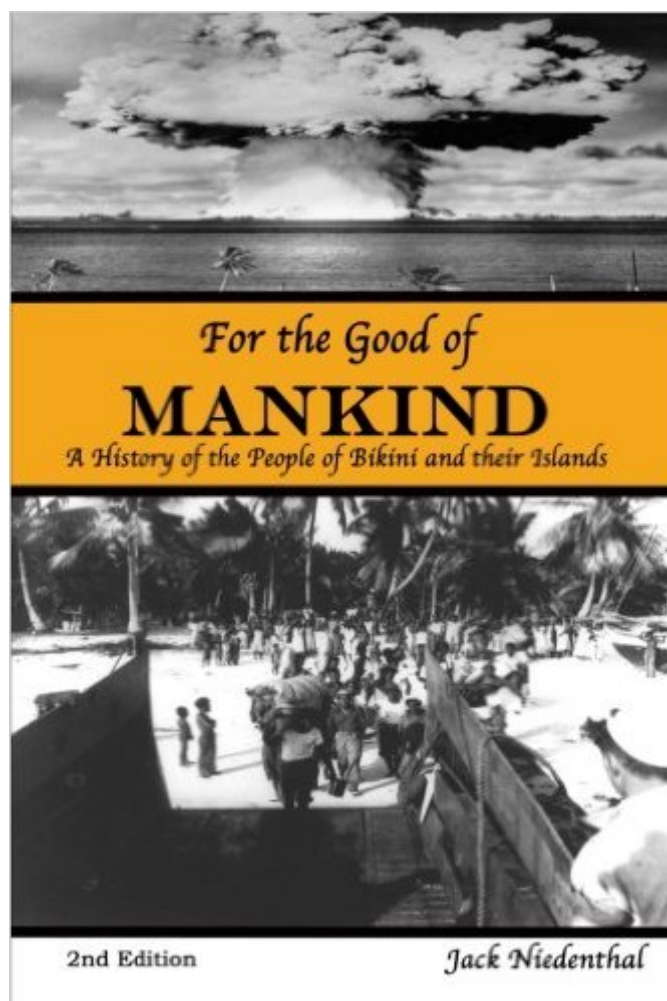


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For The Good Of Mankind: A History Of The People Of Bikini And Their Islands (Second Edition)



Synopsis

In this, the second edition of FOR THE GOOD OF MANKIND, new interviews have been added along with a Foreword by anthropologist Dr. Leonard Mason. By using firsthand accounts by the people of Bikini describing their half-century of nuclear exodus, this important book journeys through the Marshallese and Bikinian cultures from ancient to modern times. I thoroughly enjoyed the book, particularly reading the history of Bikini in the words of the people. The book assures that these traditional stories will be available for others to read, but perhaps most importantly, for younger generations of islanders.

- -Allen P. Stayman U.S. Compact of Free Association Negotiator 1999-2001. "FOR THE GOOD OF MANKIND is a compelling account of the troubled history of the people of Bikini Atoll. Niedenthal's skillful use of oral history enables the Bikinians to tell much of their own story, and his personal reflections about that history and his own involvement with the community enrich the account. A welcome and useful contribution to Pacific Islands studies."
- -Robert C. Kiste, Director Center for Pacific Islands Studies University of Hawai'i "Although Niedenthal peppers the book with his own insights and commentary, it is the words of Bikini elders that tell their story of how 23 American nuclear tests disrupted their lives beginning in 1946."
- Pacific Islands Magazine, March 2002 "For the Good of Mankind is a remarkably unique book..."
- International Monitor Institute, May 2002 "Jack Niedenthal's work is a labor of love..."
- The Contemporary Pacific magazine, Fall 2003 "[For the Good of Mankind] is probably the most complete history of Bikini Island, and will continue to be a reference touchstone for future studies of the Marshall Islands and even the south Pacific...The cultural observations are superb."
- Nick Wreden, Peace Corp Writers Magazine, January 2004

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is history written from the view of the people. The book had me crying at times, at times laughing, at times it had me very angry: The story of the people of Bikini is that kind of tale. I will just give this warning: this book will not make you proud to be an American, we really messed things up out there.

This book was an eye opener. It makes you wonder why this event that happened so many years ago in the middle of the Pacific has been buried for so long. This is not a cut and dry history, this book is a very readable journey through a culture that is unique. The author lets us know who he is, so it enables the reader to understand the person who is doing the interviews. That was a nice and unexpected touch. I found the book to be thought provoking and would recommend it to anyone who has an interest in studying the history of the Pacific.

I found my teenaged daughter reading this book one day, so when she was finished I picked it up...This is a story so worth reading. The author's life at first seemed hopelessly entangled with his subject's to a point that I thought the book would eventually read like a one-sided diatribe. I was very, very pleased with how he presented the Bikinian's story, however, and would highly recommend this small but important piece of Pacific history to anyone who wants to know how an indigenous people can be so horribly abused by a super power. Astounding material.

My father was stationed in the Pacific during the nuclear testing so I grew up hearing so much about the islands. I enjoyed this book because it gave me a sense of what it must be like to live in such a beautiful place, yet at the same time having to deal with so much tragedy. What surprised me the most was how entertaining and how easy to read this book was. It really gave life to the way people must be and must think in the islands.

It is generally accepted that the dropping of two Atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought WW2 to an end. Had the Japanese not surrendered, however, no third bomb existed. Whilst the explosions happened just as they were supposed to happen, this new dreadful science was very new and, in a post war-torn world, had to be tested and refined. No western power, however, was prepared to have such weaponry tested anywhere near their own country - not even within distant

range of fall-out. For this reason, one of the world's remotest islands in the southern Pacific was eventually chosen. In the summer of 1946 the United States detonated two 21 kiloton bombs code-named Able and Baker. These were the fourth and fifth such bombs ever exploded. Another bomb was also due to be detonated but this was cancelled after the fallout from Baker created far more radiological contamination than was ever expected. In order to conduct such tests, the United States had, in the first instance, to forcibly remove the indigenous population of the Bikini Islands. How powerful is one nation that it is able (apparently quite legally) to remove another from their homes so that the former can practise with big bombs. This book is the story of those Bikini Islanders and their life-long struggle to regain their homeland. Yes, many have now come home, but it will be a long time before they can even hope to resume a traditional existence. Truth is it is highly unlikely 'that' will ever happen. The Bikini islanders were removed from their homes "for the good of mankind," personally, I think this book should be read for the same reason. NM

This is a very sad and very hard to believe story. I don't understand how the United States could be so uncaring toward people who were so defenseless. I got this book and started reading and could not put it down. Listening to the islanders describe their tale was so interesting, I can only hope that they find their way back to their islands someday. My only criticism of the book is that I found myself even wanting to read more... The author really seems to have a feel for the people he is writing about.

I found this book to be remarkably unique and refreshing as the author has found an interesting way to allow the islanders to tell their own story through interviews and vignettes about the islands.

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