

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

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PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

The Hon. Harry R. Anderson
Assistant Secretary of Interior
Department of Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Harry:

This note to you is prompted by one I received from George Milner yesterday enclosing pages from the Congressional Record of December 11 including the text of the paper Mrs. Van Cleve presented at the Miami health conference in October.

You may recall that I also attended this conference. I was very favorably impressed with Mrs. Van Cleve's speech; so much so that I subsequently requested a copy and have had reprints made for use from time to time.

It was this speech that in part influenced remarks I made to the press when I was asked for an interview upon my return through Honolulu. In your letter of November 27 questioning the propriety of certain statements attributed to me, you particularly objected to my use of the term "credibility gap." As I have already made clear, I have accepted the validity of your criticism.

If you reread Mrs. Van Cleve's statement, you will note that she also referred to the "credibility gap," although she did so much more gracefully and in better balance than remarks attributed to me. The portion of her statement to which I refer said:

"However, after we achieved this authorization and turned to actual funding, we were also to be disappointed. For last year, instead of 25 million there were actually appropriated to us only 19.2 million. For the present year, instead of 35 million, we have actually 24 million.

"All of the foregoing has resulted in our own great big credibility gap in Micronesia--a gap between the cheerful picture we bureaucrats paint of where we're going and the dollars we actually need for doing so-- a gap between our stated goals and our means of achieving them."

Mrs. Van Cleve then went on to explain that the current problems in Micronesia are not the responsibility of the Congress and that "we in the executive branch can not pass this buck."

Almost any reporter sifting through the total statement for a news lead or headline probably would have seized upon the "credibility gap" reference despite the thoughtful, balanced exposition of the surrounding context.

That is why I regard your criticism of my remarks as timely and constructive and as a reminder of the hazards of public statements that are not thoroughly thought through to possible consequences if taken out of context.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. Norwood
High Commissioner