

# PACIFIC PEACEMAKER

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No. 2, February 1983

## ISLANDERS SPEAK ON NUCLEAR DAMAGE

by Jude Smith

The most recent *Peacemaker Newsletter* contained an article about "Operation Homecoming", the June 1982 sail-in protest by Kwajalein land-owners. These Marshall Islanders were occupying their homelands after being relocated in the 1960's to make way for the U.S. Kwajalein Missile Range (KMR).

In January, two prominent Nuclear-Free Pacific campaigners visiting the West Coast, Giff Johnson and Darlene Keju, presented first hand information about the consequences of this courageous action, and other Micronesian issues. They addressed packed and enthusiastic audiences from Seattle to San Diego. The tour was coordinated and sponsored by the U.S. Nuclear-Free Pacific (NFP) Network, with regional sponsorship by groups such as AFSC, Pacific Peacemaker Project and Livermore Action Group.

Darlene Keju was born on overcrowded Ebeye Island, four miles from the air-conditioned American community on Kwajalein Island in the Marshalls. Her passion for Nuclear-Free Pacific issues stems from her personal experience of the Marshall Islands bomb testing in the late 1950's when she was a small girl. As a graduate student of public health, she is in a unique position to report on the health and cultural impact of militarism and nuclear exploitation in her homeland. Giff Johnson, an American journalist, has been concerned with Pacific issues since the 70's. He has published many articles relating to the Nuclear-Free Pacific and co-founded the Micronesian Support Committee.

**Excerpts from their Seattle presentation (and slide show) on January 8**  
**Giff Johnson's comments follow:**

"In May of 1982 U.S. and Marshall Island negotiators signed a Compact of Free Association, a treaty that would give the U.S. 50 years use of Kwajalein for continued testing. But nothing in the language of the Compact states that the Marshallese will be treated as first class citizens in their own islands, or that they will no longer suffer the indignities that they have suffered for 30 years.

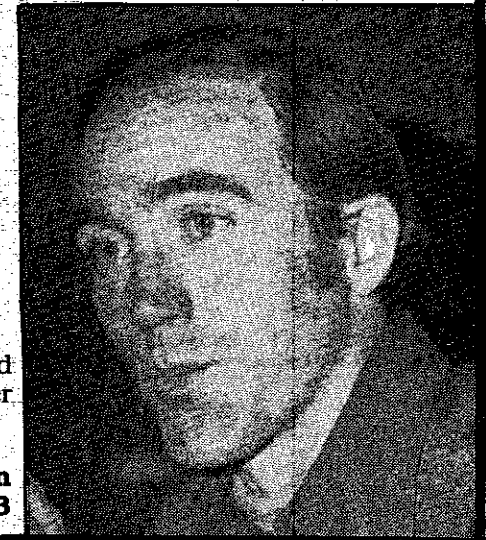
"In fact, in 1976 a U.S. Congressional team had visited Ebeye to investigate the problems and called the situation there a patent violation of human rights."



"Now we realize we've got the power, we can do it together . . . Although it took us 35 years to really come out and say that we don't want to be part of this Nuclear Age, the important thing is: WE DID IT!"

"Where I come from in the Marshalls, we have no word for enemy. So when the U.S. government says: 'Oh, don't worry, we're doing this to protect you,' we say 'To protect who?'"

**Darlene Keju**  
**Marshall Islander**  
**Seattle, 1983**



"Kwajalein has probably contributed more to the arms race than any other spot on earth!"

**Giff Johnson**  
**Seattle, 1983**

*The Kwajalein Atoll Corporation, who represent the many landowners, found that none of their points they wanted included in a future agreement had been incorporated into the Compact of Free Association. So in June 1982 they decided to take action themselves and re-occupy Kwajalein and ten other islands in the atoll.*

Giff Johnson further remarked:

"Interviews with many of the people in 'Operation Homecoming' reflected how much they enjoyed on these clear islands going fishing, eating fresh crabs and turtles . . . and the community spirit of people working together as a Marshallese community, something that rarely exists on Ebeye.

"Many of the tests from Vandenberg Base in California to the Kwajalein Missile Range had to be cancelled at great expense to the U.S. government.

"After four months, 'Operation Home-

coming' ended in October with the land-owners and defense department agreeing to a new three year lease. While the new lease falls short of the Kwajalein peoples' demands, it does provide for capital improvements on Ebeye and other islands and access to a greater number of islands. . .

"Many people are realizing money is no substitute for land. As Marshallese leaders in the 50's told the U.N., land means 'more than just a place where you can plant your food crops and build your houses or bury your dead. It is the very life of the people. Take away their land and their spirits go also.'"

Darlene Keju, a Marshall Islander, noted with feeling: "This slide show really moves not just me but all of us, because we realize that we've got the power—we can do it together! Although it took us 35 years to really come out and say we don't want to be part of this

### Islanders Speak on Nuclear Damage

nuclear age, the important thing is, we did it! And with the encouragement of our brothers and sisters in Europe, this movement is growing . . . We know we are the target, but we also know that we don't want to be part of this nuclear madness."

#### Giff Johnson:

"I think the most vital and important thing at this point is that we try and work out the problems . . . the Pacific islands are rapidly becoming one of the more densely militarized regions in the world . . . If the Nuclear Free Pacific Movement is successful it will put a major curb on this, because, you see, it is the forward bases in Australia, in the Philippines, in Guam, in Pelau, in Kwajalein, in Hawaii, that make that first strike capability, that make that war possible. So I think that the more you say, 'You can't have that stuff out here', you get it to a point where those things are not going to happen."

*The slides also told of the enforced removal of the Bikinians and Enewetok and Rongelap people in the 1950's. Sixty-six atom and hydrogen bombs were tested in this region. Sixty-nine percent of Rongelap children have had surgery to remove thyroid tumors.*

#### Darlene Keju:

"But we haven't won the battle yet, we still have hope. I think seeing to so many fires here tells me that we'll get there. It takes time and it takes a lot of education, but I think the wind is blowing. So I encourage all of you, including myself, to keep on fighting because we will win."

# BELAU TO VOTE ON TREATY WITH U.S.

On the far corner of the Western Pacific lies a chain of coral and volcanic islands called by the indigenous people, BELAU. Set in a backdrop of clear blue lagoon, swaying palm trees with leaves being combed by the trade winds, it fosters an abundance of resources that sustain self-sufficiency for its people.

Recently, a 13-year strenuous negotiation on a Compact for Free Association between Washington D.C. and Belau has been concluded. Now it is before the people of Belau to vote on in a Plebiscite scheduled February 10, 1983.

This compact is a 50-year treaty with provisions and budgets that would transport Belau from "shell age" to the reality of the 21st century nuclear proliferation, arms race and international power conflicts.

Upon ratification of the compact, the U.S. would have exclusive military rights and use of one-third of Belau's lands and its port facilities. The entire population of Ngardmau village will be uprooted from their land to make way for U.S. army jungle training; fishermen will be prohibited from fishing grounds to make way for blasting and dredging the reefs to accommodate military vessels, possibly including the Trident Nuclear Submarine.

Another provision of the compact allows Americans to reside and run busi-

nesses in Belau, thereby increasing the vulnerability of Belauan culture to dilution by forces beyond control.

In essence, the compact is a unilateral treaty that supersedes the integrity of the Supreme Law of the Islands, the Belau Constitution, which prohibits nuclear storage and dumping in its territorial boundary. Secondly, it violates the sacred trusteeship agreement that the U.S. assumed from the U.N. in which it promised to promote economic and political self-sufficiency to the effect of allowing full self-determination by the Belauans.

Do Belauans have much choice in the Plebiscite? Evidently not. The ballot has three political entities to vote on: Commonwealth, Free Association and Independence.

For 30 years under the U.S. Administration, the policy has been to create a sweepstake out of Belau for the Pentagon to win. There is no solid economic foundation to support an independent Belau. This means voting on Free-association or Commonwealth; both with provisions to carve a nuclear future for the Belau Islands.

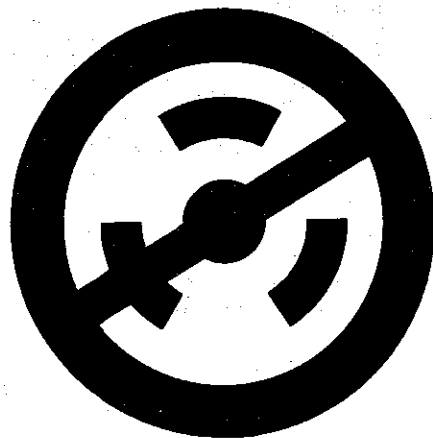
The neo-colonialistic aspects of the Compact of Free-Association have a stifling effect on the determination of a people to be free and to seek peace among the nations of the world.

An old man in the village once commented on U.S. policy: "America has been shaking our hands for 30 years while his eye searches behind our empty pockets. They want to sign a treaty now because they see military future in our lands."

Most Belauans do not aspire to the luxury and comfort of the 2 billion dollars the U.S. promises to compensate for land use. This is because, for Belauans, their lands can never be given a price tag. Belauans are a people with an insatiable appetite for freedom and life devoid of military installations and nuclear threats.

**Jackson M. Henry**

Belauan,  
January, 1983, Seattle



**THIS IS A  
NUCLEAR WEAPON  
FREE ZONE**

This is to certify that . . . . .

. . . . .  
has been declared a Nuclear  
Weapon Free Zone and is now a  
link in a chain of Peace that  
seeks to bind all peoples in a  
common stand against the  
proliferation of nuclear weapons  
and in a shared concern for  
Life on this planet.

Dated at . . . . .

this . . . day of . . . . ., 198

by . . . . .

### NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE CERTIFICATES

Originating in New Zealand, this is the beginning of a grass-roots campaign to assert our right to declare our own homes and work places Nuclear Weapon Free Zones. Order in lots of 10 or \$10, or lots of 100 for \$50 each.

"Even though the radioactive contamination on Rongelap is considered perfectly safe for human habitation, the levels of radioactivity are higher than those found in other inhabited locations of the world. The habitation of these peoples on the island will provide the most valuable ecological radiation data on human beings."

(U.S. Atomic Energy Commission  
scientists — 1957)

# HARBOR REPORT

—Crystal Van Horn  
San Diego

The Pacific Peacemaker Project has a growing number of supporters here in San Diego. With the addition of members of local support Groups as well as the Friends Meetings, our range of networking has diversified.

Whale-watching has been a major and popular fund-raiser, with each watch usually raising one share. This activity will continue through mid-February, while the gray whales migrate to their spawning grounds off the tip of Baja California.

December was a busy month, and included the arrival of Eve Phillips, who will be our new treasurer. We welcomed her warmly and are appreciating her energies and sense of business.

The Pacific Peacemaker participated during the Christmas Holidays in the annual "Parade of Lights" in San Diego harbor. Thanks to lighting designer Rick Van Horn, the sail could be seen clearly, although shrouded in fog for the entirety of the 90 minute parade route. An estimated 100,000 spectators braved the cold and damp to view this holiday sight. Caroling on Christmas Eve was a stirring affair, with a boat full of merry Peacemakers singing to those last-minute shoppers along Seaport Village and the embarcadero area of the harbor.

There are now four "live aboards" on the Peacemaker: Eve and Ted Phillips, Anne Krill and Sky (both from Oregon). All on board spend time repairing or working on the vessel, serving as crew for the whale-watches, and doing outreach work.

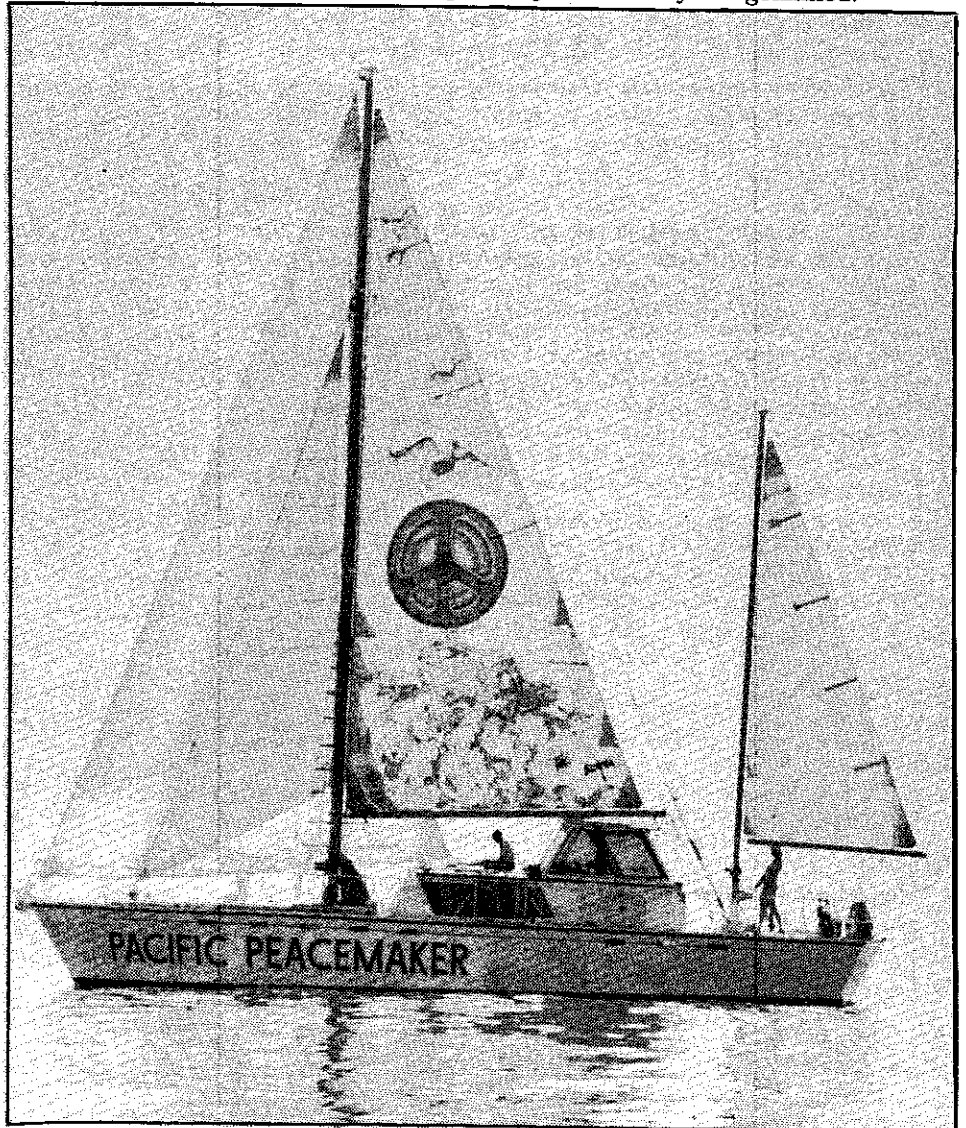
In recent weeks our San Diego group has hosted: Mary and Tom Savage (from the Seattle Committee) who stayed a week during the holidays working and sharing with us; Doug Perrin (the San Francisco Project Contact) who arrived for five days of work here at New Year's; and Skip Cospito and Josie Reichlin (Project Board Members) who met with us in mid-January.

The Micronesian slide presentation in San Diego by Darlene Keju and Giff Johnson on January 18 increased interest in Pacific issues, providing background and direction for our future speaking engagements and media coverage. Another valuable educational tool has been the slide presentation, "Harboring Nuclear Weapons" (loaned to us by the Peace Resource Center); it depicts weapons emplacement areas within San Diego's harbor environs.

We have also participated in swap meets by selling T-shirts and passing out leaflets, and in gatherings where we educate about the Peacemaker Project. We also sell photographs and stationery.


We, here in San Diego, are happy to have the Peacemaker in our hometown. We feel that, through our efforts during the boat's stay with us, we have a unique op-

portunity to educate about and to work for a Nuclear Free Pacific. In this way, a dimension of the Pacific Peacemaker Project is already being fulfilled.



YES, I WANT TO SEE THE WORK OF THE PACIFIC PEACEMAKER CONTINUE.

I ENCLOSE A CHECK FOR:

- \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 Membership(s) in the Pacific Peacemaker Project 
- \_\_\_\_\_ for a donation towards ongoing expenses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ for — subscription(s) to the Pacific Peacemaker Newsletter at \$20. each.
- \_\_\_\_\_ for Nuclear Weapon-free Zone Certificates

Please make checks payable to: Pacific Peacemaker Project, and send to

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"As the Marshallese strive to determine their future and gain control of their lands, they will need strong American support . . . There are many people who are showing solidarity actions with people of the Pacific. The *Pacific Peacemaker* Project is one such action."

Giff Johnson

## . . . AN APPEAL . . .

Dear Friends,

We are writing to you concerning the *Pacific Peacemaker*, the boat which captured international press headlines last summer when she attempted to prevent the first Trident nuclear submarine from reaching the naval base near Seattle.

During her 12,000 mile journey, the *Pacific Peacemaker* became a new symbol of hope for a nuclear-free future. The vessel provided the opportunity to call world-wide attention to the continuing struggles of the Pacific peoples for self-determination.

The Pacific Peacemaker Project will continue to focus on the impact of nuclear weapons and military bases on the peoples of the Pacific. It is intended that the *Pacific Peacemaker* sail to Micronesia, Japan and possibly to the Soviet Union. In Micronesia, the boat will receive and disseminate (for both North America and Micronesia) information about the Nuclear Free Pacific movement.

The first step requires raising money for the purchase of the boat from the collective of Australian owners before the end of February this year. We have already raised \$50,000 of the \$100,000 necessary for the boat's purchase for the Project transfer. We must still find another \$50,000 before the end of this month. No mean task. With your help the Project will continue. The *Pacific Peacemaker* will be ours!

And we mean OURS: YOURS, too!

We are asking that organizations and individuals become symbolic share-holders in the Project. This way, it becomes a "people's boat" representing the desires of many for a nuclear free and independent Pacific and facilitating networking with many groups.

It is important to note that there are ways for all sympathetic people to help this Project. Many of our supporters have obtained membership shares collectively as organizations, or by, for example, ten persons each contributing \$25.00. Each contributing group will receive a bimonthly newsletter containing information about the Project and Pacific issues.

Our strong conviction that this is a worthwhile endeavor impels us to ask for your financial support. Most urgently, we need share-memberships, and we need six for each day of this month. Will you help us make this effort waterborne?

Confident in, and grateful for your support,

For the Pacific Peacemaker Committee,

*Jude E. Smith*  
Jude Smith

For the Project Board

*Joseph A. Cospito*  
Joseph Cospito, Vice Pres/Treas

*Josie E. Reichlin*  
Josie Reichlin, President



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