

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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Memorandum

TO : Ambassador Anderson *ga*

FROM : William R. Brew *WRB*

SUBJECT: Rogers' Views Concerning TTPI

DATE: April 11, 1967

Kenneth Rogers (Australian member VM to TTPI) called on Ambassador Anderson the morning of March 30 to discuss his views concerning the TTPI. He will be writing the portion of the VM report dealing with education. Rogers' views were, in general, negative, but he appears to understand the problems (particularly the difficulty of transportation and communication) which impede progress in the TTPI.

Rogers gave no definite indication of the tone that his portion of the VM report would take, but the reporting officer, based on conversations before and after the VM took place, believes that Rogers may be counted on to do a valid, conscientious, and accurate reporting job. This conclusion is also based on Rogers' requests that USUN aid him in collecting statistics on education, so that his portion of the report could be a complete and accurate reflection of the situation. As a life-long civil servant, with extensive experience as the representative of a wealthy state in underdeveloped areas (most recently Pakistan), Rogers seems to carry a slight prejudice which favors governmental administrations over non-official parties who, he says, have a tendency to criticize without offering solutions.

1. Education and Skills Development: Rogers felt that the education given Micronesians was generally poor, particularly so in the academic disciplines. He noted that two technical schools had the potential of supplying good technical or vocational training to the Micronesians. One of these is an agricultural school presently being organized by Jesuit missionaries. Rogers acknowledges the educational difficulties inherent in the fact that 9 dialects or languages are spoken in the territory. For this reason he views the teaching of English as of great importance. High quality training in English would enable the Micronesians to more readily continue higher education abroad. Although he had a few complaints concerning Peace Corps activities, he felt that they were an asset to the territory. Because the PCVs were facing such a difficult task in teaching English, he believed that more extensive training in teaching English as a foreign language should be given to them before they were sent to their jobs in the TTPI.

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Rogers noted that the large education program may be having the effect of educating the people to the point where they were not willing to do manual or directly productive labor. He stated that most of the educated people in the TTPI preferred clerical or administrative work within the Trust Territory Administration. Rogers felt this was an undesirable situation because it could only lead to continued dependence on other areas of the world (the US) for the actual sustenance (and economic development) of the Territory. As a result, he emphasized the need for greater technical training.

Rogers continued that he believed that the number of people with directly productive skills had actually decreased over the years. He felt this was the direct result of the ease of obtaining a job with the Administration. Administration jobs for Micronesians, however, did not (with a few exceptions) lead to high level executive authority for Micronesians. This problem, he asserted, could reduce the incentive of the Micronesians to better themselves and could make eventual self-sufficiency and the granting of independence more difficult. Rogers noted that a similar problem had existed in New Guinea, but that Australia had developed a program for utilizing natives as assistants to the Australian administrators. This type of program might well be considered for the TTPI.

2. Government: Rogers felt the main problem with the governmental system was the plethora of local (District and Municipal) governments. As a result of confusion concerning the responsibilities of each of the legislative bodies (as well as duplication of personnel in these bodies), the legislators, as well as the people, were unable to determine what they should be doing. Moreover, he believed that the lack of fiscal authority of the legislatures undermined public confidence in the legislatures. Rogers asserted that the Micronesian people were aware of the legislatures' lack of authority and, as a result, were not convinced that they were really being given a part in the government of the TTPI.

As a solution, Rogers suggested the abolition of district legislatures, coupled with the granting of greater fiscal and substantive authority to the Congress of Micronesia. Agreeing that the elimination of district legislatures would be a difficult step, Rogers tempered his suggestion by explaining that the first step could be an improvement in tax collection. There is a head tax on the statute books, but this tax is not presently effectively enforced. Allowing the monies derived from this tax to be utilized by the Congress of Micronesia would be an excellent means of educating the members of the Congress in matters of fiscal responsibility. It would also serve to increase the stature of the Congress in the eyes of the Micronesians.

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Rogers is opposed to the continuation of the District legislatures because they are controlled by hereditary leaders (conservative forces) and by the cities. As a result, he feels that hereditary and "urban" interests are looked after to the detriment of the outlying, more under-developed areas.

3. Economic: Rogers believed that economic development would be very difficult and would proceed in the present haphazard manner unless local development plans were created. At present very few people, including the local legislatures, have any conception of what has or can be done to promote greater development. He blames the shortcomings of the local (district) legislatures on the fact that they have limited taxation responsibilities and, as a result, just do not understand the intricacies of financing governmental projects. The people of the TTPI are not interested in economic development programs because they have not been made aware of the possibilities for development.

An additional problem is that of proper land utilization. The Land Office, established only recently, is doing a good job but is severely understaffed. It particularly needs surveyors. Moreover, although there has been some progress in clarifying the land tenure system, he wonders if the US system of ownership of property is the most appropriate system to be applied in the territory. In this regard, he noted that forms of communal tenure had been practiced in some areas of the territory.

Turning to the Nathan Report, Rogers stated that it contained much analysis that was of value, but that some of its conclusions were of dubious value because they did not take account of political realities. In this regard he singled out the suggestion that foreign labor be imported when Micronesians could or would not do the necessary work. Rogers believed that the Micronesians would certainly be opposed to this step and that the Congress of Micronesia would probably not give its assent.

4. Administration: Rogers suggested two problems concerning administration personnel. The first was that people working in Saipan did not make a practice of traveling outside of Saipan. He said he was quite surprised that one man, involved with education, had almost never left Saipan. The other problem was that of parity of salaries for Micronesians and Americans holding equally responsible positions. He stated that the Micronesian district administrator was paid only about one-half the salary paid to American administrators. This tended to diminish the respect due to Micronesian officials, both in their own eyes and in those of the Micronesian people.

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5. Separatism in Marianas: In a later conversation with the reporting officer, Rogers discussed the separation movement in the Marianas. The VM had heard a good deal of discussion about separation and union with Guam, but Rogers was unable to say whether the movement was growing or waning. He felt separation would be unwise and that this could be explained to the islanders.

6. Needs: The Territory's most pressing needs were for communications facilities, roads, small ships and docks, and aircraft.

WRBrew:sms
cc: Mr. Johnson
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