

December 17, 1967

Dear Ruth:

With the approach of Christmas it seemed to me that it would be a good time to have another man to man chat with you and to wish you and your family a very fine holiday season. I trust that you are now very much back on your feet and that all is well. We are looking forward to an interesting Christmas here inasmuch as our family will be joining us here on Saipan. Our 23-year old son will be arriving tomorrow from Honolulu and our daughter, her husband and our two granddaughters and a grandchild to be will be arriving next Saturday. We should have an enjoyable time and inasmuch as I've taken no vacation since I took on this job I'm going to snatch a day or two to go fishing, swimming or whatever comes to mind while the family is here.

We are looking forward with interest (and some uneasiness) to the arrival of the two Congressional committees next month. To have them arriving almost at the same time will tax our logistic capability to some extent. Neiman will be going along with the House group and I tentatively plan to send Leo along with the Senators to serve as liaison man and trouble-shooter. I do not plan to accompany either party because I think they could form more objective impressions without my presence and also because I want to spend as much time as possible for our de-briefing session when they wind-up on Saipan. However, if either group should express a strong desire to have me along, I could try to arrange it. It would have to be handled in such a way, however, that I could not favor one group over the other, perhaps starting with one and switching to the other would be a compromising device. But I prefer to stay right here.

With Marty, Paul and Shoe spending so much time in Washington I've been swamped with work, almost to the point of exhaustion. I was enormously pleased by Shoe's appointment and the expeditious manner in which it was handled. My inclination is to appoint Don Tindal as his successor but want to talk to him about it when he returns next Wednesday, Shoe I mean. Tindal is young (35) but has performed very well and I find him thoroughly reliable with good initiative. As you may have been informed Mr. Mooney has not worked out well and it looks as though we may have to send him home, but I want to talk to Shoe about that also. I wrote to him about it and suggested he discuss the matter while he was in Washington.

We have been very disappointed by the necessity of the prolonged negotiations in Washington and the circumstances which required suspension of the talks without a contract. I hope the problem was not seriously complicated by a recurrence of Marty's moodiness. He is so very able that it's a pity he allows his prejudices and temper minimize his effectiveness and hurt his relationships with others. I'm just guessing this may have happened again but hope it didn't.

I have written several fairly long letters recently to Harry requesting advice regarding some of our other personnel problems and just yesterday drafted a fairly lengthy report on alien investment proposals which we have been receiving in increasing number.

I really don't have so much more to say that I should start a new page but perhaps ideas will pop up as I go along.

I just discovered yesterday that we are in trouble with OT and BOB again as a result of our failure to get revised program goals to you by the time requested. I refer to your October letter requesting reply by November 30. Your letter arrived before I had returned to Saipan and was routed on to B&F and Alldredge. I'll be checking with him tomorrow to find out what happened but I was not aware of the letter until a message from George yesterday asked us to hurry up with the info. I guess I must have misunderstood the import of the session we had with the BOB. I thought the suggested revision of program goals applied to preparation of our 1970 memorandum, not to a modification of the '69 document. That makes more sense to me but whatever the BOB wants it will get, if we can possibly deliver, although I must say that their requirements very frequently seem to me to make very scant allowance for the time-distance factors we encounter in trying to marshal data out here.

Our new Saipan hotel, the Royal Taga, opened with appropriate fanfare last week. While it is not exactly done in tropical decor and could fit comfortably in Omaha or Oshkosh, it is very comfortable and functional and as grounds and plantings are developed I think it will be quite attractive. You may have seen reference to it and Ken Jones in the last issue of Time. There has been some local resentment of Jones and a fear that he is trying to become Mr. Big on Saipan as he is on Guam, but I believe he is going to make a genuine effort to cultivate good relationships with the local people and I have cautioned him that as he undertakes to provide jobs and training for local people he must exercise some patience. We don't want any quick buck artists out here.

I haven't heard yet whether we are going to get the coast Guard ship Nettle but I think that as a result of my direct appeal to Admiral Sharp we may. His last message indicated as much. If we get it out plan is to employ it immediately in the Marshalls to replace the Militoba during the latter's layup for drydocking and then to use it for other trips as circumstances require. One use I have in mind is a special voyage to haul surplus construction materials and supplies from Eniwetok to Ujelang, where, as previously reported the residents are in dire need of help.

I guess I'd better run over to the office now to see whether there's any blue envelopes. Have a good Christmas and let's hope the new year produces better performance by the HC.

*Gill*