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By

JAPAN'S MANDATE IN
THE SOUTH SEAS

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This is an interim report on "Japanese Dependencies and Colonial Policy" submitted by Professor T. Yamahara to the International Research Committee of the Institute of Pacific Relations. The Japanese Council takes liberty to distribute the paper among the members attending the Banff Conference of the Institute, as the Council thinks that the report may serve as an useful material for discussion. The presentation of this paper, however, does not imply that either the Institute itself or the Japanese Council assumes responsibility for statements of fact or opinion contained in the text. These remain as much the personal expression of the author as would be the case if the contribution were communicated orally.

Preface

Last April I was asked by the Institute of Pacific Relations to undertake a research of the Japanese dependencies and their people. I was so fortunate as to obtain the valuable assistance of Mr. Tanzo Sowa. We began with a study of the South Sea Islands. We shall describe the social and economic development of the South Sea Islands and attempt to grasp the changes which the primitive life of the natives underwent and is still undergoing from the time of the Spaniards and Germans to the period of the Japanese administration. We wish especially to consider the often discussed subject of the depopulation of aborigines, and in what way this tendency affects our South Sea Islands.

The South Sea Islands mandated to Japan are a number of small islands scattered over a wide area. They did not constitute a major part of the German possession in the South Seas, but a subordinate part of New Guinea. Therefore, we cannot say that there has been much written about these islands. Most of what has been written is merely static description. So, for our study we have had much difficulty in obtaining material relating to changes in the life of the natives which were a result of contact with colonizers. Besides making use of available books and articles in our library, we were supplied with materials from the Departments of Overseas and Foreign Affairs. Moreover, we sent questionnaires to the Government offices, schools, hospitals and religious bodies in the South Sea Islands, and we had interviewed some persons who had actual knowledge of this region. But we fear that on many points we are still only touching the surface of the facts. So we intend to make a trip through this region for a survey and after that complete this report. The following is a very brief outline report of what we have done up to present.

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Our mandated islands in the South Seas are situated in an area which extends from 130 to 175 degrees east longitude, and from the Equator to 22 degrees north latitude. The islands are scattered over an area of ocean extending 1200 knots from north to south and 2500 knots from east to west. There are more than 600 of these small islands of which the Marshall Islands form the three main archipelagos. The islands are so small, that even the largest of them Rome covers only 375 square kilometers. The total land area of the islands is only 2149 square kilometers. Moreover, the islands are quite isolated from each other, the shortest distance being 10 knots and the longest distance more than 650 knots.

Although situated in the tropic zone, the islands are so small that they are entirely exposed to the sea winds, so that the temperature at no time during the year exceeds 29 to 31 degrees centigrade. Throughout the year there are but slight variations of climate; the rainfall in the islands is heavy. Moreover, the malaria mosquito is unknown. From the point of health, therefore, the islands cannot be said to be unsuitable for settling.

The vegetation is luxuriant, of it the palm and bread-fruit are economically important. A large variety of fishes and other marine products are found in the surrounding waters. There are no wild animals. The sea-fowl congregate in such large numbers that some of the islands are rich in phosphate. No other mineral deposits, however, have been discovered. Pigs and chickens, first brought by the Spaniards, have increased considerably in recent years. Judging from those natural conditions stated above, we can understand that the economic value of these islands is not at all negligible, though not considerable.

Racially, the natives are of very mixed origin; in general it is said that the aborigines of Micronesia, which includes the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline Islands, are negritos; with these have mixed the Malays who came from the Philippines, Polynesians from east and west, and Melanesians from the south. The inhabitants of the islands are a result of a highly complicated hybridization, and the degree of mixture of the original stock is said to depend upon the locality. According to a report of an actual survey made in this region by Professor Hasebe of the Tohoku Imperial University, and according to his new classification, the predominant type of the inhabitants in our mandated islands is the Caroline A type; the Indonesian type ranks second. (Kotondo Hasebe, Our South Seas in the Past, 1932).

Besides these ethnic divisions, the natives are socially divided into the Chamorros and the Kanakas. For my purpose the latter classification is more important. The term Chamorro, also known as Mariana,

Relations of Japan with the South Sea Islands began as early as 1885 when Taketaro Goto and Keikun Suzuki set out on a voyage of

The coming of European traders and whalers between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth gradually opened up these regions to "capital" — unorganized and individual coming of German firms, about 1870, which sought for investment. In 1885 the Marshall Islands, in 1899 the Mariana and Caroline Islands became German possessions.

The islands of the South Seas entered into world history after the age of explorations in the 15th and 16th centuries when they were discovered by the Spaniards. The Spaniards were occupied mainly with proselytizing of the natives which they carried on principally in the Mariana Islands. Their policy was to bring about the subjugation of the natives by force. Martyring of missionaries and native revolts followed successively, until in 1731 in Mogmog a party led by Juan Antonio Cantova was slaughtered, and the work of the first missionaries of necessity brought to an end.

Chapter II. History

According to a recent census (1930) of the islands, the total population was said to be 69,626 of whom 3,301 were Chamorros, 46,394 Kanakas, 19,835 Japanese, and 96 foreigners. Of the Chamorros who hold the Mariana Islands as their home base, some have spread out to Yap and Palao of the West Caroline Islands. The Kanakas have settled chiefly in the Carolines, though they are scattered over the entire group of the South Sea Islands.

is applied to the natives of the Mariana Islands. "Kanakas" in Hawaiian originally meant "a man", but today those outside the Chamorro group are so called. While the Kanakas still lead a primitive life, the Chamorros from early contact with the Spaniards and intermingling with them came somewhat under European influence; as a result a difference exists between the cultural stage of the Chamorros and the Kanakas, and for this reason they do not mix with each other or intermarry. Legally both people do not have the status of Japanese citizens, but are treated as "Inhabitants of the Islands".

exploration to the South Seas; after that the number of those who sought the possibilities of economic activity in this region gradually increased. With the outbreak of the Great War, the Japanese navy took possession of the German colonial possessions north of the equator, and as a result of the Peace Conference these islands were mandated to Japan. Our Government then established the South Seas Bureau in 1922 and entered upon the intensive administration and development of this region.

The South Sea Islands have been in the hands of three different masters, and according to the change in time and the change in possessors, the character of the policies in the different administrations changed. The activities of the Spaniards did not go beyond discovery and the opening up of a field for religious propaganda; under the Germans commercial activity alone was not their aim, but they made some effort for the development of the islands. But under German administration these islands held only a subordinate position to that of New Guinea. Only after being mandated to Japan did these islands for the first time become an independent region for administration and the object of a systematic and intensive administration.

Chapter III. Population

The Germans seem to have begun taking a census after 1900, but they were partial and incomplete. Only after being mandated to Japan was a statistics of the population of the entire region published annually. A detailed census of the islands was taken especially in 1920, 1925 and 1930.

To begin with, let us consider the Marshall Islands: before becoming a German possession the native population was said to be 15,000; at the beginning of the German administration, apart from Nauru, the population was roughly said to be 15,000, but a further change was made as follows:

Aboriginal population

<u>German Rule</u>		<u>Japanese Rule</u>	
		(within the jurisdiction of the Jaluit branch office)	
1909	9,267	1920	9,589
1911	9,163	1925	9,422
		1930	9,970

(Since the methods of survey of the Germans and Japanese are not identical and the region under survey not necessarily the same, no conclusion can be drawn from a comparison of the figures of these two surveys. But a general tendency may be inferred, so this method is adopted for the following:)

The population of the Mariana Islands in 1669 was said to be between 100,000 and 150,000, but in 1710 it had decreased to 3,678 and in 1900 to 1,916. However, on the whole, there has been a gradual increase since then.

<u>German Rule</u>		<u>Japanese Rule</u>	
		(within jurisdiction of Saipan branch office)	
1901	2,105	1920	3,398
1905	2,412	1925	3,493
1908	3,577	1930	3,829

Next, in the East Caroline Islands, under the Spaniards the population definitely decreased, but after coming under German administration there was a tendency toward an increase in population.

<u>German Rule</u>		<u>Japanese Rule</u>	
		(within the jurisdiction of the Ponape and Truk branch offices)	
1901	circ. 24,000	1920	21,426
1908	25,000	1925	22,560
		1930	23,401

In the West Caroline Islands with Yap and Palao as the centre, the population of Palao in 1783 was said to be 50,000; in 1885 it was estimated at 4,000. After becoming a German possession the population still continued to decrease, until after 1907 when there was a sign of gradual increase.

<u>German Rule</u>		<u>Japanese Rule</u> (within jurisdiction of Palao branch office)	
1901	3,748	1920	5,754
1907	circ. 3,000	1925	5,957
1911	4,147	1930	6,009

But in Yap, unlike Palao, even after coming under German rule the population continued to show a marked decrease.

<u>German Rule</u>		<u>Japanese Rule</u> (within jurisdiction of Yap branch office)	
1900	7,464	1920	8,338
1905	6,641	1925	7,366
1911	6,327	1930	6,486

In most of the other small islands of the West Caroline Group, the native population shows a marked decrease.

In short, the years between the coming of the Spaniards and the end of the 19th century witnessed a decline in the population. But from the beginning of this century there has been a slight but gradual increase in the population. In Yap and Sonsoi alone there was no cessation in the natural decrease. On the whole, the total population of our mandated territory has been static. Under Japanese administration this general tendency has continued, and the island population, as a whole is showing a tendency toward gradual increase, though it is slight, and this tendency seems to be one which will continue. Only, the number of decrease in the population of Yap is so great as to offset the increase in general of the entire area. It is also necessary to note the extremely small rate of increase in population in Palao. (Refer to the following chart:)

Therefore, from this chart we may induce a tendency of gradual increase in the island population. Even in Yap where an absolute decrease in population is still continuing, we may say that conditions are improving.

Branch of Jurisdiction	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Salipan	44.9	61.7	73.5	89.7	36.4	70.6
Yap	43.1	214.0	222.8	233.3	189.2	180.0
Palao	148.5	77.8	73.3	63.7	80.0	66.8
Truk	56.8	84.2	100.0	173.7	52.7	99.7
Ponape	56.7	110.1	76.6	100.0	43.2	51.7
Jaluit	150.0	135.0	83.3	63.7	54.2	91.0
Total	109.4	107.2	96.2	120.1	63.0	86.5

A comparison of the births and deaths among the native population during the last six years within the jurisdictions of the branch offices shows that to 100 births the number of deaths has been as follows:-
(Outline Report on the South Seas, South Seas Bureau, 1932)

Entire Zone	1920	1925	1930	1920-1925	1925-1930
Salipan Jurisdiction	3,398	3,493	3,829	95	336
Yap	8,338	7,366	6,486	*972	*880
Palao	5,754	5,957	6,009	203	52
Truk	14,788	14,961	15,200	173	239
Ponape	6,638	7,599	8,201	961	602
Jaluit	9,589	9,422	9,970	*167	543
Increase or (*)Decrease				1920-1925	1925-1930

The birth rate shows an increase, but not to the fullest extent owing to various natural and social hindrances. In the slow increase in population the high death rate is a more important factor than the low rate of birth. This is especially apparent in Yap, where decrease in population still continues. To this matter the Yap Government Hospital is giving its special attention and effort.

If we consider the increase in population according to races, the Chamorros, amongst whom the birth rate is high and the death rate low, have a large rate of increase, whereas, the Kanakas, amongst whom the death rate is high and the birth rate low, have an extremely small rate of increase.

	1920	1930	Increase over 1920	Rate	%
Chamorros	2,824	3,301	477	16.18	
Kanakas	45,681	46,394	713	1.54	

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the Chamorros had come under the influence of Christianity much earlier than the Kanakas, so that the former have reached a higher cultural stage. Of the entire group of Islands, Yap, where there is a conspicuous decline in population, is said to have been least modernized and it is said to have least come under the influence of Christianity. One can assume that the increase in population is closely related to the improvement in the standard of living and mode of life.

Considered as a whole the decline in population of the last few centuries seems to have reached an end, and one infers that the racial potentiality to survive is not lacking. Professor Roberts' judgment on the problem of decrease in the native population of the Pacific Islands is confirmed. (Roberts, S. H., Population Problems of the Pacific, 1927). Therefore, depending upon the policies for the natives, the improvement of conditions among the native population in the future would not necessarily be hopeless. In this chapter I think I have explained as much as is possible, the reasons for the great depopulation in the past and the cessation in this tendency in recent times, together with the reasons for the continued decline in population in Yap.

Chapter IV. Economic Conditions

1. The economic life of the natives is on the whole at the stage of natural economy. After coming under German administration, however, their economic life changed through contact with capitalism, and the change has been even more accentuated under Japanese administration.

The object of this chapter is to describe the economic activities of settlers in this region and the resulting changes which have taken place in the economic life and status of the natives.

2. According to the native system of land owning, the land which in the past was owned jointly by clan or village; while a chieftain ruled over it, and the people utilized the land. Only Kusate and the Marianas, which had early come under the influence of the Europeans, were exceptions, in that the right of ownership by a family or by an individual was recognized.

The German Government forbade the transfer of land from the natives to those other than natives, and at the same time established government holdings, and by these two means was able to establish a system which would protect the interests of the natives as well as capital. At that time a land survey was made only in Saipan and Ponape. The policy of the Japanese administration followed that of the Germans, and in order to establish a right of land holding, and to define clearly the Government holdings, a land survey on a large scale was begun in 1923. According to that survey, as far as it has gone, the Government land holdings are very much larger than those of the natives; this will be seen in the following chart:

Government holdings		Private holdings
%		%
78	Saipan	22
88	Rota	12
84	Palao	16
65	Ponape	35

Private land is mostly owned by the natives, and it is divided into that held by a community and that held by individuals. In the Marshall Islands the old system of land holding still prevails. The Japanese constitute a larger portion of those who obtain leases of

Government land. The lease made in the Saipan jurisdiction for the cultivation of sugar cane is the most important one.

3. Under German administration German and Japanese money as main currency, as well as English and American money were circulated indiscriminately. This could not correctly be called a monetary system. Trade between natives and foreigners was carried on partly by means of money and partly by barter. The natives hardly understood the meaning of money. Only recently, after coming under Japanese administration has the currency been unified. Only Japanese money circulates under the unified system, and at present the idea of money is beginning to develop so that even bank notes are circulated. Only in some isolated islands is barter still practised.

4. In the past the economic life of the natives was primitive-communistic, and self-sufficient natural economy. Under a chief-tain the natives worked by social obligation, engaging only in primitive agriculture, fishing and handicrafts.

After coming under German administration they began to engage mainly in the cultivation of the coco-nut, for at that time copra was the only export goods. The production of copra has increased markedly from year to year.

European goods gradually replaced a greater part of the native handicrafts, and the dependence upon foreign goods has increased. Under Japanese administration the tendency has become even more accentuated.

At present, the principle exports from the South Sea Islands are copra, sugar and phosphate. The character of the economic position of the natives is determined by their connection with the producing of the above three commodities.

Copra, which is not produced on the scale of a capitalist enterprise, is produced principally by the natives in all the islands by primitive methods. But the transforming of the methods of production seems to be merely a matter of time. The sugar industry has developed as an entirely new industry in Saipan and Tinian under Japanese administration; it is a monopoly of the South Seas Development Company, Ltd. The workers engaged in this industry are mainly emigrants from Okinawa Prefecture (Japan). Very few natives participate in this industry. The mining of phosphate was first undertaken by the Deutsche Südpazifikphosphat Aktiengesellschaft, and is now carried on by the South Seas Bureau. The workers in the mines are mostly natives from Angaur, Truk, Yap and Palao. We must

In this chapter I shall deal with the problem of government and subjects relating to the League of Nations.

Chapter VI. Political Conditions

Since the subjects to be treated in the following chapters are still in process of study, I shall briefly outline the project. S. Matsuo's "Ethnography of Micronesia" (1927) gives a detailed account of the social system and traditions of the natives. In this chapter I shall deal with the problem of the manner and degree of changes which have taken place under the various administrations of colonizing powers, and also the problems of sanitation, education and religion.

Chapter V. Social Conditions

Seventy-six percent of the native population is supported by agriculture. They supply their staple food (bread-fruit, taro, yam and coco-nuts). A part of the natives engages in capitalist enterprise, but for the most part they carry on a self-supporting economy. The South Seas Bureau has established an industrial and agricultural experiment station and applied itself to the diversification of production and to the spreading of a knowledge of agriculture among the natives. How this will on the one hand help to develop capitalist enterprise, and on the other stabilize the basis of the economic life of the natives, and as a consequence what will be the effect upon the rate of increase in population, is a problem of the future.

consider separately the significance of the three forms of production in relation to the economic and social life of the natives.

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I wish to summarize in this chapter the progress in the economic development, spread of social institutions (sanitation and education), systematization of political control, in other words — conditions of intensified administration in the South Sea Islands since they were mandated to Japan, and in relation to them I shall try to indicate what will be the conditions of the natives in the future and judge the characteristics and results of the Japanese colonial policy.

Chapter VII. Conclusions