



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMERCIAL
CABLE ADDRESS
HICOTT SAIPAN

May 28, 1966

Dear Ruth:

In this I shall not attempt a "progress" report because I can not honestly claim any progress yet except for the opportunity to begin to get acquainted, acclimated and somewhat preliminarily adjusted to my new duties. Needless to say, the welcome has been almost overwhelmingly cordial. The Godings have been most gracious and Mrs. Norwood and I are deeply appreciative of the spirit in which they have accepted us and helped us these past few days. I shall report more later. But here are a few items which I think I should call to your attention immediately.

Bill's Retirement Status

When Bill saw a copy of Secretary Udall's letter to John Macy requesting formal approval of my appointment as High Commissioner on or before July 1 he became greatly disturbed. He apparently had been hoping or expecting that he would continue to hold the title until his retirement on or about October 1. I do not clearly understand his problem except that it has something to do with the fact that he was a presidential appointee and his retirement benefits as such are not the same as they would have been, had he been an appointee of the Secretary. Thus he seems to feel strongly (and with bitterness) that merely keeping him on the payroll even at full salary but without the protection he thinks he deserves. He apparently intends to make an issue of this and spoke of taking it up with Senator Bartlett, Wayne Aspinall and others. I told him that while I was aware that some consideration was being given to an arrangement to accommodate his retirement problem I was clearly under the impression that I was to become High Commissioner officially July 1. I mention this to forewarn you that I am sure you will be hearing more about this matter from other sources. I am also enclosing a copy of a press release which indicates that as far as he is concerned I will not become High Commissioner until he retires.

Call from Nabors

Last evening I had a telephone call from Bill Nabors whom I had not yet seen since our arrival two days ago. He said he was calling in connection with the action taken against Mr. Neas, the former Yap Distad. Prior to leaving Honolulu I had a telephone call from Frank Midkiff, former Hicom, who had received



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a letter from Nabors asking him (Midkiff) to advise me to look into the merits of the Nease problem when I got here. Nabors asked if I had received his message from Midkiff. I said I had. He said that he was calling as Neas' attorney to request that I review the action taken against his client. I told him that as I had opportunity to do so I intended to obtain a thorough briefing. I explained that I was presently very heavily involved in getting acquainted with my staff and my responsibilities. He said that he was confident an impartial investigation would disclose that the accusations against his client were without sufficient substance to warrant the action taken against him. I assured Nabors that as far as I was concerned I was confident his client would be accorded equitable treatment, but that I was in no position to discuss the merits of the case over the telephone. Nabors thereupon informed me that he was leaving almost immediately for a pleasure trip and business trip which eventually would take him to Washington where he intended to see Congressman Edmundson and others upon whom his client apparently is relying for some support. I thought you should know this. Nabors said he would be returning here in late June and hoped that by that time I would be sufficiently acquainted with this case to discuss it with him. I told him I could make no promise at this time to do so but would take his request under advisement. I intend next week to obtain

and also to give this problem area early attention in view of the fact that he has already organized some kind of a trust fund and is making arrangements to recruit Micronesian students for trust fund scholarships in Hawaii and elsewhere.

I mention the foregoing merely for your information. I have no intention of being bamboozled by Nabors or anyone else. He seems very smooth if not slick.

Peace Corps

I am getting together with Jim Hawkins and others next week in connection with a long teletype from Pritchard indicating the response to the PC recruiting effort has far exceeded expectations. The implication of the message is that maybe we should adjust our estimates to accommodate the fact that their recruiting effort will produce more volunteers than originally anticipated. My present thinking is to phase in the volunteers as carefully and as effectively as we can but certainly not to attempt to soak up an overflow unless a need for service can be clearly established.

That's all for this time.

Bill