Chapter 3

The Civilian Military Workers of Guåhan

> Camp Roxas was no walk in the park when I arrived on New Year's Eve 1951. I was taken aback by the primitive conditions, living in crowded Quonset huts with no heat protection. And they could be very hot. There would be 20, 30 [Filipino] men to a Quonset with mosquito nets hanging for a stifling effect. We had community bathrooms, clean but public.
>
> —Donald Marshall, *Under the American Sun*

Donald Marshall was a white American who worked as the general manager and personnel director for Luzon Stevedoring from 1951 to 1955. For a time, he worked at Camp Roxas, the largest company camp for Filipino workers in Guåhan. Marshall's reminiscence is significant because it helps uncover the harsh conditions that these workers had to endure. The centering of their experiences exposes the various ways that US settler militarism functioned.

In this chapter, I argue that US settler militarism in Guåhan produced and depended on an exploitive hierarchical labor system that was predicated on race and nationality. As geographers Wesley Attewell and Adam Moore separately argue, the US government relied on private contractors to serve as the US military's "lifeline of empire"[1] as they provided "logistical support"[2] in the recruitment of Filipinos and white Americans to work as civilian laborers in the construction of bases throughout the island. These military

workers were integral to the infrastructure that connected Guåhan to private contractors in the Philippines and the continental United States. By the late 1940s, approximately 28,000 Filipinos (mostly men) and 7,000 white Americans had migrated to the island.[3] In contrast, the military and its contractors employed only 5,831 CHamorus even though they constituted nearly half of the island's population of 59,498 people in 1950.[4] Eventually, the recruitment of Filipino and white workers led to the massive influx of settlers who became synonymous with military employment. Thus, the racialization of these military laborers was integral to the creation, expansion, and maintenance of the US military's infrastructure that spanned the globe.[5]

The US military and its contractors justified their recruitment of Filipino and white American laborers through a narrative that they were instrumental to the postwar "reconstruction and rehabilitation" of Guåhan.[6] Additionally, the military and its contractors argued that CHamorus did not have the skills nor could they provide enough workers to complete the military's infrastructure projects. The military's rationale obscured the fact that Filipinos were paid the lowest wages and were the most exploitable laborers due to their status as "US colonials."[7] Besides recruiting workers, the US military and its contractors regulated the social and working lives of their employees. Military bases became the focal point for the systematic exploitation of Filipino workers that resulted in the segregation of company camps, unequal wages, and uneven working conditions.[8] Civilian labor and militarism in Guåhan was actually part of a larger Cold War legacy in the military's reliance on Asian labor that included the Philippines, South Korea, and South Vietnam.[9] In the case of Guåhan, this process was based on the triangulation of CHamorus, Filipinos, and white Americans.

I begin this chapter by focusing on the racialization of military labor and exposing the connections that linked Guåhan, the Philippines, and the United States. The story then shifts to examine the immigration, work, and social experiences of Filipino and white American laborers. Following that is an investigation of CHamoru and Filipino labor discontent as it relates to the proposed Guam Wage Bill of 1956. As this chapter demonstrates, the creation of Guåhan's military labor system was predicated on hierarchies of race, indigeneity, and nationality that produced issues such as access to employment, the creation of a stratified wage scale, an unequal immigration policy, and the formation of company camps that were reflective of Jim Crow practices from the US South. Ultimately, military base employment led to the largest

influx of settlers into Guåhan, which shifted the island's demographics in a way that remains today.

Searching for Civilian Military Workers

As was noted in chapter 2, the US military relied on the US Construction Battalion—commonly known as Seabees—to provide the bulk of the labor needed to build infrastructure used in the retaking of Japanese-occupied islands in the Pacific. These white American men constructed airstrips and roads in places such as Guåhan, Midway, Okinawa, Palau, the Philippines, Sa'ipan, and Tini'an.[10] In Guåhan, Seabees built the island's main highway, Marine Drive, as well as developing the airstrips at Tiyan and Orote Point in 1944.[11] At the conclusion of the war, the mass deployment of Seabees to Guåhan ended, which resulted in the US military needing to secure a new source of workers.

Military officials quickly dismissed the mass hiring of CHamoru laborers, whom they considered to be unproductive and inefficient workers. Specifically, naval officials believed that CHamorus were slow and "not willing to take initiative"[12] in the completion of work-related tasks and that they did not have the "background and the education necessary for training in the skilled trades."[13] The racializing of CHamoru laborers as unproductive, inefficient, and unskilled masked a historical legacy of US colonial-style education in Guåhan. Beginning in the early 1900s, the US military implemented an education system that stressed elementary English language, public health and sanitation, citizenship training, and vocational training in unskilled work.[14] This education was largely in preparation to teach CHamorus jobs that could primarily serve the US military. In addition, the majority of CHamorus in the prewar period were farmers and ranchers, which was a more self-subsistent way to survive. A smaller number of CHamorus had civilian military jobs or were employed with companies such as Commercial Pacific Cable and the Pan American Hotel. Therefore, most CHamorus were never given the opportunity to obtain the training necessary to be carpenters, electricians, engineers, mechanics, and other skilled workers. As for CHamoru women, statistics for their employment are scant. It appears that they were only hired as midwives, nurses, secretaries, and other office support staff positions, which also made them subservient to military officials.[15] Finally, most CHamorus were still struggling to survive and reunite

with family members who had been scattered throughout the island due to the US military's bombardment.

The military weighed the possibility of recruiting other Micronesians such as Carolinians, but they too were racialized in similar ways to CHamorus. Military officials argued that "[Micronesians] worked in groups rather than as individuals" and "looked lazy, unenterprising, improvident, and both unable and unwilling to work at regular, sustained labor."[16] The racialization of Carolinians was based on Western notions of work and time that were different from those of Native Pacific Islanders. Instead, military officials preferred to hire Carolinians and other Micronesians primarily as "houseboys, cooks, and laundresses" for individual units and officers.[17] The infantilizing of Micronesians through their hiring as house servants mirrored the experiences of CHamoru and Filipino men who worked as stewards in the US military and Mexican men who worked in service industries in the continental United States during the same time period.[18] Since military employers could not discipline Carolinians and CHamorus into a Western work pace, they turned to a group of workers they already had control over.

During the war, the US military utilized Japanese prisoners of war (POWs) to augment Seabee labor.[19] They repaired roads, worked as gardeners,[20] maintained camps, served as carpenters, and provided sanitation support.[21] Though there were only 1,250 Japanese POWs in Guåhan (in comparison to the several thousand Seabees), they constituted a source of cheap labor that the military sought to exploit.[22] They too were racialized as a workforce that was perceived to be in "excellent condition."[23] Moreover, military officials argued, "many of them prefer[red] to remain prisoners there [on Guam] and draw their $0.80 daily pay than be repatriated."[24] While it is highly questionable whether Japanese POWs preferred to remain in Guåhan, it is clear that this rationale concealed the capitalist cost-saving strategies through the racialization of Japanese soldiers as being reliable workers. Furthermore, Japanese POWs were already under the control of the US military, which meant they were forced into their roles as exploitable labor due to their incarceration. The war's end resulted in the repatriation of Japanese POWs, leaving the military to search for another group of workers to recruit.

By 1946 the US military contemplated supplanting Seabee and Japanese POW labor with Chinese workers. The island commander of Guam, L. D. Herrle, suggested that the military recruit Chinese workers, who were racialized as being "better workers than Filipinos, Polynesians," and other people from the Pacific region.[25] Herrle and others also believed that Chinese workers were more amenable to labor discipline and were less likely to mingle

with CHamorus.[26] The power to control workers was the common thread that linked Seabees, Japanese POWs, and the potential hiring of Chinese workers. CHamorus and other Micronesians were not vulnerable to deportation because they lived in Guåhan or resided on nearby islands across Micronesia. Thus, the military considered Chinese workers because they could be easily deported if they did not adhere to US military labor policy. Herrle's views reflect the earlier perceptions that Leland Stanford and other industrial capitalists had in their preference for hiring Chinese men to construct the transcontinental railroad.[27] The racialization that they were "docile, industrious, trustworthy, and reliable" mirrored the nineteenth-century discourse on Chinese laborers in the continental United States.[28] Herrle also claimed that CHamorus supported the temporary recruitment of Chinese workers so long as they were eventually deported.[29] However, it is unclear which specific "Guamanians" were consulted. Lastly, Herrle believed that the cultural differences between the Chinese workers and the CHamorus would deter these two groups from mingling, which was a common employment strategy that happened in other parts of Oceania, such as plantation labor in Hawai'i.[30] Finding workers who they believed would not threaten US settler militarism proved to be a difficult endeavor for military officials. However, as with the CHamorus and Carolinians before them, the mass recruitment of Chinese workers did not occur. This was partly due to the fact that the growth of pro-Communist sentiment in late 1940s China fostered political tensions between both nations. Furthermore, though the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was repealed in 1943, Chinese migration to the United States was limited under the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924.[31] Given the US military's preference for privately contracted construction companies in the Philippines and elsewhere, it eventually disregarded the recruitment of Chinese workers and instead hired Filipinos and white Americans as the primary sources of civilian military labor.

Infrastructure of US Empire

A close investigation of military records reveals that the recruitment of Filipino military workers to Guåhan was founded on a preexisting agreement between the Philippines and the United States made in 1947.[32] In this exchange of notes, the US government wanted to hire Filipino men to assist in the repatriation of the bodies of US soldiers who had died in World War II and to serve as mess hall stewards for the US military.[33] The Philippine

government viewed this agreement as an economic opportunity for its citizens and the Philippine state. Though the Philippines was a newly independent nation, it was still recovering from the economic and physical ravages of World War II.

After 1947 the primary recruitment of Filipino laborers to Guåhan shifted to the private corporations who were contracted to construct the majority of the infrastructure on the island. This pact was also significant because it established the wages and privileges these workers were supposed to receive, which some military contractors used as their standards. As contract workers, their compensation was suppose to include 15 centavos per hour, plus a 25 percent overseas pay differential, free laundry services, free medical and dental care, guaranteed transportation to and from point of hire, pay while in travel, compensation for service connected to injury or death, overtime pay, and holiday pay.[34] Military private contractors benefited the most economically from this agreement. For example, some contractors saved money by paying their workers in Philippine pesos instead of US dollars.[35] Moreover, the length of their employment was one year, renewable up to three years maximum. This limit on employment was intended to ensure that Filipinos could not apply for permanent residency, as individuals who lived in the United States (and by extension Guåhan) for five years could legally petition for naturalization via the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952.[36] However, companies did not always adhere to this agreement, which resulted in numerous cases of workers who did not receive all of their contractual privileges. One of the largest military contractors in Guåhan, the aforementioned Luzon Stevedoring (LUSTEVECO), played a vital role in the infrastructure that connected these and other labor matters between the Philippines and the United States.[37]

A close examination of LUSTEVECO exposes a historical legacy that connected it to US interests that date to the Spanish-American War of 1898.[38] Founded by US veterans of the Spanish-American War, LUSTEVECO became one of the leading cargo transportation companies in Southeast Asia.[39] After World War II, the company came under the ownership of Americans Edward M. Grimm and Charles Parsons, himself a World War II veteran. By 1947 LUSTEVECO was one of the largest military contractors in Guåhan.[40] The navy relied on LUSTEVECO to provide cargo transportation and construction work for naval projects throughout the island. Because it was based in the Philippines, the company's reliance on Filipino workers was already established, though a small number of white Americans—such as Donald Marshall—held supervisory and managerial positions. Moreover, LUSTEVECO depended

on labor unions in the Philippines, such as the Philippine Consolidated Labor Union (PCLU), to assist in recruiting Filipinos.[41] When the time came for LUSTEVECO to recruit workers for Guåhan, mobilizing a large labor pool was a relatively easy task given its preexisting infrastructure that connected the company to the PCLU and other unions. As historian Kevin Escudero argues, this "imperialist and militarist network" was instrumental in providing a source of laborers who could be easily and quickly recruited to Guåhan.[42]

Similar to LUSTEVECO, Brown-Pacific-Maxon (BPM) had a previous relationship with the US government. BPM was a joint venture that included Brown & Root, Pacific Ridge, and Maxon Construction. In Guåhan, BPM primarily received contracts from the US Air Force. Unlike LUSTEVECO, BPM's worker pool consisted of workers from both the Philippines and white Americans, with many of the latter coming from the southern United States. BPM's preference for white American southerners was most likely based on the fact that the lead company, Brown & Root, was located in Texas. Additionally, BPM's recruitment of workers was reflective of racial and class differences.

Hired primarily as skilled workers, white Americans labored before and during World War II for Brown & Root's federal projects, such as the constructing of Corpus Christi Naval Air Station in Texas (1940) and the development of 359 US naval ships (1941).[43] In contrast, BPM hired Filipinos to work mainly as unskilled labor. Thus, BPM's hiring preference differed from that of LUSTEVECO, which openly recruited skilled Filipino workers. These uneven hiring practices were significant in the establishment of a racialized labor system that was formed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and lasted until the 1980s.[44]

BPM's hiring practices also contributed to the racialization of military workers in Guåhan.[45] In 1954 Guam senator James T. Sablan shared his observations during a Guam congressional hearing. He argued, "The BPM construction company is a company somewhat owned or controlled by Southerners and they do not want to hire people other than Caucasians and the reason why they have Filipinos is because they give them a slave or low salary. Now as proof of that I don't think there is a single Negro in that unit."[46] White American Eugene Morgan came to Guåhan in the early 1950s as a civilian military worker. He recalled that there was a "heavy quota" for white workers from Texas and Oklahoma since Brown & Root was located in Texas.[47] Sablan's testimony and Morgan's observations expose BPM's reliance on white American and Filipino workers, with the latter receiving

lower pay. This discrepancy in hiring practices and pay contributed to and perpetuated a racialized labor system that would lead to tenuous relationships among workers. With their ties to the colonial Philippines, the US military, and the Jim Crow South, BPM and LUSTEVECO facilitated the largest in-migration of Filipino civilian workers to the island.

Coming to Guåhan

The first postwar wave of Filipinos arrived on Guåhan in 1947 as workers for LUSTEVECO. They came primarily from the province of Iloilo in the Visayas.[48] For many of these laborers (who were mostly men), immigrating to Guåhan provided them with sorely needed employment opportunities since the Philippines was in a state of economic and political instability due to the aftermath of World War II and rising tensions around the issues of labor organizing and communism.[49] By the late 1940s, BPM also had begun to recruit Filipino workers to Guåhan, primarily from the province of Pangasinan. Although it is unclear exactly as to why BPM recruited Filipinos, it can be hypothesized that LUSTEVECO had set the precedent of hiring Filipinos a few years before, an effort endorsed by the US government through its exchange of notes with the Republic of the Philippines. Moreover, Filipinos already had a history of working for the US military at US Naval Base Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base.[50] These preexisting connections were especially important since the US Navy had implemented a security clearance policy that required all people traveling to and from Guåhan to receive permission from the naval commander.[51] BPM was able to expedite the process of hiring Filipino workers through its recruiting station at Clark Air Force Base, located in Angeles City, Philippines.[52] According to former BPM labor recruiter Gorgonio Cabot:

> It [the recruitment of Filipinos] was well established already when I joined them. They already had plenty of publications. It was advertised, and we continued to advertise about qualified people who were willing to work in Guam. They write, write, write. They could only write, but they [labor applicants] could not come in because we were in Clark Air Force Base. They had to write a letter, addressed to me with the positions they were applying for. We give them a test. Laborers very easy, there's a fifty-pound bag there, carry it. But carpenters need to know how to read the measurer,

> and know how to cut wood and carry fifty-pound bag too. You had to have a clean bill of health because the Philippines was full of tuberculosis.[53]

Cabot's statement unveils that the US Air Force aided BPM's recruitment of Filipino workers by permitting the company to utilize Clark Air Force Base as its recruitment center. The air force's relationship with BPM is significant because it exposes how US settler militarism depended on private contractors on other islands throughout its empire, such as Guantánamo Bay. In Cuba, the military relied on its close ties to contractors to recruit local workers. This overlap blurred the relationship between government and private employers in which the US military engaged various island communities.[54] However, before any workers could come to Guåhan, they had to pass a number of strict medical requirements, which was similar to the practice the US government had Mexican workers endure under the Bracero Program.[55]

Before entering Guåhan, workers had to provide certification that they were free from "tuberculosis, chronic malaria, amoebic dysentery, venereal disease, and communicable or infectious diseases."[56] Each employee also had to provide documentation that they had been vaccinated against smallpox and received inoculations against typhoid fever and tetanus.[57] The few Chinese laborers who came to Guåhan via China were also subjected to a battery of health inspection requirements that included isolation for a period of fourteen days.[58] Other migrant workers from Hawai'i and the continental United States also had to pass medical requirements (such as being free of smallpox and venereal diseases), but they were not as rigorous as the health inspections endured by Filipinos.

American perceptions of Filipinos as weak and diseased were widespread in prewar Philippines.[59] In light of BPM's practices, the US military and its contractors still viewed Filipinos as a "diseased" people in the postwar era. Contrary to the belief that these medical tests were intended to protect all the inhabitants of the island, a separate military order required that all military personnel or their families that employed Native "servants" be advised to have them examined for diseases as well.[60] Thus, these hierarchical health requirements based on race and national origin were also implemented to protect the military and their dependents, while simultaneously racializing Filipinos as being the most "diseased" of all recruited civilian military workers.[61] Consequently, it was the labor of these Filipinos—US colonials of the United States—and white Americans that subsequently helped to expand the military's presence on the island.[62]

The Working Lives of Civilian Military Laborers

Filipino men participated in both skilled and manual labor. Examples of manual work included clearing overgrown brush, farming, and stevedoring at Naval Base Guam in the village of Sumai. Semi-skilled and skilled work included carpentry, construction, electrical work, painting, plumbing, road paving, and roofing.[63] LUSTEVECO also recruited Filipina workers for skilled labor in Guåhan.

Filipina workers served as nurses and medical assistants in the company camps and never totaled more than 1 percent of the labor force.[64] In some instances, contractors hired women to work as hospital workers rather than nurses.[65] This practice reveals that contractors were able to pay them lower wages as general hospital workers, while still benefiting from their formal training as certified nurses. In turn, these workers were exploited as "cheap labor," which was and still is a common occurrence for overseas Filipina laborers throughout the world.[66] Furthermore, companies such as LUSTEVECO only hired seven to eight hospital workers for Camp Roxas, which housed several thousand men.[67] Depending on how many workers needed medical attention, this imbalance in the patient-to-medical-worker ratio created a pressured work environment. BPM took a similar approach that mirrored a racial and gendered hierarchy that privileged white American men over all other workers, including white American women, which was then commonplace throughout the United States.[68] They hired, for example, a small number of white American women who held subordinate positions as assistant clerks, clerk typists, and secretaries.[69] BPM also preferred hiring white American men who served in managerial and skilled positions such as electricians, engineers, foremen, mechanics, and site supervisors.[70] Some of these men even had experience doing foreign contract work before coming to Guåhan.[71] By 1950, BPM's labor force comprised approximately one thousand white Americans and five thousand Filipinos.[72] In Guåhan, white American workers were privileged over CHamorus and Filipinos, which was most evident in the wages they were paid.

Military contractors used a hierarchical wage scale that paid white American workers more than CHamorus and Filipinos. Specifically, white American workers (classified as a nonlocal hire) received a "territorial post differential" (TPD) that gave them an additional 25 percent bonus on top of their base pay.[73] CHamorus (classified as local hires) were paid the second-highest wages (which were usually half the rate of a nonlocal hire), while Filipinos were paid the lowest wages (three-quarters of a local hire).[74] Though

some Filipinos were also supposed to receive a TPD, there were numerous cases in which they indicated that it was withheld or never issued at all.[75] While it is unclear how many people received TPD bonuses, Filipinos were usually still paid below the US minimum wage, which was $0.75 in 1950.[76] In response to these allegations, the US military simply claimed it was unaware of the low wage issue and that private contractors were responsible for paying workers accordingly.[77] Not surprisingly, the US military's complacency in the regulation and enforcement of workers' wages and other compensation underscored the notion that the militarization of Guåhan trumped the protection of workers' rights. This corrupt practice also allowed the US military and its contractors to reduce employment costs. In turn, they justified paying the lowest wages to Filipinos since they were categorized as "alien" workers who were "unskilled." Though CHamorus received lower wages than white Americans, they still received higher wages than Filipino nationals because they were US citizens. However, because CHamorus had to be paid more than Filipinos, fewer of them were hired, while Filipinos could be paid the least and were more susceptible to labor discipline since they could be deported. White Americans could also be deported, but their investment in working in Guåhan was dissimilar to that of Filipinos.[78] For Filipinos, working for the military and its contractors was more lucrative and represented economic mobility since the Philippines was still recovering from the ravages of World War II, whereas white Americans generally saw work in Guåhan as temporary and transitional.[79]

Working as a civilian military laborer sometimes resulted in injury or death. In January 1948, Filipino workers Felix Sarmago and Felicisimo Caperas were killed in an industrial accident while working for Marianas Stevedoring (MASDELCO), a subsidiary of LUSTEVECO.[80] Other Filipino laborers, such as Teodoro Gorospe, likewise encountered workplace accidents. In June 26, 1959, Gorospe and an unnamed CHamoru worker came into contact with a hot wire at a voltage substation on Andersen Air Force Base and died of electrocution.[81] While information on the number of deaths is not available, the number of injuries that workers sustained on the job was recorded periodically. During the summer of 1947, BPM averaged seventy-four worker injuries per month (for a three-month span), which amounts to 2.4 injuries per day.[82] The dangerous work environments in building construction, heavy machinery, and explosives made CHamorus, Filipinos, and white Americans all susceptible to workplace injuries and/or death. In addition to coping with these hazardous conditions, workplace injuries placed a financial burden upon Filipino laborers.

Filipino worker Antonio E. Lo was sent back to the Philippines for hospitalization due to his gastric ulcer. Lo claimed that his employing company, LUSTEVECO, had guaranteed to pay for his hospitalization yet never did.[83] In some instances, military contractors such as LUSTEVECO simply repatriated workers to the Philippines instead of granting them medical treatment in Guåhan. Thus, the risk of injury and/or death, coupled with their employers' unwillingness to provide medical care, caused many Filipinos to become outraged. Moreover, the US military was able to absolve itself from liability and obligation since these workers were hired directly by LUSTEVECO. However, working for the US military also resulted in medical issues that happened later in life.

Before coming to Guåhan, Filipino worker Larry Mabini was a carpenter for the Japanese Imperial Military during World War II. He was hired in 1959 to work for Vinnell Construction in Guåhan as a carpenter and worked at military sites throughout the island that included the Navy's Public Work Center and NAS Hagåtña. Larry's daughter, former Guam senator Dr. Sam Mabini, recalls, "I was always curious because when my father passed away he was very asthmatic at the end. During his later years after he retired he started having asthma. There were questions even after he passed away because he was a carpenter and he worked in asbestos environments. As a little girl, we would go to some of these naval station facilities and sometimes he would tell me not to go in there because there was asbestos."[84] Sam's memory of her father reveals that military laborers were subjected to working conditions that potentially impacted their long-term health. While it cannot be fully deduced what led to Larry Mabini developing asthma later in his life, there is scientific evidence that links asbestos exposure to respiratory issues that can occur years after exposure.[85]

Company Camp Life

While workplace conditions served as a source of tension, life in company camps was both a positive and negative focal point of workers' lives in Guåhan. The military's contractor system allowed construction corporations to set up company camps where they administered the social lives of their laborers. There were several company camps—including Camp Asan, Camp Edusa, Camp Marbo, and Camp Magsaysay—scattered throughout the island. However, the largest camps were LUSTEVECO's Camp Roxas (initially named Camp Carter) and BPM's Camp #1, Camp #2, and Camp Quezon.[86] Fili-

pino workers employed by LUSTEVECO lived in Camp Roxas, which was located near the present-day southern villages of Hågat and Sånta Rita. BPM housed its Filipino and white laborers in segregated company camps in the village of Mangilao, near the present-day University of Guam. Filipinos lived in Camp Quezon, while white Americans lived in Camp #1 and Camp #2. White American women also resided in BPM's camps but lived in separate quarters that were located away from the men. These companies established autonomous camps that had baseball fields, basketball courts, bowling alleys, chapels, churches, clothing stores, medical facilities, mess halls, movie theaters, and security patrols.[87] However, the social experiences in these camps were at times just as regimented as in the workplace. Thus, these company camps were sites of social control that worked in conjunction with Jim Crow racism, immigration policy, and labor discipline in the workplace.

The logic of white supremacy operated through Jim Crow racism that operated via racial segregation. For example, white American workers from BPM's company camp performed minstrel shows, which was advertised in the *Constructionaire,* a newsletter that was circulated in BPM's camps:

> Rastus, why fouh your be so happy? Well Rufus, Monday night we's all gwana have a lot ob fun wid dem folks out front. Yeah, dat's all true an' deys gwana enjoy it too, I think. Dat is if dey goes along wid our stuff an' takes it in de proper spirit. Yeah, Rufus, an' if dey don't, git ready to duck 'cause deys no reefer ship in an' dey'll be throwin' coconuts. Come on now, make wid de big smile fouh all de folks out dere, 'cause dis aint no good sample ob our show di'logue.[88]

Interestingly, this show was also performed in Camp Quezon, which suggests that some white Americans were willing to incorporate Filipinos into their anti-Black sentiment. For white Americans and Filipinos, recreational activities were one of the few social opportunities outside of work. However, for employers, these activities veiled their promotion of welfare capitalism that attempted to discipline all of the workers living in company camps.

BPM, LUSTEVECO, and other contractors utilized welfare capital activities to disguise their objective of reducing worker discontent and the possibility of labor protest.[89] Camp Roxas and BPM's camps had baseball, basketball, bowling, and volleyball teams.[90] For example, the MASDELCO Warriors was a basketball team that represented Camp Roxas.[91] These sports teams not only competed within camps but also played against other company camp teams, CHamoru village teams, and against US military teams, thereby

encouraging workers to think of themselves as representatives of their companies. These sports teams also played an integral role in generating camaraderie, conflict, and rivalry that included the women and children who were allowed to attend these events. Moreover, sports teams commonly nominated Filipina nurses who worked in the same camp to symbolically serve as a "team muse" who attended the games to inspire their performance. This act was also a reflection of the gender imbalance among Filipino laborers and the relegation of women as passive participants. For Filipino and white American men, sports became one of the activities that allowed them to engage in homosocial relations and display their masculinity in front of large crowds of fans. These expressions of masculinity also represented racial and national pride, especially during interracial competitions. For the companies, they believed these activities kept workers in good physical condition and could prevent laborers from drinking, fighting, and gambling.[92] By doing so, companies wanted to ensure that their workforce was efficient, healthy, and disciplined.

Filipinos and white Americans participated in numerous racially segregated social activities such as beach parties, bingo game nights, church services, dances, and holiday parades.[93] While workers did initiate these social activities, the reality was that their employers allowed them to participate in these gatherings while providing them the facilities to hold these events.[94] For example, contractors required all of their workers to obtain company police clearances if they wanted to participate in recreational activities and social gatherings outside of their respective camps.[95] One of the most common activities was to have beach parties. As shown in figure 3.1, one beach became synonymous with Filipino workers, who nicknamed it Rizal Beach in honor of the Filipino nationalist Jose Rizal. Rizal Beach was reserved for Filipino workers from Camp Roxas as a way to segregate them from a nearby beach that was designated for US military personnel. While the naming of the beach after Jose Rizal was an attempt to claim place and nationality, it also perpetuated a settler colonial logic of remaking Indigenous lands since the beach is the ancestral property of the Pangelinan-Bordallo families. Places like Rizal Beach were supposed to be sources of comfort, even though the companies viewed these sites and activities as profit-driven measures.

Originally from Iloilo, Visayas, in the Philippines, former LUSTEVECO worker Jose Savares came to Guåhan in 1952 as a timekeeper. He arrived in Guåhan via a cargo ship from the Philippines that took eight days. Savares recollected, "I got sick and I was very young. I missed my mom and cried. Some of the guys at the camp [Roxas] already knew us and they took care

Figure 3.1. Rizal Beach, 1950s. Source: Photograph courtesy of Humanities Guåhan (formerly known as Guam Humanities Council), *A Journey Home: Camp Roxas and Filipino American History in Guam*, an exhibition funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, We The People Initiative.

of us. . . . The older guys helped take care of me. One of the older guys was my neighbor back in the Philippines. He would wake me and have coffee with me."[96] For Jose and other Filipino workers, homosocial relationships were integral in the acclimation to living in Guåhan. For many Filipinos, finding people who were from their hometowns was easy since LUSTEVECO, BPM, and other military contractors recruited from the same province or regions in the Philippines. Filipino workers also served as unofficial recruiters who encouraged their family and friends to apply for jobs to work in Guåhan. However, even homosocial support and welfare capitalism was not enough to mitigate the hardships of living in company camps.

Growing Discontent with Company Camp Life

In the early 1950s, both Filipino and white American workers commonly complained about the dilapidated conditions of company camps. Naval medical officer R. W. Jones reported on the unsanitary plight of the Filipino

quarters at Camp Asan: "The cleanliness and sanitary condition of sleeping quarters is very unsatisfactory. A general field day is badly needed. Bunks need clean linen and the loose gear that is adrift should be stowed. Clothes are being dried in sleeping quarter."[97] These conditions were not isolated occurrences. As seen in figure 3.2, Filipino laborers also complained about the conditions of the Quonset huts that they lived in at Camp Roxas.[98] Contractors housed their employees in Quonset huts because they were cheap to build and could accommodate eight to twelve people, depending on the length of the buildings. As shown in figure 3.3, these structures usually had an exterior made of sheet metal and wood, which were cheaper materials than concrete. Thus, the hot and humid weather in Guåhan heightened the temperature inside these structures. L. Eugene Wolfe, an officer with the US Industrial Relations, recorded his investigation of Quonset huts at Camp Piti. As he observed, "Frequent rains, combined with gusty winds, tend to make these relatively unprotected types of building virtually uninhabitable. These

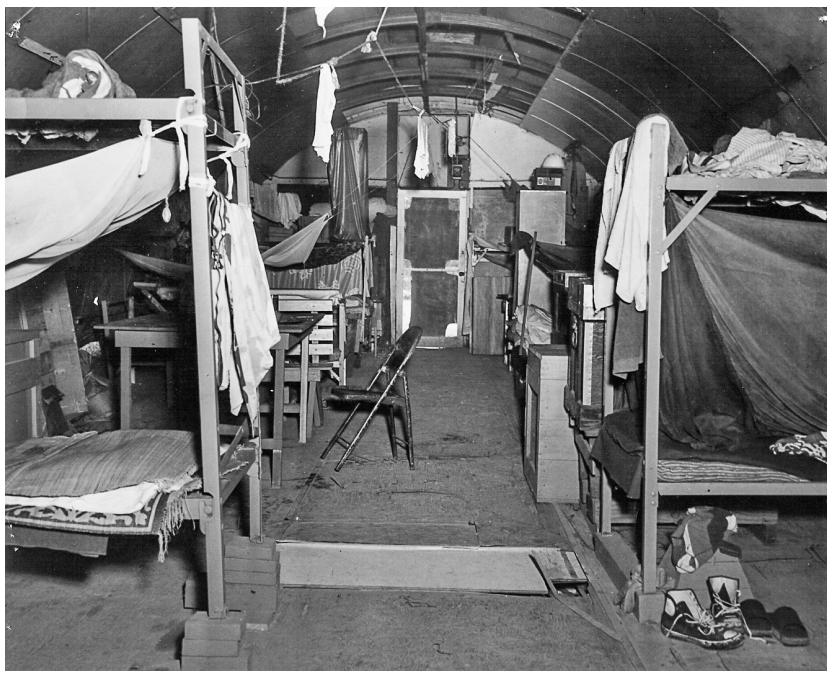

Figure 3.2. Inside a Quonset hut at Camp Roxas, 1950s. Source: Photograph courtesy of Humanities Guåhan, *A Journey Home: Camp Roxas and Filipino American History in Guam*, an exhibition funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, We The People Initiative.

Figure 3.3. Damaged Quonset hut at Camp Roxas, 1950s. Source: Photograph courtesy of Humanities Guåhan, *A Journey Home: Camp Roxas and Filipino American History in Guam*, an exhibition funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, We The People Initiative.

structures are partially open at either end and except for a four foot strip on both sides under the eaves everything in them is subject to not only the high humidity of the island but the actual wetting from blown rain during the rainy season."[99]

Another point of contention was the poor quality of food available to workers. In August 1949 civilian worker Dorothea Minor Baker wrote a letter to C. A. Pownall, the governor of Guam, describing the inadequate mess hall conditions at Camp Asan. She claimed, "Many of us, after spending several minutes in line, turn dejectedly away from the heavy, colorless, unappetizing food and work eight hours without nourishment. There are those who have lost from ten to thirty pounds in weight; those who eat and those who don't because in either instance, the food has no value."[100]

Baker's comments illustrate that women also deplored some of the conditions they had to live in. Even the food served to white American workers was unappealing enough to dissuade them from eating breakfast in the

company camps. These laborers most likely had to rely on restaurants and grocery stores outside of the camps for some of their meals. However, the most telling part of Baker's letter was her indirect critique of the regimented schedule, which was a common feature of camp life.

As LUSTEVECO worker Consul Umayan stated, "There is a tight curfew at all camps, with lights out at eleven P.M. and a bed check at one A.M." He continued, "There is too much discipline. . . . If the men are not there when a bed check is made they get one disciplinary check against them. Four such points are cause for dismissal. That's not good for morale."[101] This strictly enforced work schedule, combined with poor housing and unappetizing food options, forced Umayan to leave Guåhan. Other workers such as white American electrician Louie Levine also resigned their positions and returned to the United States due to "unsatisfactory living conditions."[102] Levine's and Umayan's actions show that some workers did not accept their living conditions and opted to find other jobs or return home rather than continuing to work for their contractors and living in company camps. These frustrations over work and life in camps sometimes resulted in conflict.

The potential for violence concerned all camp residents. On March 14, 1949, George Anderson, a resident at Camp Asan, was awakened at 1:00 a.m. He recalled:

> My wife awakened me with the statement that someone had been peering through the window. Upon investigating, I noticed an individual walking rapidly away from the building at an estimated 100 feet away. Two other couples had also been aroused by the prowler, but were unable to apprehend him. I had just begun to drowse when I was again awakened approximately one hour later by footsteps outside my window. Arising in bed, I noticed through the ventilating louvers the figure of a man creeping below the window level. I investigated and found him peering through the window of the adjoining room. . . . I went to the front door of the quarters and noticed a dark complexioned individual walking rapidly about 30 feet away.[103]

Though Anderson was unable to apprehend this individual, his statement reveals the potential danger in company camps. Along these lines, Filipino and white American men armed themselves with various weapons, which the military perceived differently depending on the racial group.

White American workers often owned firearms while living in Guåhan. As naval officer A. J. Carrillo claimed, "It is common knowledge that practically everyone, in most of the housing areas, and [in] particular Base 18[,]

have in their possession firearms[;] this is apparent as, when leaving the island for the states they are left behind, in drawers, and under beds. They are all aware however of the existing orders prohibiting the possession of [guns], but [they] will not come forward and use the proper channels to keep them."[104] Carrillo's report indicated that military and company camp officials did not police white American workers for their possession of firearms without proper registration and did little to resolve this issue. Essentially, the military condoned the white American ownership of weapons. In contrast, military officials knew that Filipino workers at Camp Roxas also owned firearms and had a punitive response. In February 1950, US military officials sent a detachment of 484 marines and sailors to search Camp Roxas for firearms and other weapons. According to the *Guam News*, "1,500 out of the 3,000 Filipino residents of Roxas had a weapon of some sort taken away."[105] The newspaper article continued, "Some of the weapons [included] were nine pistols, seven rifles, blackjacks, brass knuckles, pneumatic drills filed to a sharp point, thousands of knives of all descriptions, scissors, cutlasses, razors, hatchets, files, machetes, butcher cleavers, bayonets, dynamite, air and pistol rifles, and many others."[106] The newspaper makes no observation that many of the items confiscated were tools that construction workers commonly used—knives, razors, hatchets, files, and machetes. This racialization of Filipinos as potential criminals was pervasive in other parts of Oceania. For example, Filipinos in pre–World War II Hawai'i were perceived as violent, emotionally volatile, and having a propensity for criminality.[107]

Labor Activism and the Philippine Consulate

The Cold War was an era of anti-Communist hysteria in the United States that made labor activism synonymous with Communist Party activity. As a result, very few attempts were made to organize labor unions in Guåhan during the 1940s and 1950s.

Deportation was the primary means by which the US military and its contractors dealt with Filipino and white American workers who challenged labor discipline. In May 1955, 227 Filipino workers of LUSTEVECO were deported to the Philippines because they refused to sign individual employment contracts. These workers had come to Guåhan on a collective contract between LUSTEVECO and the PCLU, the union that represented them.[108] Because the PCLU had been suspended (due to reasons unknown), the US Navy required these workers to sign new individual contracts. The laborers

feared that these new contracts would eliminate the overseas bonus that LUSTEVECO had promised them. Additionally, the US military had a stringent policy that required all contractors to deport Filipino laborers before "the third anniversary of their arrival on Guam" and if they attempted to change their nationality through naturalization or intermarriage with CHamorus.[109] This policy was in response to the passing of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952, which removed all racial restrictions to naturalization and made foreign-born Asians eligible for US citizenship.[110] In some instances, contractors overlooked the maximum time limit and continued to employ Filipino workers regardless of the military labor policy. Their investment in transgressing military policy benefited them since recruiting, processing, and training new workers was time consuming and costly. As a result, some Filipino laborers were able to permanently settle in Guåhan through intermarriage with CHamorus or through naturalization. Moreover, the military had disguised its repatriation policy by claiming it protected the employment rights of CHamorus, but in reality it racialized Filipino workers, some of whom challenged military and contractor policies as Communists and threats to US national security. Filipinos and white Americans could be removed from Guåhan at any time, which made labor activism and unionization difficult for fear of being transported off-island. In response, the Republic of the Philippines ordered investigations regarding the experiences and treatment of Filipino workers in Guåhan.

The Philippine government launched at least two inquiries amid growing concerns that Filipino workers were being mistreated. In July 1952 the US deputy chief of naval operations in Guam sent a memo to US military officials and their contractors informing them that Philippine government officials had visited the island in December 1951. The memo stated, "As a result of these charges, which basically were politically inspired[,] an investigation committee of high Philippine government officials was sent to Guam."[111] However, this probe did not find any information that the US military and its contractors had exploited Filipino workers. In 1954 the Philippine government initiated another investigation and sent congressional representatives Justino Benito, Angel Castano, Rodelpho Ganzon, Roseller Lim, and stenographer Anselma B. Domondon to Guåhan.[112] These officials sought to ascertain if Filipino workers were being paid lower wages than other laborers on the island.[113] Though the investigation was inconclusive, it led to a growing suspicion that the US military and its contractors were in fact exploiting Filipino workers and that the Philippine government was invested in the protection of its citizens' wages.

In 1952 the Republic of the Philippines established a consulate in Guåhan, which was done in cooperation with the US government. According to Bayani Mangibin, a former Philippine consulate general to Guåhan, "One of the reasons we established a consulate here [was that] it was requested because there was no territorial government so the US was running everything; they requested the Philippine government to establish this consulate office in the early 1940s."[114] For the Philippine government, the consulate functioned to support Filipino workers. For the US government, the establishment of a consulate helped them manage the Filipino community in Guåhan. However, one of the consulate's most important objectives was to promote Filipino worker productivity.[115] Similar to other Asian nations, the Philippine government wanted to ensure that Filipino workers represented their country positively by serving as dependable laborers. Consulate officials also helped families in the Philippines locate Filipino workers in Guåhan who had "gone missing."[116] The consulate's role in supporting workers had expanded to the point that Filipino laborers made requests such as asking consulate officials to pay for their court fines, loan them money, help them raise funds to pay personal debts, and advocate for them to receive better positions.[117] While it is unknown if consul officials actually interceded in all of these cases, the consulate was invested in the protection of Filipino workers' rights.

The Philippine consulate in Guåhan also addressed various concerns such as the nonpayment of wages, excessive working hours, overtime work without corresponding pay, inadequate living quarters and food, unsanitary conditions of toilet and bath facilities, the threat of deportation, and intraracial violence. However, it is important to note that the Republic of the Philippines might have had additional motives in supporting their workers, such as the safeguarding of their remittances to the Philippines. These remittances served as an important source of revenue that helped stimulate the Philippine economy, which was later institutionalized with the establishment of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) in 1982.[118] Labor strife and issues of camp life culminated with the proposal of the Guam Wage Bill in 1956.

Guam Wage Bill of 1956

Filipino frustrations over work place safety, wages, and worker privileges reached a boiling point that resulted in the Guam Wage Bill of 1956. Proposed

in the US Congress, the bill attempted to make Guåhan exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938. This act was an important piece of legislation that guaranteed a minimum wage, provided overtime pay, set a maximum hour workweek, and prohibited the employment of minors. BPM, LUSTEVECO, the US State Department, the US Department of Defense, and the US Department of Interior were the largest supporters of the proposed bill to circumvent workers' rights as guaranteed by the FLSA. As an unidentified US naval official stated, "The Defense Department is interested mainly in stretching the defense dollar as far as it can go."[119] For the US government and its military contractors, the passing of the Guam Wage Bill would have allowed them to reduce their payroll expenses while still benefiting from the labor of CHamoru and Filipino workers. The bill called for exemptions similar to those that private corporations and the US government supported in other US territories, such as American Sāmoa, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. In the 1940s, for example, private companies were able to obtain FLSA exemptions in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, and in 1956 the Van Camp Seafood Company was allowed an exemption in American Sāmoa to maximize tuna cannery profits. As historian JoAnna Poblete writes, this capitalist strategy to suppress the wages of laborers connected Indigenous people and Asian immigrants living in US territories to "the same imperial legacy."[120] However, this attempt to reduce worker rights and wages in Guåhan met fierce resistance from various governments and labor organizations that spanned the world.

The proposed Guam Wage Bill spurred one of the largest transnational labor movements in the Oceania, connecting opponents from Asia, Europe, the Pacific, and the United States.[121] This coalition was not a coordinated effort among CHamorus, Filipinos, and others on the island to halt the militarization of Guåhan; instead, CHamorus and Filipinos had parallel movements, and each used their own set of strategies to oppose the bill. Their shared objective was to protect their wages and labor rights. For example, in March 1956 the Guam legislature sent CHamoru representative Antonio B. Won Pat to testify at a US Congressional subcommittee in opposition to the proposed bill.[122] Won Pat testified that the proposed bill would "have an extremely disruptive effect on the economy of Guam. More than that, we feel that it would affect the morale by removing from the people of Guam the privileges of a statute to which its benefits have already been extended and by threatening a pattern by which benefits of other statutes may be weakened or removed."[123] For CHamorus such as Won Pat, the Guam Wage Bill represented the loss of both labor and political rights, which they had just

obtained through the passage of the Organic Act. For CHamorus, it was another stark example of how US citizenship did not guarantee inclusion or equality. Facing similar circumstances, Filipinos in Guåhan and back in the Philippines also challenged the US government.[124]

Republic of the Philippines ambassador Carlos P. Romulo opposed the proposal through diplomatic notes. He stated, "All Asia is watching the American attitude on Filipinos in these islands and if the wage scale would be discriminatory and contrary to the democratic principles enunciated by the United States."[125] Romulo's statement was strategic because it reminded the US government that Cold War politics and alliances were at stake since nations throughout the world were keeping track of how the United States handled political and economic issues in its territorial possessions. Furthermore, the Philippine government threatened the US government that it would have fifteen thousand Filipino laborers return home if the proposed bill was passed.[126] Though the Guåhan wage provision generated CHamoru and Filipino discontent with the US government, their efforts were—as noted above—not unified. Some CHamoru politicians believed that their people were being overlooked for jobs due to the significant number of Filipino workers in Guåhan.[127] Others contended that the US military and its contractors preferred to hire Filipinos because they accepted "coolie pay."[128] These CHamoru politicians recognized the capitalist strategies that were being used to marginalize the employment of their community. This is likely one of several factors that explain why a labor movement between CHamorus and Filipinos did not materialize. Nevertheless, CHamorus and Filipinos were united in their support to defeat the bill since it threatened the economic livelihood of their people; this, despite the fact that access to military civilian jobs served as a source of conflict between their communities and in the militarization of the island.

While CHamorus argued their US citizenship entitled them to political rights, Filipinos used their own tactics to oppose the bill. The Philippine Trade Unions Council (PTUC) was one of the most outspoken critics of the Guam Wage Bill.[129] PTUC's strategy was to generate support from other labor organizations such as the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). In February 1956, PTUC representative Jose Hernandez wrote a letter to AFL-CIO president George Meany urging him to oppose the Guam Wage Bill.[130] The AFL-CIO agreed to support Filipino workers in Guåhan and in other US territories that faced proposed FLSA exemptions.[131] Furthermore, the Philippine government and the PTUC ramped up their efforts by seeking support from other international labor

organizations, such as the Asia and Pacific Regional Organization (APRO) of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).[132] Leaders from the ICFTU pledged to "present formal papers of protest and petition the [US] department to take the cudgels for these brother workers."[133] In addition to the ICFTU, the International Labor Organization (ILO) also agreed to oppose the Guam Wage Bill.[134] The ILO held an annual conference, granting representatives from the Philippines an opportunity to voice their concerns. Therefore, the ILO was instrumental in providing the space and audience to inform other labor organizations throughout the world of the US government's attempt to violate the rights of the workers in Guåhan and in other US territories.

Mounting concerns over the spread of communism and the perception of the United States' prominence as the world's democratic leader also led to the defeat of the Guam Wage Bill. AFL-CIO legislative representative Walter J. Mason testified before a US congressional subcommittee that "For the congress at this critical juncture in world affairs to enact legislation which would institute substandard wages in an underdeveloped American possession would simply feed grist to the mills of the communist propaganda machine." Mason continued, "Our relationship with the peoples in underdeveloped areas which are under U.S. administration must be exemplary and beyond criticism. It might thereby jeopardize the success of an important phase of our nation's foreign policy."[135] His comments reveal that the AFL-CIO supported the workers in Guåhan because its leadership believed the passing of the Guam Wage Bill would foster Communist thought on the island and in other US territories. The AFL-CIO also believed that the expansion of democracy and workers' rights was interlinked with US foreign policy.[136]

Politicians in the Philippines also went on record in defiance of the bill and the discrimination embedded in it. As Philippine congressman Serafin Salvador asserted, "There is an overwhelming sentiment for an overhaul of our attitude towards America. We should look more to our Southeast Asian neighbors. This atmosphere, that is termed by [the] American press as anti-American[,] is generated by the discriminatory attitudes of the United States to the Philippines."[137] Other Philippine officials also urged their government to reexamine its relationships with other Southeast Asian countries rather than focus on ties to the United States. This would deal an enormous blow to the US government's reputation, since promoting American democracy and containing communism was crucial to the federal government's foreign policy.

The advocacy of government officials and labor representatives from Guåhan, the Philippines, and the continental United States resulted in the defeat of the Guam Wage Bill in the summer of 1956. However, this victory for Filipino labor would serve to heighten the US government's suspicion of laborers from the Philippines being Communist labor organizers.

As discussed in this chapter, the justification for the recruitment of Filipino laborers and the hierarchical labor system it produced was an important component to US setter militarism in Guåhan. The narrative that these workers "rehabilitated and reconstructed" the island concealed how the recruitment and control of these workers was integral to the military's infrastructure. To achieve their results, the US military and its contractors produced and depended on a hierarchical labor system that was predicated on racial and national differences that resulted in the segregation of company camps, unequal wages, and uneven working conditions. The apex of these matters culminated with the Guam Wage Bill, which, if passed, would have allowed the US government and its military contractors to reduce their payroll expenses while still benefiting from employing CHamoru and Filipino workers. This victory for the military and its contractors would have permitted them to maintain their control over the material and social conditions of their workers, while simultaneously making military expansion more profitable. Moreover, the military's willingness to support corporate-sponsored FLSA exemptions in Guåhan and other US territories made the imperial relationships between business and government more apparent. In response to the potential worsening of social conditions on the island, CHamorus and Filipinos engaged in an uncoordinated, top-down movement against US military interests and their contractors during a time of intense anti-Communist sentiment. Although these movements did not result in the building of a large-scale multinational collation of CHamorus and Filipinos, they did symbolize that the people of Guåhan were willing to oppose the US military.

After the defeat of the Guam Wage Bill, Filipinos continued to serve as military civilian workers. White Americans began to return to the continental United States, though a small number of white American male workers stayed and married CHamoru women. Furthermore, the multinational labor movement that had formed to oppose the bill no longer existed after 1957. (While the factors for its disappearance are unknown, it is most likely due to the fact that the leaders of the movement no longer maintained the

coalitions since they achieved their respective objectives.) However, the working-class victory for CHamorus and Filipinos produced some unintended consequences that perpetuated the racializing of these communities within the backdrop of American fears of communism. Camp Roxas was the last company camp to close, in 1972, which resulted in the final dispersal of Filipino laborers. These workers went back home, settled in Guåhan, or moved to the continental United States. For the men who settled in Guåhan, they either married into CHamoru families or became naturalized US citizens who sponsored the immigration of their family members from the Philippines to Guåhan.