

Education is receiving the attention it deserves although it will undoubtedly be improved under the supervision of regular field trips, both in curricula and facilities. Standards should be established, as well as a procedure, for advanced schooling, possibly in Guam, for qualified students. The natives are eager to learn and most of them avidly grasp any opportunity to improve their knowledge. This reception plus a rather high level of intelligence, reduces the problem considerably.

Christianity seems fairly well established and all areas adequately serviced with churches and pastors. American missionaries are desired by the people, but it is believed that such individuals should be well screened for adaptability before assignment.

The Basic Island English textbook for the Marshalls is awaited with interest. The night school conducted by Military Government officers at the Kwajalein Labor Camp is stressing English and such a text could be tested advantageously.

The Teacher Training Program in Majuro placed this area in a fortunate position as far as initiating an educational system. Considering the large number of small population centers which are scattered over such a large area and the disorganization that existed in the field during the war, it is remarkable what was accomplished in such a relatively short time. The teaching organization will require much more training, improvement, invigorating and strengthening, but a least a nucleus is providing the fundamentals and a fair foundation is established.

E (Educ & Soc. Serv.)
5 (Summary)

8 March 1947

Kwajalein Dist.

No change since last report.

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Educational Conditions

(a) The physical plant of the educational system in the Marshalls consists of a Teacher Training School at Majuro which was established in 1945 and graduating approx. 50 teachers per year. Selected graduates from the first graduating class have been returned to the school for advanced training. At the same time, a beginners class for teachers is being opened to provide a source for replacements. From the pool of teachers developed in this manner it is believed that the teacher staff in the area will be progressively advanced both by educational advancement and the incentive to the student teachers produced by the knowledge that there will be a normal attrition to eliminate the least desirable and least qualified.

The actual school plant consists of a school on every inhabited island of all the atolls in the area. All children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend schools, all of which have established standard curriculum. School supplies, recreational gear, books, maps, and similar material has been furnished to all schools. As the quality of the teachers improves it will be reflected in the product immediately, as the opportunity for education is eagerly grasped by the Marshallese. There is no necessity for compulsory attendance and the children of all the villages attend school with pleasure and in all instances regard their teacher with affection and respect.

It is believed that the educational structure in the Marshalls is well established and improvement is only a question of time as the teacher training program develops.

(b) Social Conditions The influence of Amer. Missionary Soc. which entered the Marshalls over one hundred years ago is still reflected in the cultural life of the Marshallese today even though they were not active to any great extent for the past twenty-five or thirty years. This influence permeated the entire social structure and

the ability of many of the Marshallese to speak English is a result of these contacts and the school established by these missionaries. It is entirely possible that the present written language can be traced to the Bible and hymn books translated into Marshallese by these societies. This was the only written Marshallese in existence. The literacy rate is astonishingly high and can only be attributed to the use of these writings.

It is too early to correctly evaluate the impact on the Marshallese social structure by the presence of American service personnel. There are incidental evidences of this in dress and habits, but how long these will last is still a question. The inherent and insatiable desire of the Marshallese for travel is understandable when the small land area and compactness of the villages are considered and the natural tendency aroused by these conditions for a change of faces and scenery is understood. The recreational and entertainment facilities of the villages are also decidedly limited. This desire was discouraged by previous occupying powers except where it was necessary to their purpose of recruiting laborers or crews for ships.

M.G. is making every effort to preserve native customs and habits which fit their social, economic, and political culture so well; for instance native construction, songs, and handicraft are praised and their value and adaptability to the native environment emphasized. The limitations imposed by the geographical and geological situation of the islands materially restricts all these phases and which developed over a period of centuries and have therefore been naturally necessary.

(a) Since 1944 this command has been deluged with verbal and written requests from Marshallese for training in special skills and crafts. This is apparently a hangover from Japanese times. There is no school for advanced mechanical training in the overhaul of trucks, jeep engines and accessories, distillation plants, diesel electric generators, electric motor winders, galley ranges, blacksmithing and metal working. While realizing there is little place for such skills in Marshallese life on the average atoll, there is employment at the Civil Administration centers in the Marshalls for a limited number possessing skills in the crafts.

An intensified ten weeks to three months course in general utility followed by a six weeks to three months intensified training in a particular craft would be most effective and would certainly have an over supply of candidates.

Their desire for education does not in many cases include any choice of learning. Mostly it is simply a desire to go to school. A Magistrate will request that two of his young men be sent to school. One to become an electrical engineer, the other a mechanical engineer. He doesn't know why. The boys want to go to school and the titles sound interesting.

The teachers who have completed the advanced training school at Majuro and who are now in the field should prove an improvement over those primary teachers relieved by them and who are now in the advanced teachers training school at Majuro. By this method a sound educational program is being built up for the Marshalls. Only time will tell how much knowledge the teachers from the schools of Guam and Majuro will be able to absorb and in turn disseminate to the various schools of their home islands.

E (Education and Social Services) 6 April 48

Kwajalein Dist.

5 (Summary: Comment and recommendations)

None.

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The progress being made in educating the Marshallese is indeed gratifying. The people are all eager to learn a trade.

There are now 12 young Marshallese who are learning to type. They are also attending a night school in English. The various activities employing them commend them highly and they have proven in two months their ability to learn.

5 (Summary)

- (a) Education is probably the most sought after of anything administration offers. All fields of training are filled with ambitious boys and girls.
- (b) Recreation in outlying villages is very limited.