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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

PERSONAL

NOV 27 1957

Hon. William R. Norwood
High Commissioner
Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Bill:

In reading the November 10 issue of the Guan Daily News, I ran across Jack Krauss' full page interview with you, headed, "Micronesians Begin to Doubt Sincerity." Then I picked up the November 13 High Commissioner's Highlights and read your statements upon returning to Saipan recently. Suffice it to say that I was surprised and concerned.

To deal with the lesser of my concerns first, it is unfortunate that the articles attribute to you several statements which some might consider less than discreet or even unfair. No matter how valid a point one is attempting to make, it is of questionable advisability to drive the point home by in any manner associating the President with unrealized hopes. ("Hopes of Micronesians and our administration were raised further when in signing the legislation the President forcefully expressed his belief that the time is at hand for meeting our obligations to the people of Micronesia under the Trusteeship agreement. So it looked as if we were ready to go. Then when we got down to the practical matter of getting supplemental appropriations this year, we were again trapped in the economy move.")

Use of the term "credibility gap" is equally questionable ("It's a situation which we have begun to call our credibility gap in the Trust Territory"). I understand fully the problem to which you were referring, but others are likely to take the term out of context and apply it to a much broader consideration, as dramatically shown by the Daily News editorial, appearing with your interview, entitled "Another Credibility Gap." Neither the overall Executive effort on behalf of the war against poverty or this Department's efforts on behalf of the Trust Territory is served fairly by the statement, "We tend to be at a disadvantage now by having our programs regarded as just another poverty program which at a time like this gets caught in the desire to reduce expenditures."

As discussed below, we have special and obvious reasons to avoid characterizing any branch of the United States government as indifferent to Micronesian problems. ("I came away from Washington with the feeling that with the exception of a few staunch friends in Congress, the Trust Territory ranks relatively low among the problems and concerns of Congress.")

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Statements such as these -- there are others in the article -- lend themselves to misinterpretation no matter how one attempts to qualify them afterwards.

The fact that the Trust Territory appropriation authorization has been doubled twice in the last five years and will in all probability be increased sizably again in the near future sheds some light on Congressional and Executive concern over the Trust Territory, as do the recent spate of status commission bills, the impending visit of Congressional Committees, and the generous treatment by the Budget Bureau of the Trust Territory FY 1969 budget request. These facts should be publicly emphasized also. I would not say that this government as a whole has found a way to meet all of its obligations completely and with equal favor, but I am hard put to think of any program in this Department which has received the favorable consideration given recently to the Trust Territory.

I was rather taken back by the inference that the Department has attached no special concern to the Trust Territory, the above statement concerning the expenditure ceiling, and quotes such as, "We've been standing still for a year now" -- the implication being that some outside force is making you stand still--and, again concerning the expenditure and construction limitation, it "obviously stops us dead in our tracks." During your recent visit here, I assured you that requests for exemptions from the construction freeze would be acted upon promptly. We have acted accordingly on every request, and I know of none awaiting action. During your visit, I urged you to submit your requests for expenditure ceiling relief. After your return, I dispatched a follow-up. We have not yet received your reply, but when we do, we will obtain the relief needed. I know of no other bureau or office in this Department receiving such broad assurances. Certainly I have given none except to you.

I believe that no one in Washington stands between you and the accomplishment of your budgeted programs. I will stop short of another exhortation to "get the dirt flying", however, I cannot but note in your FY 1968 expenditure program submitted on October 19 to the Director, Office of Territories, your programmed construction expenditures within the ceiling of approximately \$3.8 million (\$4.8 million counting expenditures to meet unliquidated obligations). One would expect that such expenditures would support the obligation of between \$7 and \$8 million. This constitutes one of the largest, if not the largest, one-year construction efforts in the history of the Trust Territory, and all within the ceiling. Even though this level is available to you without relief, the Department is prepared to assist in obtaining approval for additional expenditures to mount an even greater effort in FY 1968. I trust it is crystal clear at this point that the Department intends to work with you to assure that you can move forward rapidly with Trust Territory programs.

If any requests for ceiling or freeze relief are outstanding at this time, or if you feel that we have been less than diligent in acting on any such request, or indeed, have failed you in any particular, call me immediately by radio-telephone so that corrective action may be taken without delay.

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Of immeasurably greater importance than any of my above comments concerning the articles or any defense or justification for any of the indicated statements, is the image of the United States presented to Micronesians by the articles--a President who raises false hopes, a Department showing no special interest in Micronesian problems, and a Congress showing little concern. We are not dealing with protection of the sensibilities of officials in Washington. We are dealing, rather, with the political mission of the United States government in Micronesia. In this respect the articles were counter-productive, to say the very least.

As a final observation, I see no need for such morose assessment of your situation as appears in the articles. Quite frankly, all things considered, there has never been a better opportunity for a Trust Territory administration to build a solid record of achievement as we have now, even with nothing more than the ammunition on hand. Of course, we ought to mount a greater effort to do the complete job, and nothing will prevent our developing several alternative plans based upon several possible funding levels which will lead to eventual accomplishment of our objectives. I will look forward to receiving such alternative plans through PPB process, and I will look forward even more to reading future news releases emphasizing the positive accomplishments of your administration.

Bill, the above comments might appear rather critical, but they are offered for the sole, exclusive purpose of being constructive, and I think you know that they are offered by one who has the highest respect and the warmest regard for you personally. I am confident that your administration in the Trust Territory will be successful and I want you to be equally confident that I am going to back you to the hilt to make sure that this comes about.

Sincerely,

(Sgd.) Harry R. Anderson

Harry R. Anderson

cc: The Secretary

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