

# MESEISET

Volume 2, Number 3

June 2013



## THE FUTURE OF CHUUK

*[Editor's Note: In SS 150 (History of Micronesia) classes, students were asked to write essays on what they perceived as the future history of Micronesia. Their essays also had to include their recommendations for improving the future. Four students wrote about the political future of Chuuk. Their essays are found in this issue of Meseiset.]*

### THE GREAT SHIP CHUUK IS SINKING! by Erson Louis

The future is time yet to come, but there are signs of warning now that tell us what will come. And the signs I see tell me that the future history of Chuuk looks bad, dangerous, and scary.

It reminds me of the Titanic a hundred years ago. The captain saw the warning signs but disregarded them: "Titanic! You are heading toward an iceberg. Change your course!" Well, the captain disregarded the signs, and the Titanic struck the iceberg and sank into the deep Atlantic.

Look out, Chuuk! The warning signs are in front of us — global warming and Compact Two's zero budget — and our captain (Chuuk State Government) seems to be disregarding the signs. It will let the great ship Chuuk sink in the next decade or two.

Are there enough life jackets for us to survive the sinking? As far as I can tell, the rich will survive, and the poor like me will drown like rats. To avoid this future, we need to change the course in which Chuuk is currently moving.

One change is migration as sea levels rise and islands sink due to global warming. Kiribati has already negotiated for its people to migrate to Australia, and Marshalls is trying to negotiate with Hawaii and California to let its people migrate there. We in Chuuk have not even started any kind of negotiation. Come on, leaders, start talking!

The second change is political — to change from independence to commonwealth. If global warming is not the threat, independence will definitely drown us like rats. In 2023 when Compact Two ends and the budget reaches zero. Prayers will not save us, but a potential commonwealth budget of \$400 million a years will! I am not a math expert, but I know that \$400 million is vastly larger than zero.

My final plea is directed to our government leaders. Please look at the warning signs of the future, open up public hearings on these signs, and start changing the course of our Chuuk. And the time is now, not ten years from now. If you fail us, then you will be like the Titanic captain and sink our ship called the Chuuk State. φ

In this issue....	page
Future History #1: The Great Ship Chuuk is Sinking! . . . . .	1
Future History #2: A Political Miracle . . . . .	2
Future History #3: The Future Economy of Micronesia . . . . .	2
Future History #4: Please Count My Vote! . . . . .	3
My Personal Philosophy . . . . .	4
A Local Food Project . . . . .	6
CHS Wins Debate . . . . .	9
Campus Beautification Project . . .	9

### **MESEISET DISCLAIMERPOL- ICY**

Any expression of opinion or viewpoint of the writer(s) of an article in this Meseiset publication is solely the responsibility of the writer(s), not of the COM-FSM system.

## **A POLITICAL MIRACLE** by Genevieve Lewis

A while ago I heard the saying that the rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer. At first, I did not understand this statement, and so I asked a few relatives. My uncles told me that they also heard it for the first time in the early 1980s. They gave me the following information:

Before Compact One began in 1986 and during the Compact One years, political leaders started getting richer and richer. They were misusing government funds to benefit themselves. Without enough public funds, the government could not develop the nation socially, economically, and educationally. So, poor people got poorer and poorer. For instance, in the early 1990s, Chuuk's unemployment was about 19% of the labor force. Then, according to the 2010 census, it reached 34%.

As I see it, under Compact Two, the rich are still getting richer, and the poor are still getting poorer. The problem of development is getting worse and worse. Schools and dispensaries are in worse condition than the 1980s. Infrastructure is bad, really bad nowadays, including an island power system which cannot give us 24/7 electricity. Worst of all, our government seems to be developing Weno and not the other islands in Chuuk.

Does our Chuuk State Government think that in ten more years (when Compact Two ends in the year 2023) a political miracle will occur to give us social, educational, and economic development? I do not think so. What we really need is a new political government called commonwealth. A close association with the United States will bring us a budget estimated at \$400,000,000 a year.

I recommend that we think about how political independence has been bringing us down. We should also think about changing our political status from independence to commonwealth. I see commonwealth as the political miracle that we all need to plan for. φ

---

---

## **THE FUTURE ECONOMY OF MICRONESIA** by Anthony Pisek

Is there a future economy of Micronesia? The phrase "economic development" should emphasize "development" which means, according to the dictionary, at least one or more of these definitions: growth, progress, increase, advance, or improvement. In addition, I would hope that development includes three ways — to increase our budget, to improve employment, and to advance the salary levels of workers. However, according to census information, our government has not developed our economy. So, I conclude that the only way to achieve economic development is to change our political status — from independence to commonwealth.

First, with independence under Compact One since the 1980s, our budget has gone downward. Now, under Compact Two, the budget will reach zero in 2023. So, after 2023, will our budget go below zero? I doubt it. Sure, there will be the Trust Fund, according to our SS 150 instructor, but the amount of the Trust Fund will probably last for only 3-4 years — until the year 2027. I imagine that, with commonwealth as our new political status, the budget can rise to \$400 million a year. Now, that would definitely be an increase, not decrease, in budget. What our FSM independence has failed to do can be quickly reversed by

U.S. commonwealth status.

Second, according to census data, unemployment has been rising since the 1990s. In effect, employment has been decreasing. That is not economic development. For instance, in the early 1990s, Chuuk's unemployment was about 19%. In 2010, it went up to 34%. I wonder — Why have so many FSM citizens migrated to Guam, Hawaii, and U.S. mainland? If they are looking for jobs at home and if unemployment goes upward, it would be better to escape from Micronesia and find jobs outside of Micronesia. How can we improve employment here? My answer is commonwealth.

Third, salary levels have increased, yes, but the increase is too slow. Maybe that is why many Micronesians, including Chuukese, have asked their relatives in America to send them remittances. A remittance is money sent from working relatives in America to poor families still in Micronesia. The remittance is usually sent through Western Union. Again, commonwealth is the answer to having more money in Micronesia, so that our working relatives in America can continue to live and survive in the expensive United States.

*(continued on page 3)*

## PLEASE COUNT MY VOTE! by McKay Ludwig

*“Tou epwe arap nge arap epwe tou”.* These Chuukese words were a past prediction by a great itang of Chuuk — the Honorable Petrus Mailo. I cannot translate these words well, and so please let me describe my own understanding of what it means in the history of Chuuk. People will come and take control of our islands. They will own our lands, and with their newly acquired land ownership they will control the way we live and think.

Mr. Mailo made this prediction after World War Two had ended. So, he was not talking about the Spanish, German, and Japanese administrations. The American administration began in the late 1940s, but Americans did not own our lands. To be sure, they came and Americanized us, but they did not take control of our lands. Since the late 1980s when Compact One began, Mr. Mailo’s words are still a warning to us now and in the future. The warning is that we have let our own government leaders and businessmen take control of our minds and hearts, and now they control us. Oh, yes, they have also taken control of the lands. They are the rich people who now control the poor.

I just found out something shocking. For many years Chuuk’s unemployment has risen to about 34% of the labor force, and we say nothing about it. In Europe, Spain’s unemployment reached a high of 27% in April 2013, and thousands of people are striking against the corrupt Spanish government leaders. For the Spanish people, 27% is bad, and so they go on a strike. For us in Chuuk, 34% is worse, and we do nothing. No, I am not saying that we should strike against our own government. Of course not! But I am saying that we should ask them a question: What are our leaders doing to help us achieve a positive future? We the young people are the future, and our leaders are not doing much to ensure a positive future for all of us. As young people, we need to re-think the future, and, if, the present leaders cannot help us, then we need to help ourselves. How? Let us vote the present leaders out. Tou!

---

---

### FUTURE ECONOMY OF MICRONESIA

*(continued from page 2)*

There is so little beauty left in Micronesia, because our physical environment is messy and dirty. However, the worst kind of ugliness in our islands is not physical. It is something else. Our leaders’ minds and hearts are filled with mess and dirt, thanks to pachification. Independence allows our leaders to misuse government funds, and commonwealth will allow the U.S. government to stop this financial abuse.

I have a feeling that — if our government lets us select our political status — the popular choice will be commonwealth, no longer independence.

So, the choice of how we want to live belongs to us, not to our government leaders. In the past and at the present time, they tell us how to think, what to think. It is now time for us to think on our own, and I would encourage all of us citizens to think commonwealth.

Tomorrow is fast approaching, and that tomorrow is called 2023. If we continue to vote for the wrong leaders, that tomorrow will be dark, not bright at all. We need to choose better leaders now who can get us ready for a political change called commonwealth. φ

I am not good enough to ever become a future leader in Chuuk, but then who would make good leaders? I want them to be honest and trustworthy. I want them to love and care for all of us, not just a few relatives and friends because of pachification or favoritism. I want them to change our political system from independence to commonwealth.

My SS 150 teacher calls me a “small potato”. He is right — in 2013. But I will not remain a small potato forever. I will grow and develop — not as a future leader, but definitely as a thinking adult. At Chuuk Campus, I am beginning to think and re-think about the future — my own future and the future of other young Chuukese. Our present leaders do not think about the future of all people. Maybe they are not able to think well.

All the same, as a developing thinker, I have been thoughtful — and hopeful — that we the young people — the future of Chuuk — can still have a future as well.

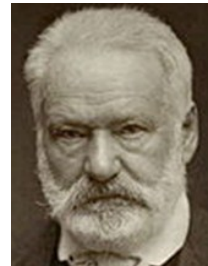
If our leaders with their choice of independence are not good enough, then we need new leaders with another choice of commonwealth. I am just one vote, but the number will increase. So, please count my vote. φ

## MY PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY by Jenolyn Hartman

[Editor's Note: Every semester students in EN 208 (Philosophy) are required to write personal philosophies. They first learn well-known philosophies in the world, then analyze each philosophy according to concepts unique in philosophy, such as metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology. Finally, the students select a topic as the basis of their own personal philosophies, and describe their own philosophies. The following is the personal philosophy written by Jenolyn Hartman.]

Name of Philosophy = **PRO-ACTION**

A French novelist Victor Hugo (1802-1885) wrote Les Misérables, a story about a poor man named Jean Valjean who stole a loaf of bread for his hungry family. For his bad action he suffered the negative consequence of going to prison. Yes, he stole – that was bad. However, he stole because he loved his suffering family – that was good. So, what – good or bad?



Victor Hugo

Jean Valjean escaped from prison, and a police officer named Javier chased him for many, many years, trying to send Valjean back to prison. All the same, during those many years, Valjean tried his best to do good deeds to help others, and yet Javier refused to forgive Valjean. The one-time action of stealing, according to Javier, was enough reason to punish Valjean for a lifetime. In other words, Javier did not believe that a criminal can “learn from his mistakes”. Was there any forgiveness or compassion for why Valjean stole? No.

What about each one of us? If you make a mistake – if your action is bad – should you suffer the negative consequence? Do you want to be forgiven? Do you want people to understand your social, personal, and economic reasons that caused you to steal? Do you want people to find compassion in their hearts toward you, and help you so that you can “learn from your mistake”?

Metaphysics

- Anthropology
- Theology

I see two similar kinds of negative consequence. First, the American existential philosopher Maxine Greene presented in her philosophy the idea of the “power of one”. Anthropologically speaking, you alone have the power to choose your own action – good or bad – but you must also accept the consequence of your action – positive consequence for good action, negative consequence for bad action. So, in the case of Jean Valjean, was Javier correct? Since Valjean took action to steal, he should suffer the negative consequence for a lifetime. If we accept Greene’s philosophy 100%, then, yes, the thief must be punished. Second, according to the Holy Bible, the seventh commandment “Thou shalt not steal” means “Do not steal”. Of course, from the Bible, God shall punish the thief. In Les Misérables, Javier acted like God. Theologically speaking, you must accept any punishment from God.



Maxine Greene

In the case of bad action and negative consequence, I can agree with Greene, but not 100%. Is it possible that bad action and “positive” consequence can work together? If – I repeat, if – some kind of positive consequence can help a person to stop doing any bad action, the case of bad action and positive consequence is what I call “pro-action”.

(continued on page 5)

## **MY PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY** by Jenolyn Hartman

(continued from page 4)

**Epistemology** = Sources of Knowledge

- Empiricism
- Logic and Reasoning
- Intuition
- Undisputed Authority

When someone does a kind of bad action, he may already know what the negative consequence will be, but he does not want to receive the punishment. If he can truly “learn from his mistake”, then should we find a way to help him from ever doing bad again? In other words, we must find a way to teach or train the wrong-doer not to do wrong again. For instance, at Chuuk Campus, a student does something wrong – bad action – and so the automatic and negative consequence is to give him an F, withdraw him from class, or even kick him out of college.

My philosophy is called “pro-action”. I do not believe that a negative consequence has to be the automatic result of bad or wrong action. At the same time, I do not believe 100% in giving an automatic “second chance”. After all, a “second chance” can encourage the wrong-doer to do more wrong. So, what do I believe? I recommend that we look at different kinds of consequences (both negative and positive), using the four sources of knowledge to determine how we should understand the action of stealing and the kind of consequence, as follows:

Epistemology	Bad Action & Positive Consequence	Bad Action & Negative Consequence
(1) Empiricism	Give a second chance and watch him carefully so that he will not do the bad action again.	Punish him — no second chance — and put him into jail for an appropriate period of time.
(2) Logic and Reasoning	Assign him to do community service for a period of time, or provide him with some kind of vocational training.	Let the punishment fit the crime, without probation at all — he must serve time in prison.
(3) Intuition	Feel sorry for him, and find a welfare program to feed his hungry family.	Never let him find a job forever, and let his poor family suffer too.
(4) Undisputed Authority	Forgive him in the name of God, and find him a job to earn a living.	Let the man face eternity in hell — no forgiveness at all.

In other words, in my philosophy there is a variety of pro-active consequences – both positive and negative. In the chart above, there are four negative consequences and four positive consequences – eight in all. When we look at a person’s bad action, there should be eight ways to decide what his consequence will be.

**Axiology**

- Ethics
- Aesthetics

So, yes, each person has the “power of one” – and he must realize that there will be consequences for bad actions. However, the consequences can vary. All I can say at this time is: “Choose wisely what you plan to do – think of the consequences of your action – and learn to accept whatever consequences you will have – both positive and/or negative.” That is, after all, what life is all about. Also, when you ask for a “second chance”, you should mean it – not take advantage of it.

Pro-action works well if, and only if, the wrong-doer really and truly wants to change from bad to good, from wrong to right. Then, positive consequence can help to improve an individual and the society as well. If it does not help, then we must continue to use negative consequence against bad action. φ



## A LOCAL FOOD PROJECT

*[Editor's Note: In SS 150 (History of Micronesia) classes, students were asked to volunteer in a local food project — to eat, for seven consecutive days, only local foods. They were not to eat any imported foodstuffs. They were to be honest in their self-appraisal, as shown in a seven-day journal. Five students completed the project, and their journal entries are excerpted and posted below, day by day.]*

### DAY 1: Tuesday, 04/16/13

Genevieve Lewis: I'm lucky, because there was only local food for dinner. Pounded breadfruit, and fish, fresh and salted. When I go to sleep to-night, I know tomorrow will be good day.

Jenolyn Hartman: I do not want to think how I am going to suffer for one whole week. I seriously can't bear it. Tonight I had only pounded breadfruit and fish. Somebody, help me!

Teinin Sam: It's after dinner, and guess what? I just got back from the kitchen with a full stomach. I ate taro and fish. I used to eat a lot of rice, canned meat, chicken, etc. Not tonight. This project is easy for me.

Anthony Pisek: I ate pounded breadfruit and fried fish, smells and tastes great! I know some people who don't want to eat local food — they say that imported food is better. They have money, and so they just show off. My mind and soul are better with local food.

Erson Louis: For dinner I ate pounded breadfruit, rice, and fish. I had told my mom about this project, and she advised me not to eat any rice. I didn't. After dinner, my brothers and cousins teased me that I would get sick eating only local food. They drank coffee. I didn't. No problem.



**DAY 3: Thursday, 04/18/13**

Genevieve: There was no local food in the house today, and I ate nothing. My sister and a cousin were worried for me, because they know about my project. Sure, there was rice, but I didn't touch it. I feel sorry for myself, but I will complete this project.

Jenolyn: There was nothing except one banana this morning. I mean, what is one banana going to do for me — starvation? Eating just one banana is like eating nothing at all. Truthfully, I couldn't eat any local food, so I didn't. Instead, I ate a bowl of ramen and drank Kool-Aid. For dinner, I ate kon and iik. Guess what? That was better than nothing — I think I like it.

Teinin: I feel so down today. My family thinks that I'm crazy and stupid. No local food for breakfast. This project is like a punishment.

Anthony: I'm really happy with this project. It's only Thursday, but I made my cousins go with me to our taro patch. I ate taro tonight, and I still have some left-over for breakfast tomorrow. I thought of something silly — people who buy a lot of imported food love to eat money. They're crazy, right?

Erson: Today is my birthday. So, happy birthday to me from me. Breakfast and lunch, no food. On campus my stomach growled and roared. As I went home, I thought — my birthday, no money, no gift, nothing. I thought I was going to die. Then, at home, surprise, surprise! My family made a special dinner for us — a combination of local and imported foods. Sorry, teacher, I helped myself to all the food.



**DAY 4: Friday, 04/19/13**

Genevieve: No local food all morning and afternoon. On campus, I felt sick. Headache and stomach pain. Back at home, I asked my older brother to buy pounded breadfruit for me. I really thanked him, and I feel good tonight.

Jenolyn: I made a deal with myself, No matter how hard it is, I will eat local food and like it. Tonight I had taro and fish — and chicken. There was rice and other kinds of imported food, but I did not touch them. I am surprised because I think that I'm beginning to like this local food project. It's my own free will — and I never thought that I could do this. I have a better feeling toward local food.

Teinin: I didn't eat anything from morning to evening. At dinner, I ate rice, luncheon meat, and kimchee. I'm so sorry — I failed.

Anthony: Here's something funny. As I write my journal, I'm eating some bananas which relatives brought for me. They know about my project, and they support me.

Erson: I was thinking tonight why our go-local project is okay. I'm getting support from my family members. When I got home, my mom and my uncles were talking about me — why didn't I join them for after-dinner coffee. When I explained about the project, they said, "We thought that you had a thing against us." I felt bad, but they understood and agreed to help me complete the one-week project. That's what my family is — the kind of support I need from them. One of my uncles gave me some pounded breadfruit, fish, and bananas. Good night, my teacher!



**DAY 5: Saturday, 04/20/13**

Genevieve: Last night, after dinner, I took some left-over breadfruit into my bedroom and hid it. When I returned home today, I took the breadfruit out of my bedroom. My family didn't get angry at me. Instead, they just laughed at me. One said, "Maybe your teacher wants you to lose weight!" Well, today was just a funny day.

Jenolyn: Wow! Local food is the best! For lunch and dinner I ate local without hesitation. I actually wanted to, and it was good. Now, I want to see, when this project ends, whether I will want to continue eating local food a lot.

Teinin: Today is another day of failure. I ate ice cream and bread with my cousins. I feel really bad because I'm failing my assignments in our project because I cannot control my hunger.

Anthony: This morning my aunt and I went shopping. We bought imported meat for dinner tonight. Outside the store was a woman carrying a basket full of tapioca. I asked my aunt for some money to buy all of the woman's tapioca. I did so, and my aunt cooked the tapioca for dinner. I am actually enjoying this project, and my family is encouraging me to complete the project.

Erson: Yesterday I said something about how important family support is. Today was another good day. My cousins and I worked on land to get local food. An uncle took others to catch enough fish for everyone. We had lots of local food tonight. I witnessed today what family support really means in Chuuk — working together, what we call "angaangfengen". Chuukese culture, with its local food, is very special.

---

**DAY 6: Sunday, 04/21/13**

Genevieve: Today my family had lots of local food, and I had no problem. No pain. Everything was delicious.

Jenolyn: Ditto from yesterday. Feeling good about myself.

Teinin: After church, I had to cook food, all ported food, for my family. For a couple of days now, there was no local food. I want to quit this project.

Anthony: No problem, and guess what? My relatives brought some mangoes over for me. Yes! I ate my favorite fruit — MANGOES!

Erson: No entry.

---

**DAY 7: Monday, 04/22/13**

Genevieve: Lots of local food at home. That's what I ate — morning, afternoon, and evening. I just want to say, "Thank you, teacher, for this kind of homework." It was more than just saving money or maintaining good health. It was a great lesson in my own cultural appreciation.

Jenolyn: Wai-oooo! Last day! Yes, I did cheat a little bit. As far as I'm concerned, morning and afternoon, I didn't like local food that much, but I really enjoyed local food for dinner. It's such an awesome feeling. I will continue eating much more local food from now on, and this project taught me a good lesson: "Go local, mo' bettah!"

Teinin: Today I ate rice, canned tuna, and kim-chee. My uncle forgot to buy pounded taro. I said that he forgot, but he didn't forget. My family agreed that they would not buy any local food, to punish me for lying about this project. This past week was the worst week in my life. I'm so sorry to tell you the truth.

Anthony: I ate breadfruit and fish, and, sorry, I also ate a little bit of rice. The project ends, but I will always eat local food more than imported food. I wonder how my classmates have been doing in the project?

Erson: During breakfast my mom and I were discussing the go-local project. As we ate tapioca, fish, and banana, she told me that she was proud of me for getting other family members involved in eating local food. I still like to eat both local and imported food, but this project has taught me to experience and appreciate the joy of family. φ



## **CHUUK HIGH WINS STATE DEBATE**

by Harry Narruhn (FSM Supreme Court)

Chuuk High School won the 2013 Chuuk State Law Day Debate, against Xavier High School. CHS’s winning score was 307 to XHS’s 302. The debate topic was **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE FSM CONSTITUTION SHOULD BE AMENDED TO CREATE AN ADDITIONAL AT-LARGE SEAT IN THE FSM CONGRESS FOR EACH OF THE FOUR STATES, ELECTION TO WHICH SHALL BE OPEN ONLY TO WOMEN CANDIDATES”**. The debate was held Monday, April 29, at the FSM Supreme Courthouse.

Chuuk High’s debate team — Majesty Helickios and Tiarra Rose Williander — will represent Chuuk State at the FSM National Law Day Debate, to be held July 12 this summer in Chuuk. Winning debate teams from Yap, Pohnpei, and Kosrae will participate in the July 12th event.

Four high schools participated in this year’s debate. The following chart shows their participation:

Debate	Affirmative	Negative	Winning Team
1st Round	<b>Chuuk High School</b> (Majesty Helickios) (Tiarra Rose Williander) <i>[Coach Paul Hadik]</i>	<b>Saramen Chuuk Academy</b> (Art Ray Irons) (Tracey Narruhn) <i>[Coach Paige Katzfey]</i>	CHS
2nd Round	<b>Xavier High School</b> (Bridget Endor) (Brendan Yamase) <i>[Coach Marc Roselli, SJ]</i>	<b>Seventh Day Adventist</b> (Honesty Nakamura) (Jayma Goulund) <i>[Coach Rebecca O’Hare]</i>	XHS
3rd Final	Xavier High School	Chuuk High School	CHS

A total of 9 judges scored the debates — three per debate. The judges of Debate 1 were Jack Fritz, Kelly Keller, and Ken Uehara. The judges of Debate 2 were Sabino Asor, Floyd Corter, and Derensio Konman. The judges of the final debate were Charleston Bravo, Brian Dickson, and Johnny Meippen. Moderator of the debate proceedings was Chuuk Campus Instructor Alton Higashi. Approximately 90 persons, including Chuuk Campus students, were in the audience. φ

### **“GREEN AND CLEAN” BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT** by Alton Higashi

Keep it green! Keep it clean! That is the motto of our Chuuk Campus Beautification Project. The project, begun in March 2013, is headed by staff members — Ben Akkin, Kalvin Assito, Yosko Kim, Virginia Mamangon, Marcelly Mariano, Lolita Ragus, and Maika Tuala.

According to Marcelly, the beautification team has two primary goals:

- to help all of us keep the Chuuk Campus green and clean, and
- to promote environmental education and awareness among our Chuuk Campus students.

The team members recruited a number of students to join the effort. They collected different varieties of plants to decorate and beautify the

campus grounds. They may not be landscape experts, but their effort has begun to pay off. This summer they will begin planting and cultivating fruits, such as watermelon and cantaloupe.

In addition, there are more trash bins on the campus. We are expected to separate our trash before we throw it into the bins — for one thing, cans, and, also, styroform and plastic items. Ask the team members why there should be separation of trash — they will explain!

So, all of us, let’s do our share of the work. First, admire the new greenery growing around and smile. Second, separate our trash into different categories, and keep the campus looking good. Okay? Okay! φ