

*“People in the United States would not tolerate something like this in their own backyard right now- or any time”*

-Jack Niedenthal

(“This Concrete Dome Holds A Leaking Toxic Timebomb | Foreign Correspondent”  
15:06–15:13)

The legacy of the United States has always been about ‘freedom’ and ‘individuality’, but for the countries it invades, those two ideals are nowhere to be found. The government of the United States has long held selfish ideologies and have inflicted much pain and suffering in communities in the Pacific on the basis of ‘freedom’ from World War II and other wars which would proceed on a nuclear standpoint.

The United States nuclear testing did not only affect those in the Marshall Islands, but also those of its own country, such as those involved in the cleanup of the Enewetak Atoll ‘dome’. For those affected by the nuclear testing, compensation has been scarce. It is evident that the United States government cares more for capital than the people the country vows to “establish justice, insure domestic tranquility,” and further, “promote the general welfare” of (“U.S. Senate: Constitution of the United States”).

The United States of America should not only acknowledge the damage it has done by performing these nuclear tests, regardless of time period, but also compensate affected communities. In addition, test sites should be efficiently decontaminated with workers who will knowingly volunteer and be properly paid, trained, and equipped.

Before watching the video from ABC News In-depth, I had never really thought about the Marshall Islands as a place inhabited by people, and rather only considered it as a historical place of the past. As sad as it is, it took me having to see the children going to schools and people driving cars to recognize that this is a place just like where I live, and as a sovereign country, they should not have to singlehandedly deal with destruction not dealt on their own volition. Just as Jack Niedenthal says, the American people would not tolerate this issue, so why should the people of the Marshall Islands have to?

I wanted to propose the question: Why do you think there is so little taught about Pacific islands in American history classes besides when describing war and colonization?

Works Cited:

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