

Grant K. Goodman and Felix Moos, eds. *The United States and Japan in
the Western Pacific: Micronesia and Papua New Guinea.* Boulder,

Colorado: Westview Press, 1981. Pp. xiv, 289, maps, illustrations, index. \$20.00.

As the theme of this book, which was originally prepared as a report for the Sumitomo Fund and the Rockefeller Foundation, concerns the development prospects of two countries in the South Pacific, one might have expected it to provide a detailed inventory of the economic resources and deficiencies of the two polities under examination. Justifiably, however, this expectation is not met. Rather, the authors take some pains to demonstrate that the historical fact of colonialism has enormously influenced the development of Papua New Guinea and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and that current political relations, both internal and external, are continuing to affect the development outlook for these two countries. Thus, this book is essentially a study in political economy.

Central to the focus of the various authors is the notion that political autonomy does not imply in itself economic independence. Papua New Guinea, they argue, is heavily dependent on Australian aid and technical expertise, and this dependence reduces the development options of the former colony. Fortunately PNG is comparatively resource-rich, a circumstance which offers substantial opportunity for close economic relations between PNG and resource-poor Japan. Indeed, these relations are emerging--much encouraged the authors suggest--by the underlying character of PNG's political and economic systems and the nature of its resources, particularly fisheries. Further growth is predicted despite occasional political differences over the relatively minor Japanese aid to PNG. American interests are less immediate or substantial in PNG although the United States shares Australian strategic interests in a stable, friendly PNG not only for its ANZUS ties but also for PNG's proximity to the militarily important Trust Territory. With considerable perspicacity, the authors point out that both its strategic importance and its connection with Australia rest uneasily with PNG's efforts to pursue a universalist foreign policy. Since the book went to press, Prime Minister Julius Chan has indeed moved to have this policy revised.

The unhappy colonial experience of the Trust Territory is also examined at length. Here it is American interests which predominate, and chief among these is the military requirement of strategic denial. One might quibble with the authors' assertion that American economic assistance has resulted from a troubled national conscience, but there can be little dispute with their interpretation of its disastrous social and economic effects. Their pessimism for the future has been more than amply justified by the years since the study was completed in 1978. The failure of the United

States to come to grips with Micronesian circumstances leads the authors to suggest that a greater Japanese involvement in the economy of the Trust Territory might be beneficial for all parties.

Although the bulk of the substantive content of the book is devoted to the history and development of PNG and the Trust Territory, the real purpose of the work emerges in the author's plea for greater cooperation between the United States and Japan in the Western Pacific. They argue the two Pacific rim powers have an interest in each of the island countries and that much may be gained both in terms of American and Japanese interests and in terms of the welfare of Papua New Guinea and the Trust Territory, through mutual cooperation and the avoidance of conflict between Japan and the U.S. in the Western Pacific area.

Their argument may have more than a grain of truth given the indifference of both countries to the South Pacific in the quarter century after World War II. Nevertheless, the proposal does raise questions about the other states which might be affected by any increased cooperative effort by the United States and Japan to influence affairs in the South Pacific. Indeed, the two ANZAC states would be vitally concerned as hitherto both Japan and the United States have encouraged Australia and New Zealand to regard the South Pacific as their sphere of influence. Major elements of ANZUS policy are based on this premise. The failure of the book to treat the repercussions of its proposal leads one also to question why the study was restricted to the four countries given in the title. The American interest in Papua New Guinea is relatively minor by almost any standard, a view which is only confirmed by the authors' analysis. It would appear Western Samoa (or even the territory of American Samoa) might have had greater *prima facie* grounds for inclusion.

Undoubtedly, the objective unifying thread in this book derives from the Japanese interest in PNG and the Trust Territory. Not only is this interest substantial and genuine, as the authors convincingly demonstrate, it is of increasing importance to the islands. And it is principally through this analysis of the Japanese involvement in the region that *The United States and Japan in the Western Pacific* makes an original contribution to the literature of South Pacific affairs. Japan has not received scholarly attention commensurate with its impact on the economies of the Pacific Islands. Despite its being the second most important trading partner (the former metropole is usually first) for a number of island countries, students of South Pacific affairs have tended to focus their attention on the aid, diplomatic or strategic interests of extra-regional states. Its absence from these areas has, therefore, tended to disguise the importance of Japan

in the South Pacific. This work should assist in correcting the misapprehension.

The United States and Japan in the Western Pacific is a readable and well presented general survey of both the development concerns of PNG and the Trust Territory and the range of interests which have drawn the United States and Japan into the contemporary Western Pacific. The effectiveness of the attempt to coherently integrate these diverse themes may be somewhat suspect for the book as a whole, but this misgiving does not attach to the chapters individually. They are fairly self-contained. The sections relating to Japan particularly will contribute usefully to filling a serious deficiency in the literature.

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