# PARADISE

Ebeye Island. 1/4 square mile wide, less than a mile long, 8000 Pacific souls call this home... That's an average of 12 per house...the claustrophobia that inevitably presses in is soothed by American beer in astounding quantities, as well as the best of American TV, brought to them by the missile range a few miles down reef. Payments to local landowners by the Pentagon keep the people consumption-oriented, if not happy. Given the choice, many locals would rather keep the US and their jobs on the range, their compensation funds, their Western ways and perks...dependency runs deep. Neither history nor the US offer any real choices to the Marshallese, but rather a long-term, nearly automatically renewable lease on their land and their lives...

...and all the streets are paved with coral...a few coconut trees stick up as reminders of a rural past, here and there people struggle with home gardens...is this how you pictured paradise?

Young girls replace the old as housekeepers when both parents hold jobs in the urban Pacific...cooking, laundry and child care are relegated to the next generation. Imported fuel replaces once available firewood as the latter gets scarce...kerosene stoves replace earthen pits when the money's available...sailing canoes fall by the wayside in the face of widespread use of outboard engines... white polished denutrified American rice replaces the native coconut as the number one staple food...even tupperware finds its niche. Micronesia is rushing into the 20th century without even pausing to glance at the 19th.

# American STYLE

Faced with much more free time than a subsistence life allows, Urban Pacificans turn to imported pastimes...some of the best card players in the world reside on the other side of the International Date Line.

Rover Lewis

* In the December '85 *Emancipation* we ran an article, "Nuclear Colonialism in the Pacific", presenting a general picture of life under "western" influence in the region. Rover Lewis captures for us life "American Style" on just one of these islands. Thanks Rover.

Where do we put all the fruits of Western civilization? After centuries accustomed to a totally bio-degradable world, these Pacific islanders now find that just as the spoils come in, so does the spoiled mount up... Encouraging to see, however, is the presence of a growing community consciousness which tries at least to put the trash out of sight...out of mind. Could these be the seeds of self-reliance???

Playgrounds are where you find them... with some imagination. Ebeye's beaches offer many such automotive graveyards for restless children in need of diversions more real than video. Due to a lack of funding and commitment from both the Marshall Islands government and the Missile Range Administration, the need for playground areas gets little recognition, the reef gets rustier, and the kids...get tetanus?