a gift from Liktanur, a woman of Ailinglaplap Atoll, to the youngest of her ten sons. The boys had decided to race their canoes across the lagoon, from Woja Island to Jeh Island. Liktanur, loaded with bundles, appeared at the beach just as the race was about to begin, and asked each of her sons in turn to take her along. Eyeing her bulky packages dubiously, all refused except the youngest, Timur. Liktanur detained him on the beach until the others were off across the lagoon, paddles flashing. Then Liktanur opened the bundles she had brought to reveal a sail, rigging, and spars. On the way across the lagoon, she demonstrated tacking, and Timur won the race.

The legend says that Timur and his brothers ascended to heaven after their deaths, and became stars which Marshallese used as aids to navigation.

Carolinians and Marshallese alike could navigate by stars, currents, elapsed voyage time, wave set and such signs as the appearance of certain sea birds known to frequent given locations at particular periods of the year. Chants preserved the accumulated knowledge, which islanders exchanged among themselves over large regions. The Marshallese even constructed charts to record sailing information. Made from sea shells and pandanus roots, the charts showed the set of currents and waves around islands and in the open ocean. The shells represented the islands, the sticks the currents. The mattang, for a single point; the meddo, for four or more; and the rebbalib, for the whole of the Marshalls; chain.

#### ECONOMIC SITUATION

A copra industry that produces less than it could or should... the beginning of tourism and fisheries...some scattered vegetable and livestock farming...a bit of handicrafts manufacture, a trace of seashell harvest, dwindling scrap metal sales, unexplored forests, unplumbed oceans, uncrossed seas, unrecorded and inalienable lands....

These are the industries and the resources from which the good life in Micronesia must spring despite:

-----an economic structure in which government of one sort or another employs 64 percent of all the workers.

-----an economy that in 1967 paid cash wages to only about 34 percent of the potential labor force, and distributed the money unevenly (nearly 40% in the Marianas while only 13% in Truk.)

-----rapid growth in a predominantly youthful population (over 3%

growth a year in recent years; better than 60% of Micronesia's people are under the age of twenty four.

----uneven income distribution. (the government pays best. In 1970 copra growers made an average of \$275; stevedores, \$430; retail and wholesale employees, \$1125; construction workers, \$1330.)

----conflicting cultures, uncertain political union, impediments to travel, poor education, and no common language (yet).

----an extreme shortage of investment capital; grave land tenure problems; dispersed population; inadequate roads, power, and water resources; restrictions on trade.

#### LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT

In the Marshalls, however, legislative development took a quite different form. There the traditional leaders who had been incorporated into a separate House of Nobles were the Iroij, customarily the holders of title to all land and possessors of knowledge of navigation and supernatural matters. Their land rights had been sharply eroded during the Japanese mandate, but the CivAd in large measure restored them to their former positions of eminence. They dominated the Marshall Islands Congress and defeated the several attempts at reform of that body sponsored by the trusteeship administration. Far from being over-awed by the legislative process, the Marshallese Iroij made it a weapon for defending their own interests.