**Film Notes on “The Insular Empire: America in the Mariana Islands” (2009) Oct 2, 2018**

1) Where are the Mariana Islands?

2) How did Saipan and the Northern Mariana Islands enter into a colonial relationship with the United States during World War II?

3) How did Guam enter into a colonial relationship with the United States? And what happened there during World War II?

4) How does the experience of Carlos Taitano (former Speaker of the Guam legislature) show how the U.S. governed these islands after World War II?

5) Describe Guam’s ancient history and early European contact.

6) For the Marianas, what were the results of the War of 1898?

7) What were the status of these islands after the Supreme Court ruling in the 1901 Insular Cases?

8) What happened on Guam in 1949-1950?

9) How do the experiences of Hope Cristobal (Museum Director and former Guam Senator) show what the Marianas were like during the early Cold War, as a UN Trust Territory, from 1951-1962?

10) How do the experiences of Lino Olopai (retired police officer and farmer from Saipan) and Pete Tenorio (U.S. Resident Representative from the Northern Marianas) illustrate the U.S. presence on Saipan in the 1950s?

11) Since 1962, which U.S. agency has overseen Guam?

12) What kind of development took place on Saipan in the 1960s? How did Lino Olopai protest and what happened when he did?

13) How do Carlos and Hope’s experiences in the 1960s show the evolving American relationship to Guam?

14) How did Pete Tenorio leverage Saipan’s Trust Territory status to achieve U.S. Commonwealth status (CNMI) ? Was it unanimously welcomed?

15) What is “the Covenant” and under which U.S. president was it signed?

16) What have been some of the consequences or sources of controversy with the Covenant?

For example—

* Land rights
* Health care access
* Language
* Cultural traditions
* Local politics
* Economic development
* US citizenship rights & military service
* Effects since 9/11

17) For what purpose has Hope Cristobal petitioned the UN year after year?

18) How does Pete’s two terms as Resident Rep for the Northern Marianas show the US relationship to CNMI?

19) What does “Liberation Day” celebrate or what does it mean for the participants?

20) In the Insular Cases at the start of the 20th century, the Supreme Court ruled that “the constitution does not follow the flag.” As with Puerto Rico, commonwealth status grants people of the Northern Mariana Islands US citizenship but not all of the associated rights, such as the right to vote for president/commander in chief. In Guam, about 1/3 of the island is owned by the U.S. military to spport about 13,000 members of the military and their families. There is also a permanent missile defense installation there due to the nuclear threat from North Korea.

After viewing this film what are your thoughts on this situation?

**Some Legal Notes**

US Territories can be “incorporated” or “unincorporated” and have either “organized” or “unorganized” governments. All of the people in these territories have US citizenship, except American Samoa.

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|  | **Incorporated** | **Unincorporated** |
| **Organized (by passage of an “Organic Act”)** | Now, none. But 31 territories admitted as states had this status at one time between 1789-1959 | Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands |
| **Unorganized** | Palmyra Atoll (attached to Hawaii), but has no permanent inhabitants | American Samoa – the only one in this category with permanent inhabitants. Organic Act was defeated in 1949; Samoa is self-governing since 1967. Its people are US nationals but NOT citizens. Nonetheless it is the #1 military recruiting station for the US armed forces. Wake + Midway Islands (now wildlife refuges), Johnson Atoll and various uninhabited Pacific reefs/islands. Also 3 Caribbean islands either uninhabited or with a naval base on them. |

Although residents of territories and commonwealths cannot vote for president (only residents of states may do so), they do participate in the presidential primary voting and they send delegates to the Republican and Democratic conventions to help select the party’s nominee. Delegates to the House of Representatives (with a voice but no vote) are sent from Washington D.C., the US Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Since 2009, US immigration rules are in effect in each of these territories and commonwealths, although the CNMI has a transitional period that has been extended to December 31, 2019.

The film mentions an anticipated 2011 vote about Article 12 Land Alienation Clause, which restricted land ownership to those of Northern Marianas descent. The vote was cancelled, keeping Article 12 in place.