THE GREAT FLIGHT NORTHWARD: FSM MIGRATION TO GUAM AND THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

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Over the past two decades regular warnings have been issued about the inevitability of a brain drain in Micronesia. As the imminence of such an event was being argued in scholarly and not-so-scholarly circles, one of us could confidently report in a paper written four years ago and only now being published that emigration from the Federated States of Micronesia up to that time had been merely a "trickle" (Hezel and Levin 1989).[1] This is no longer true today. Emigration from the nation-states of Micronesia--particularly from the Federated States of Micronesia, our main focus in this article--has increased from a trickle to a substantial outflow. The long-anticipated exodus has begun in earnest, it appears. The purpose of this article is to document this sudden demographic occurrence: that is, to indicate the magnitude of emigration, its causes, reasons for the choice of destinations, and significant changes in household patterns of recent migrants. Let the reader be warned, however, that this article makes no claim to being a thorough analysis of recent emigration. It is but an initial exploration of a phenomenon that, except for this brief article, has been undocumented and unresearched.

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Indeed, this should be read as an invitation to demographers and students of social change to consider undertaking more rigorous studies.

The newly formed nation known as the Federated States of Micronesia represents the core of what until recently had been the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. During the course of long negotiations on the Trust Territory's political future, three of its island groups expressed the desire to establish separate political identities. The Northern Marianas, which shares a cultural tradition with Guam, chose commonwealth status, while Palau and the Marshall Islands formed their own governments, each in free association with the US (although Palau's new status has yet to be formally implemented). The remainder of the former Trust Territory took the name Federated States of Micronesia and adopted a status of free association with the US under terms of a compact that was put into effect in November 1986. The FSM is composed of four states: Yap, with a current population of 10,000; Truk, whose 51,000 people constitute half the population of the FSM; Pohnpei, which numbers 31,000; and Kosrae with 7,000.[2]

Of all the new nations fashioned from the Trust Territory, the FSM has been the most visibly affected by the emigration wave of the past few years. The greatest outflow by far has been northward to the Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). That emigration should be occurring in the new island-nation of the FSM is not in itself surprising. Recognizing the limited resource base and economic potential of their islands, Micronesian leaders purposely provided for emigration under their new political status. The Compact of Free Association grants Micronesians free entry into the US to '"lawfully engage in occupations and establish residence as non-immigrants in the US and its territories" (Compact 1982: Title I, Article 4). Emigration to the US was regarded as necessary to permit run-off of excess population, which is still growing at more than 3 percent yearly in the FSM, and as a safety valve in the event that plans for developing the economy fail. Even so, the rapidity of the outflow during the first two years of the FSM's new status was a shock to the nation's leaders.

Emigration from Micronesia to its northern neighbors has a history that goes back to the earliest Trust Territory days. Since the 1950s Guam has been the destination of many emigrants from Palau, an island that has always had a reputation as the most progressive and achievement-oriented society in Micronesia. Palauans thronged to Guam long before Filipinos in any appreciable number arrived there, and they owned the small bars and diners along Marine Drive that later passed into the hands of Koreans (Solenberger 1953:7-8). Their number increased from

perhaps 100 in 1953 to well over 1,000, and perhaps closer to 1,500, by the early 1980s (Connell 1983:21-22; Hezel and Levin 1989). Meanwhile, islanders from other parts of Micronesia arrived in Guam to pursue college studies beginning in the early 1960s, when boarding facilities for Trust Territory students were first built. The number of young Micronesian college students on Guam increased during the early 1970s, then dropped sharply as Micronesians ventured to the US for schooling, but picked up again later as education and travel costs rose, and finally peaked by the mid-1980s with over 500 students from the FSM and another 140 from Palau and the Marshalls (Hezel and Levin 1989: table 12). Most of these students returned home after completing their studies, but a few trickled into the mainstream of life as Guam residents.

The 1980 Guam census showed 410 FSM residents on Guam, but about half of these were students on the island temporarily (US Census Bureau 1980: table 26). The size of the permanent FSM community that had taken root on Guam by that time, then, was no larger than 200 to 250 people. During these twilight days of the Trust Territory when Micronesians still were unable to immigrate freely into Guam, the Northern Marianas was the favorite destination of young Micronesians seeking employment. Since there were no restrictions on entry into the Marianas, which was still officially a part of the Trust Territory, scores of Trukese and others headed for Saipan or Tinian to take jobs in the garment factories that were just opening, in the fishing plant on Tinian, and in the dozens of businesses that were sprouting up as the tourist industry expanded.

The Extent of the Outflow to Guam

When the Compact of Free Association between the FSM and the United States was implemented on 3 November 1986, the situation changed entirely. For the first time Micronesians were allowed free entry into the US and its possessions to live and work without restriction. The Guam Department of Labor quarterly economic survey figures for March 1985 and March 1986 showed about 1,100 ethnic "Micronesians" sixteen years of age and older, most of them presumably Palauans.[3] By March 1987 the number had risen by 430, and by March 1988 by another 800. According to Labor Department estimates, 1,200 Micronesians over the age of sixteen had been added to the Guam resident population within a year and a half of the inauguration of the compact. If another 20 percent is added to this figure to account for

TABLE 1. **Household Survey of Micronesians on Guam by State and Occupational Status, 1988**

State of Origin	Households	Sample Size	Employed	Unemployed	Students	Attending UOG & GCC
Truk	55	375	151	82	142	79
Pohnpei	16	55	10	9	36	13
Kosrae	14	66	42	15	9	5
Yap	16	89	49	12	28	21

Source: Data collected by Micronesian Area Research Center and Micronesian Seminar; survey conducted in October 1988.

dependents under the age of sixteen, it appears that the number of Micronesian newcomers to Guam may have totaled about 1,600 by early 1988.[4] These, as we will see, constituted the first large wave of FSM people moving to Guam on a permanent or semipermanent basis.

In the absence of any gate-count of FSM emigrants at either their point of departure or their destination, the authors undertook a rudimentary household survey in September 1988 to determine the number of FSM citizens who were then residing on Guam. The survey form, which included the name, age, occupational status, and birth island of each Micronesian in the household, was distributed as widely as possible throughout the community. Questions about the social organization of the household or the economic condition of its members were deliberately excluded, despite the valuable information they might have yielded, for fear that a longer and more complex survey would have discouraged respondents from completing the form. Responses were then tabulated and the information obtained was used to extrapolate to the total number of emigrants from each state in the FSM.

The Trukese sample, for instance, contained 375 migrants living in fifty-five households (see Table 1). These households included about 33 percent of the 242 students who were known to be studying at the University of Guam (UOG) and Guam Community College (GCC). Assuming that the ratio of students to nonstudents was the same in the households not surveyed, we could extrapolate to the size of the entire Trukese population on Guam. The result is 1,100 Trukese living in about 160 households. This estimate concurs nicely with another estimate based on the known emigration from two small communities in Truk. The island of Fanapanges, with ten persons living on Guam out of a population of about 500, showed a 2.0 percent emigration rate; while Foup, with nineteen out of 700 on Guam, had a slightly higher rate of 2.7 percent.[5] If these rates were typical for the whole of Truk

TABLE 2. **FSM College Enrollment on Guam for Fall 1988**

State of Origin	GCC	UOG	Total	% of Total FSM Students
Truk	163	79	242	62
Pohnpei	35	38	73	19
Kosrae	14	20	34	9
Yap	30	10	40	10
Total	242	147	389	100

Sources: University of Guam registration figures; Registrar's Office of Guam Community College.

with its population of 50,000, then the number of Trukese on Guam would be between 1,000 and 1,350.

Estimates for the remainder of the FSM are more questionable since the sample size in the survey was much smaller and the margin of error greater. Yet, if we use the same method to extrapolate from the samples for the other states, while allowing for the number of students living in the UOG dormitories, we can make reasonable projections of their immigrant populations. Pohnpeians would number about 300 and Yapese about 150. The Kosraean projection, which must be modified considerably since 40 percent of Kosraean college students live in the dormitories, would be around 150. Altogether these three states have roughly 600 citizens on Guam, their combined total falling well below the number of Trukese on the island. This estimate is supported by the preponderance of Trukese among the FSM college students on Guam. As Table 2 shows, fully 62 percent of all FSM students are Trukese--roughly the same proportion as the Trukese immigrant community to all FSM citizens living on Guam, if our estimates are accepted. In all, the number of FSM citizens residing on Guam would seem to be in the neighborhood of 1,700, about the same size as the estimate derived from Guam Labor Department survey data.

It might be noted that there are also fifty to sixty Marshallese on Guam, although we have not included the Marshalls within the scope of this study because of the small size of the Marshallese community.[6] The migration flow from the Marshalls runs in the opposite direction, with Hawaii and the US mainland as the normal destinations.

The Search for Jobs

There is no mystery at all as to what is driving Micronesians in such great numbers to Guam today. They are emigrating to find there the

TABLE 3. **Total Salary Employment in Micronesia**

Year	Truk	Pohnpei	Kosrae	Yap
1970	1,832	1,847	NA	952
1973	2,515	1,939	365	1,126
1976	3,743	3,239	717	1,421
1979	5,599	3,442	510	2,027
1982	3,782	3,913	682	1,484
1985	4,054	NA	NA	NA
1988[a]	6,116	6,253	2,376	2,190

NA = not available.

Sources: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands 1981; FSM Social Security Office records.

[a]Figures for 1988, derived from social security records, are unadjusted, Since they include persons who have worked less than 25 hours weekly, they are inflated by comparison with previous years.

jobs that they are unable to procure on their own home islands, as they will plainly tell anyone who asks. By the early 1980s the job boom of the previous decade was decidedly over in Micronesia (see Table 3). Between 1979 and 1982, more than 1,700 jobs throughout the FSM were lost. Only Pohnpei showed any significant continuing growth in employment during the early eighties, due to the transfer of the FSM capital to that island a few years before. The decline in employment was due mainly to radical cutbacks in US federal program funds for the Trust Territory in preparation for the onset of its new political status. The level of US assistance had risen from $54 million in 1970 to a high of $138 million in 1979 before dropping off sharply at the beginning of this decade (Micronesian Seminar 1984:40). The cut in funds also affected the private sector, which had always been dependent on government spending as its main impetus.

Preliminary employment figures for 1988 appear to show an appreciable increase in the number of jobs within the past few years, but these figures--the only ones available--are unadjusted and hence include individuals working an average of only a few hours each week. Even if there was in fact an increase in full-time employment, the increase was probably too little and too late, considering the number of educated Micronesians entering the labor pool. In populous Truk, for instance, the figures show only 517 jobs more than there were in 1979, while in Yap there are 163 more positions. Although Kosrae and Pohnpei show healthy gains, the overall apparent increase in employment in the FSM--about 5,300 jobs since 1979--is modest compared to our esti-

mate of the 14,000 individuals who entered the labor pool in this same period.

The cutback in government funding and the concomitant loss of jobs hit Micronesia all the harder because of the euphoria that the education boom of the 1970s had brought. High school enrollment swelled during those years and hundreds of young Micronesians went off to college abroad in the expectation of finding jobs awaiting them upon their return. The early returnees were fortunate enough to find employment in the growing economy of the mid-1970s, but those who followed them were not as lucky. During the period 1979-1982, in which the FSM lost more than 1,700 jobs, about 1,800 recent graduates--half of them with at least some college education--entered the labor force (Hezel and Levin 1989). Needless to say, large numbers of this and later crops of students were disappointed in their search for salary employment within Micronesia. Their frustration was reflected in a slight dip in high school and college enrollments, but even so, great numbers of young people continued to pursue higher studies even in the face of a very uncertain future. In 1985 there were still about 1,200 young FSM citizens abroad in college, with over one-third of them in Guam (Hezel and Levin 1989: table 12). Job prospects in Micronesia had by this time become dismal, but before these young people finished school, the compact would open new doors to the future.

Guam's economy, meanwhile, was the reverse image of the FSM's. In contrast to Micronesia, Guam's economy had been sluggish after the Vietnam War wound down in the early 1970s, and the number of jobs, which dropped sharply in 1974, hovered at about 30,000 to 34,000 for the next ten years (see Table 4). Then in early 1984 the real boom began. Thanks to the devaluation of the US dollar and the resultant strength of the yen, the Japanese tourist industry on Guam began to show prodigious growth. This in turn helped power a new construction boom and rapid growth in island business. The misfortune that had befallen the US economy became a windfall for Guam. Private-sector employment on Guam has shown enormous gains since 1984, with the addition of more than 11,500 new jobs in the past four years. Overall, private-sector employment has increased from 15,480 positions in December 1983 to 29,860 in June 1988--nearly 100 percent growth in less than five years (Government of Guam 1986:110). And the boom shows no signs of abating.

At present Guam has a very limited labor supply from which to draw to fill these new positions. Unlike the Northern Marianas, which is experiencing a tourist boom of its own, Guam has severe restrictions on

TABLE 4. **Employment on Guam, 1974-1988**

Year	Government	Private	Total
1974	15,600	21,900	37,500
1975	15,600	18,900	34,500
1976	13,900	15,900	29,800
1977	14,500	18,100	32,600
1978	13,400	18,100	31,500
1979	14,300	16,800	31,100
1980	16,600	16,700	33,300
1981	14,700	16,700	31,400
1982	14,460	15,690	30,150
1983	15,390	15,480	30,870
1984	16,300	18,920	35,220
1985	16,980	21,190	38,170
1986	16,150	24,150	40,300
1987	16,390	27,550	43,940
1988	16,760	29,860	46,620

Sources: Government of Guam 1986: 109-110; Government of Guam 1988a.

importation of alien labor. All H-2 work permits for foreign laborers must be signed by the governor, and the present size of the alien labor force is only about 1,600 (Government of Guam 1988b:22). With a current unemployment rate of only 4.5 percent, there is little hope that Guam can find in its own population an adequate work force to handle all the new jobs being created. It may be providential, then, that the bars to Micronesian immigration dropped at the very time the labor shortage was becoming acute. Hundreds of Micronesians who had little hope of finding salary employment in their own islands have already moved to Guam to take entry-level jobs--in hotels, in stores and gas stations, and in construction--that would otherwise have been unfilled. The prospect of a job, even a low-status one, at US wage levels (which are princely by comparison with FSM standards) has attracted hundreds to Guam and may lure many more in years to come.

Guam's attitude towards the large influx of Micronesians within the past two years is ambivalent; most longtime residents look upon it as a mixed blessing. There is no doubt that the newcomers play an essential role in Guam's expanding economy, but they are also regarded by many as a burden that must somehow be borne with whatever good-humored resignation can be mustered. "Trukese" (the word can be understood to apply equally to other Micronesians) have apparently won a reputation for brawling in nightspots, smashing into telephone and power lines

TABLE 5. **"Micronesian" Enrollment in Guam Public Schools**[a]

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988[b]
Elementary	225	229	NA	255	299
Middle School	81	97	NA	94	140
High School	29	8	NA	7	37
Total	335	334	NA	356	476

Source: Guam Department of Education, ethnic enrollment reports.

Note: Figures are for fall enrollment; NA = not available.

[a]Includes students from the FSM, Marshalls, and Palau, but excludes those from the Northern Marianas.

[b]Projections based on incomplete enrollment reports from the schools.

with their cars while intoxicated, and trashing apartments that they lease or rent.[7] Some natives of Truk have found it necessary to identify themselves as Marshallese or Pohnpeians to avoid being blacklisted when they attempt to rent an apartment. But Trukese are not the first migrant group in history to be tagged with unflattering stereotypes.

The more substantial reservations that Guam has about its recent arrivals have to do with the social-service costs and who will pay them. Education of dependents, medical care, and other welfare programs for which Micronesians are eligible will cost the government a sizable sum, and Guam authorities are asking themselves how to pass along part of the price tag to the US federal government (Government of Guam 1987). The annual cost of educating a public-school student on Guam is $3,000, and projections based on partial enrollment figures for 1988 indicate that the number of Micronesian students may have increased by more than 100 during the past year (see Table 5). Furthermore, since Micronesians are currently ineligible for federally funded public-assistance programs, the welfare burden may fall upon the Guam government and private service agencies. But even as Guamanians ponder whether the costs of having large numbers of Micronesians may outweigh the benefits, the island remains firmly committed to its present economic growth course. The yearly number of visitors to the island has just reached the half-million mark for the first time ever, the number of hotel rooms is expanding by several hundred each year, and hotel employees now work in three full shifts to keep up with the work load. The large hotels are attempting to lure employees away from their rivals with higher salaries as the tourist industry vigorously competes for the limited labor pool. Unless Guam wishes to call a sudden halt to its

TABLE 6. **FSM Enrollment in Northern Marianas Public Schools**

State of Origin	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Pohnpei	72	78	84	74	102
Yap	45	25	26	26	38
Truk	91	79	95	108	133
Total	208	182	205	208	273

Source: CNMI Department of Education.

Note: Figures include enrollments for grades 1-12 in public schools.

economic boom, the island must find additional large supplies of labor over the coming years--of the various alternatives, continued reliance on Micronesian labor is probably the cheapest, social costs notwithstanding.

An Alternate Destination: The Northern Marianas

Guam has not been the only destination of FSM emigrants. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is now the home of nearly as many FSM citizens as Guam--between 1,200 and 1,400, our estimates show. In addition, there are about 1,000 Palauans, many of whom found jobs and took up residence in Saipan when it was still the capital of the Trust Territory, and perhaps 100 or so Marshallese.[8] Exact figures for the number of FSM residents in the Marianas are impossible to obtain, and no household survey similar to the one on Guam was done in the CNMI. Yet the number of FSM children enrolled in the public-school system provides a fairly good clue to the size of the immigrant population (see Table 6). We can presume, on the basis of data that we possess for other places, that the 273 FSM schoolchildren represent about 20 percent of the total FSM population in the CNMI, which would put the latter at just below 1,400. Trukese once again seem to be the largest group, with an estimated immigrant population of 700. There are probably 400 to 500 Pohnpeians and perhaps 200 Yapese, with a mere handful of Kosraeans.[9]

Hundreds of FSM citizens moved to Saipan, the CNMI capital, during the early 1980s before Micronesians were allowed free access to Guam. The CNMI, like Guam, has recently been enjoying an economic boom that is in good measure the result of the growing Japanese tourist industry. Visitor entries have risen steadily since 1983, reaching more

than 200,000 in 1988.[10] Hotel expansion has been so rapid that in five more years Saipan is expected to reach the tourist level that Guam attained in 1986 (Stewart 1988:137).

In addition to the tourist industry and related services, a sizable manufacturing industry has grown up around twenty-four garment factories now producing clothing for export to the US. The garment industry, which has quickly expanded since its beginnings in 1983, offered new openings and was one of the main attractions to Micronesians. Although the vast majority of the employees were Asian (mainly Chinese, Korean, and Filipino), commonwealth law mandated that 12 percent of the total work force be "local" employees--a term that is interpreted broadly enough to include Micronesians from outside the Marianas (Stewart 1988:76). Factory managers have never found enough Chamorro and Carolinian workers to make up their quota and so have had to recruit from other parts of Micronesia. Of the 580 employees in the largest of these factories, 105 are "local," with all but thirty of these coming from the FSM.[11] At present it is estimated that upwards of 450 FSM citizens--mostly women--are employed in the garment industry on Saipan.

Scores of other FSM citizens have found jobs in the tourist industry as chambermaids, bellhops, and warehouse clerks, while many others have hired on as security guards for hotels and other private businesses. Apparently there are also a number unemployed, since over 200 FSM citizens were receiving food stamps as of October 1988.[12]

Migration from the FSM to the Northern Marianas has slowed considerably since 1986, when Guam became an alternate destination, The hourly minimum wage in the Northern Marianas at $2.15 is over 40 percent below the $3.75 minimum on Guam and employee benefits are less comprehensive. Moreover, the Northern Marianas has an ample supply of relatively cheap alien labor--the foreign labor force now numbers about 15,000--and there is little need to encourage Micronesian immigration except to fill the quotas for the garment factories.[13] Indeed, some Trukese and Pohnpeians are still emigrating to Saipan today to take jobs in the garment industry or to join their families, but FSM labor plays a far more marginal role in the CNMI than it does in Guam. One small gauge of this is that, of the 285 persons employed by the newest luxury hotel, the Nikko Saipan, only eight are FSM citizens.[14] The Northern Marianas, therefore, can be expected to remain what they have been since the transfer of Trust Territory headquarters there in the early 1960s--an economic fallback when all else fails.

TABLE 7. **FSM Sample on Guam by Island Group of Origin and Household Type**

	Family Households[a]	Peer-Group Households[b]	Other[c]
Pohnpei	9	1	6
Kosrae	4	10	
Yap	7	9	
Truk:			
Moen	8	2	
Dublon	6	0	
Uman	1	6	
Tol	7	2	
Mortlocks	3	9	
Westerns	2	5	
Halls	0	4	

Source: Data collected by MARC and Micronesian Seminar in a survey conducted in October 1988.

[a]Defined as one in which a husband and spouse, regardless of their age, serve as nucleus of the resident group.

[b]Defined as one in which a group of persons of the same sex share a residence and household responsibilities.

[c]Includes single-person, nondormitory households.

Characteristics of the FSM Households on Guam

The results of our household survey on Guam revealed significant differences in the composition and structure of the communities that the new arrivals from FSM form (see Table 7). Some of the new households are built around a family group and their structure differs little from what it would be in Truk, Pohnpei, or anywhere else in Micronesia. One Yapese in his twenties shares a house with his Trukese wife and their two children as well as three older relatives of his wife and several of his Yapese friends. A Yapese couple in their forties provide for their six children, all but one of whom are in school, as well as six others who are related to either the man or his wife. These households often depend on the income of only one or two wage earners and have the usual trouble making ends meet, especially when kinfolk in any number unexpectedly descend on them for a long stay on Guam. But these problems, normal ones for any Micronesian family, are offset by the clear lines of authority that exist in such households. Everyone in the household knows who is in charge, even if the head is sometimes inhibited from exercising his authority as fully as he might like for cultural reasons. As the family

sinks roots in its new home, it will gradually summon more of its children to Guam to attend school, and family life will come to resemble what it was back home.

The composition of many of the Micronesian households on Guam, however, is far less stable. Slightly more than half of the 101 FSM households surveyed were composed almost entirely of young people, usually in their twenties and often related or at least from the same island, who banded together under the same roof in a commune-type arrangement.[15] One such group from Nomwin, an atoll north of Truk, has six of its members working, most as security guards; in another from Puluwat four of the six young males work at a fast-food steakhouse. Households of this type, which can have as many as ten or twelve members, usually experience more serious problems, as we might easily imagine. Since the males in the household are roughly the same age, it is not an easy matter for one of them to assume a leadership role, even when he happens to be the single source of income. Normally, however, several have jobs and contribute to the support of the group, but each hesitates to impose any regimen on his peers. Even ordinary care and cleaning of the house is often overlooked, and life in the household is sometimes just a bit short of the anarchic. People drift in and out of these houses regularly. Older relatives or friends from home may come to Guam, even if they do not speak English and lack the skills to find a job, just to sample life in the city. The young people who belong to these communes often leave for better surroundings and a new household as soon as the opportunity arises. These households are provisional and their members are experimenting to work out viable authority structures in a setting that is still alien to them. The wonder is that amid such chaotic conditions Micronesians are able to make a successful adjustment to their new surroundings; yet some do. One group of bachelors learned to control their partying, budget their money, and take turns cooking and cleaning; they now live in a well-managed household and own six cars, all of them paid for and insured.

The migrant communities from different states appear to have their own characteristics, to judge from the household survey. The newcomers from Yap and Kosrae are unusually young--very few are older than their early thirties--and they show a strong tendency to reside in the kind of peer-group households described above (see Table 7). About two-thirds of the sample from both states were living in communities made up entirely of young people their own age. Another feature of these households is that most of their members are occupied either with a job or schooling. The number of dependents is very low in these house-

holds; well over half the Yapese surveyed and nearly two-thirds of the Kosraeans had full-time employment (see Table 1). These same characteristics are shared by the immigrants from some of the islands in Truk, especially Uman and the outlying atolls of the Mortlocks, Westerns, and Halls (see Table 7). On the other hand, Pohnpeians and most of the lagoon Trukese show a strong leaning toward more structured, family-like households. Such households, while less prone to conflict and better regulated, have a larger number of nonproductive members. Less than 20 percent of the Pohnpeians surveyed had wage employment. Among Trukese from lagoon islands the percentage employed was almost 40, much higher than for Pohnpei but considerably below the Kosrae and Yap samples. Overall, the FSM households that have sprung up on Guam can be described as economically "lean" in household composition as well as in earnings. There are as yet very few dependents in these new households, especially when compared with the average family size in the FSM, although this will undoubtedly change in the years ahead.

Given the adjustments the emigrants must make and the relative lack of supervision in their lives, it is no surprise that they have come to be regarded as troublemakers by long-time residents on Guam. Their all-night drinking bouts and their drunken-driving arrests, among other things, have been well-publicized and are a source of some concern to FSM government officials no less than to Guamanians. Police figures show that about 6 percent of all arrests made on Guam during 1987 were of FSM citizens, who at that time represented only slightly more than 1 percent of Guam's civilian population (Government of Guam 1987: table 4.2). Most of the crimes seem to have been alcohol related and fell under the categories of driving while intoxicated, disorderly conduct, assault, and larceny. The disproportionate arrest rate of FSM citizens may look worse than it really is, since a great number of the new Micronesian arrivals on Guam are young males in the troublesome 15 to 35 age bracket and the crimes they commit are the explosive and foolish acts likely to occur after a drinking party has gone on too long. Nonetheless, the police figures do indicate the distance that transplanted Micronesians still must go before they have completely adjusted to life in their new surroundings.

The Significance of Recent Emigration

The extent of recent emigration to Guam and the Northern Marianas in the past few years has been unparalleled in the postwar history of central Micronesia. If the estimates proposed in this article are accepted--a

resident FSM population in the Northern Marianas of 1,400 and a movement of 1,700 FSM citizens to Guam in two years--it would appear that about 3,000 FSM citizens have migrated north since 1982. A few of the FSM people living on Saipan are very likely former Trust Territory employees who chose to remain, but the great majority are recent arrivals. Although it is impossible to assign exact numbers to the annual outflow, our estimates suggest that the emigration rate has increased from perhaps 300 a year to the CNMI in the period 1983-1986 to about 700-800 yearly to Guam during 1986-1988.

On the basis of an estimated total FSM population of 100,000, the annual outflow during the past two years would represent 0.7 percent of the population. In some areas like Truk, however, the emigration rate is over 1 percent a year, as we have seen. The extent of population leakage to Hawaii and the US mainland in recent years is unknown, but when added to the migration northward it could bring the overall emigration rate from FSM to something approaching 1 percent annually.

Although the high emigration of late is clearly rooted in economic motives, the choice of Guam and the Marianas as destinations seems to be based on factors other than the mere availability of jobs. Part of the appeal of Guam and the CNMI as work sites is their proximity to the FSM, thus allowing emigrants to maintain fairly close contact with home and to visit relatives there from time to time. One has only to be standing in the Truk or Pohnpei airport on a Friday or Sunday evening as the turnaround flight from Guam disgorges its passengers to realize that the traffic between FSM and Guam is unmistakably two-way. There is a great deal of shuttling back and forth, as would be expected of a people whose ties with family and birthplace remain as strong as Micronesians' do. This circular flow resembles that of Samoans between their islands and the western US except that much smaller distances in the Micronesian circuit encourage more frequent visits home.

Few of those who have left for Guam or the Northern Marianas regard themselves as permanent emigrants. Most profess the desire to return after earning enough money; few envision themselves retiring in their new home. In this respect recent emigrants are much like the outer islanders who moved into the district centers in search of jobs during the expansionist era of the 1960s and early 1970s. Yet there are indications that increasingly more are bringing their children to enroll them in the Guam and CNMI schools for the better education they supposedly offer. Children raised in Guam may find it as difficult to return permanently to their home island as young outer islanders raised in the glitter of the FSM's port towns.

To refer to this emigration to Guam and the CNMI as a "brain drain" is misleading. Those who have left the FSM for the north are not the best and the brightest, the most creative and energetic individuals. In fact, they are often those whose job prospects at home are unpromising because they cannnot hope to compete with their better educated and more talented peers. The most competent of the high school and college graduates would generally prefer to stay at home and take a decent job with their own government if they could. It is the others, those who cannot count on jobs at home, who fly off to Guam and Saipan for lower-level work.

Finally, there is an undeniable economic significance to the recent emigration from FSM. An estimated 700 citizens of FSM who would otherwise not be working were able to obtain paying jobs on Guam, and possibly almost as many have found salaried employment in the Northern Marianas. There is no reason why this figure should not grow each year, given the economic prosperity of the areas to the north. Yet the economic impact is still more potential than actual. If emigration continues to accelerate, the prodigious population growth of the FSM will be slowed and could eventually decline to zero, as Palau's has for the past fifteen years (Hezel and Levin 1989). Not only would the cost of government rise much less steeply if the population was stable, but economic planners could count on a considerable source of income from the remittances sent back to their families by overseas workers. The beginning of a sizable remittance component may ultimately prove to be the single biggest boost to the FSM's flagging economy.

NOTES

1. The article cited here (Hezel and Levin 1989) has been used several times in this article since it presented a summary of emigration from FSM, Palau, and the Marshalls prior to the start of the large-scale emigration described in this article.

2. Population data is from unpublished figures issued by the FSM Office of Planning and Statistics, Pohnpei. These figures represent population projections for 1989.

3. These quarterly surveys are conducted by the Guam Labor Department, Bureau of Statistics, and issued in computer printout form as Report No. 18-711.

4. The 20 percent figure for dependents under the age of sixteen is, of course, far smaller than the corresponding figure for FSM residents; the latter figure is close to 50 percent. The estimate of 20 percent was derived from samples of several emigrant households in which both the total size of the household and the number of young dependents were known.

5. The survey of these sample populations in Truk was done by one of the authors. The size of each community is small enough so that nearly any resident would be able to list virtually all recent emigrants. Population of these two communities was extrapolated from 1973 census data in Truk.

6. This estimate of the size of the Marshallese population on Guam was derived from data obtained in our household survey, which included Marshallese.

7. Recent FSM arrivals on Guam are known among local people as "Trukese" because of the preponderance of migrants from that state. Similarly, in former years all Micronesians were termed "Palauans."

8. The estimate of the size of the Palauan and Marshallese communities in CNMI was derived, like the size of the FSM population, from the number of dependents in elementary and high schools. These numbers were 247 and 24 for Palau and the Marshalls respectively.

9. It may be worth noting that these estimates, as crude as they are, were confirmed by a number of knowledgeable individuals on the island as well as by recent FSM voter-registration lists.

10. Marianas Visitors Bureau announced this in its periodic news bulletin for January 1989.

11. Information supplied in an interview with Jun Ha, owner of the largest garment factory.

12. Information provided by Federal Program Office, CNMI.

13. The latest figure in Stewart (1988:132-133) is 11,654 foreign workers in 1986. The Immigration Department for CNMI, however, records over 15,000 applications for nonresident work permits in 1988.

14. Information supplied by the personnel director of the Nikko Saipan in October 1988.

15. The authors are grateful to Donald Rubinstein, director of the Micronesian Area Research Center, for his helpful observations on peer-group households.

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