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GENERAL

August 21, 1964

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Dear Dr. Gibson:

The President has asked me to acknowledge your letter of July 11. The President is very appreciative of the contribution made by you as Director of Education of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The President has asked me to convey to you his best wishes for your future.

Sincerely,

15/

Ralph A. Dungan
Special Assistant
to the President

Dr. Robert E. Gibson
c/o Mrs. E. A. Gibson
Maitland, Missouri 64466

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~~cc - Anna Z...~~

Nothing else sent to
Central Files as of 9/27/64

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AUG 21 1964

United States Senate

Washington, D. C., August 5, 1964

Respectfully referred to

Mr. Lawrence F. O'Brien

Special Assistant to the President

The White House

Enclosure:

Letter of 7/27/64, with enclosures,
from Robert E. Gibson, Maitland,
Missouri.

CONGRESSIONAL

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AUG 22 1964
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Maurine Neuberger

Maurine B. Neuberger

U. S. S.

37
c/o Mrs. E. A. Gibson
Maitland, Missouri
64466

July 27, 1964

Senator Maurine Neuberger
Senate Office Building
Washington D.C.

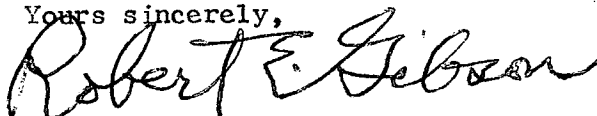
Dear Senator Neuberger:

I saw an announcement lately of your marriage but for the life of me, I cannot remember your new name, so I shall continue addressing you by your old familiar name. I wish you and your husband a long and happy life together.

I have resigned my position as Director of Education of Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands after serving for 13 years in that capacity. The conditions under which I resigned are set forth in the two enclosures. These are not conditions that should have been inflicted upon one who has served his country in several different educational capacities over the past twenty two years. The ultimate irony was that it should have happened to one who has served the Democratic Party with effort and money over the past 35 years. I do not expect any vindication for myself. I simply ask that the arrogance and ruthlessness of some of those in administrative positions of power in Washington be investigated and that they not be returned to positions where they can do such un-American things to their fellow Americans, and discredit the party which they represent. As I have supported you and Dick over the years, I am bringing this to your attention.

Despite the treatment I have received from Mr. Carver and Mr. Taitano, I shall still support the Democratic Party this fall more vigorously than ever. I cannot imagine a greater calamity for our country than a victory for Senator Goldwater and his kind. Please tell me how I can serve best for this is my new dedication.

Yours sincerely,



Robert E. Gibson

Encs.

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Remarks by Dr. Gibson at Briefing
Session for Mrs. Van Cleve, June 26, 1964

Mrs. Van Cleve, Mr. Gading and colleagues - This is an auspicious occasion for me. I welcome the opportunity to give an accounting of the work of the Department of Education to the new Director of the Office of Territories and to celebrate an occasion. It is exactly 13 years ago today that I first joined the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in Honolulu as Director of Education and as I look around this group I see only two others who were here before me.

I well remember the spirit of idealism which actuated me in those early days - an idealism largely engendered by the lofty pronouncements of the United Nations, the leadership of our first High Commissioner, Senator Elbert Thomas, and my own desire to do my part to keep a pledge to the Trusteeship Council that we would pursue the goal of educational advancement for the inhabitants of Trust Territory.

I think it was my convictions and idealism which kept my eyes focussed on the goal through long years of living on practically a starvation budget, when scarcely a minimum of educational growth could be achieved. However, despite having to operate on a yearly budget for 10 years of less than \$500,000 we did initiate a program of universal elementary education; we developed in each district a system of junior high schools; we did have a very excellent senior high school; we did develop a teacher education program and we had made considerable advance in developing a scholarship program.

So that you may have some basis of comparison, Mrs. Van Cleve, I am going to compare the figures spent on education in Trust Territory with those spent on Guam during the same period, pointing out as I do so that on Guam about the same number of children had to be educated and that they were all concentrated on one island. They went to school by bus, not by boat, or plane as our youngsters did, nor did they have to be subsisted at the junior and senior high levels in boarding schools. When we were spending \$500,000 per year on education, Guam was spending 3 - 4 million for the same number of students.

I can report, perhaps with some pride, that every member of the present Council of Micronesia and three of the four members of the leader grant program who attended the recent Trusteeship Council Meeting have been products of the educational system we provided. I note that in the UN Report of 1964 this was said:

"In retrospect, it is a matter for surprise that so much was in fact accomplished, particularly in the fields of education and health; the Territory has fortunately had the services of not a few able and devoted specialists and administrators who did their best with such resources as they were given, while making no secret of their view that the results were inadequate."

During the last two years my hopes have risen. Last year's upping of the budget from 7½ million to 15 million gave education its first opportunity to flex its muscles and to do many of the things which up to now had to remain in the realm of activities only "devoutly to be wished".

How have we spent this money? We have imported 60 new American teachers to help man the elementary schools; we have built housing for these teachers and we have constructed, or are in the process of constructing and adequately supplying 48 new classrooms. We are adding 90 more American teachers this fall to those already here in the elementary schools. We are continuing to provide these teachers with adequate housing and to keep on building new elementary schools until every child in Micronesia has a decent school to attend. We intend to supply and equip these schools with the best in teaching materials and other facilities. So far we have largely concentrated on elementary schools but we haven't allowed the secondary program to lag. From one central secondary school, we have moved to a secondary school in every district. This means a new building program which we have already started. It means bringing out more qualified American teachers. Our scholarship program doubled last year and is doubling again this year. Such progress in such a short time has brought soaring problems in some of which other departments share. You can well imagine what such a vast increase in activity has meant to our Public Works, our Supply, our Transportation and Communication, our Personnel and even to our Health Departments. They have been as beset as I with the manifold problems which have surrounded us.

As for our particular problems in education, they involve those associated with recruiting and orienting new teachers and then providing them with the necessary supervision so that they understand and grow on their job; we are concerned with problems of schoolhouse planning; of the continuous process of building, evaluating and re-building school curricula; of making English the lingua franca of Trust Territory; of developing a vocational program which will meet the growing needs of Micronesia; of taking care of the many problems related to a scholarship program in which more than 100 students hold total or partial scholarships in higher education; we are involved further with the problems associated with preparing and administering budgets for such an expanded program, and those of supervising and standardizing textbooks, other teaching materials and equipment.

One of the largest problems of all is the inadequacy of my own staff to handle the greatly increased complexity of these problems. There are now five people in my office - plus a Micronesian secretary and clerk. One of those five spends his full time with Personnel on recruitment - one has just been added as Coordinator of the Adult Education program, a recently acquired

administrative assistant is in charge of the Scholarship program. I have had to share more and more of the administrative work with Dr. Bender. His willingness to spend his free time, his innate ability and intelligence have made it possible for him to do this as well as to conduct an outstanding program in the teaching of English.

Finally, I think this is a good occasion on my 13th anniversary of service to announce my retirement from Trust Territory. I have my letter of resignation to Mr. Goding to take effect as of June 30.

Since those of you who are my friends and colleagues know it is not in the Gibson tradition to give up in the face of difficulty and frustration, I think I must tell you how this came about.

Three years ago I came back from leave with the inference that the position of Director of Education would be upgraded. You will remember that the Solomon Report made the same recommendation, along with a greatly increased staff for the office of the Director of Education. If I remember correctly it described the staff as "Pitifully inadequate even for its present holding action."

Those of you who read the Reading Files may remember a letter from the High Commissioner to the Director of the Office of Territories making a recommendation that the Director of Education be promoted to a Grade 14 and that the vacancy of Assistant Director of Education be filled with a GS-13. But nothing ever came of it.

This week when Mr. Goding returned he told me that the position was to be upgraded to a GS-15. I, however, would remain at my present rating and somebody else would be given the top position.

This isn't because I haven't done my job. All of you know that. It is a newly conceived way of getting rid of somebody who didn't always say "Yes" and who felt it his duty to disagree with Mr. Carver or to inform him of things he ought to know for the benefit of the people of Trust Territory.

I shall leave you, my colleagues, with regret and some fears of your security. I shall leave this job, which I have loved, with some foreboding. I would say that we need to give greater concern to those basic human values which are an essential part of our democratic tradition; that to negate them, as some have done, is self-defeating; that those who ignore the worth and dignity of the individual human personality, whether of student, teacher, government employee, or just plain private citizen are as dangerous to America's goals as the subversive.

I trust I have left some little heritage on the positive side of this picture.

F. ...
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Trust Territory Headquarters /
Saipan, Mariana Islands

96950

July 11, 1964

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President Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I have just resigned from my position as the Director of Education of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. I was first appointed to this job in 1951 and began my work under the inspired and idealistic leadership of Senator Elbert Thomas. Those of us who came out here were determined to make this one Trusteeship of the United States an example to the world of the progressive and enlightened administration of our democratic country. We have succeeded in some areas but in some we have not. Up until last year we were handicapped by a very small budget and frequently we would be impelled to ask the question: "Why is so much money given to countries which are not under American administration, and such a pittance to this area?"

I doubt, however, if those of us who worked in the Department of Education were as discouraged or as pessimistic as some. Educators - or at least those who love their work - come to look for rewards other than purely monetary ones. These we found here. The Micronesians were eager for what we had to offer. They knew how essential it was that their young people become educated in order that they achieve a place in the modern world. In spite of difficulties and deprivations it is with some pride that I can tell you that Micronesians are becoming close to self-government and that every member of the Council of Micronesia - the soon-to-be legislative body of Trust Territory - is a product of the last 13 years of administration of Trust Territory under the Department of Interior. During that time there have been four different High Commissioners, but only one Director of Education. Two of these High Commissioners were Republicans committed to a "cheap" administration, or to speak in terms of years, 8 of the 13 years were years of deliberate cutting down and deprivation. In education this came particularly hard, since the population increased and education grows by what it feeds upon.

In 1960, since I have always been a dedicated and contributing member of the Democratic Party and since I felt I was well qualified by experience and training, I made application to President Kennedy and Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall for the position of High Commissioner. I was encouraged to do this by Democrats working in Trust Territory and helped by such people as Senator Engle, Senator Estes Kefauver and Senator Hubert Humphrey. My candidacy was not successful -- which didn't upset me too much as I realized that it would have been no bed of roses! However, at that time, I received a letter from Mr. John Carver, the Assistant Secretary of Interior

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asking me to remain in my position as Director of Education and give Mr. M.W. Goding, the newly appointed High Commissioner, all the help he would need. This I have done, although I soon learned that Mr. Carver had not meant what he wrote. On his first visit to Guam in 1961 he told me I was a "troublemaker". This staggered me - not the appellation (I am sure to the John Carvers of this world I am) but the dishonesty of his approach.

Since that time Mr. Carver has tried to get rid of me by various means. I understand from Mr. Goding, the High Commissioner, that on his various visits to Washington, Carver's inevitable question has been: "Have you gotten rid of Gibson yet?" When you were Vice President after one particularly flagrant example of this in-fighting, I wrote to you and you were kind enough to encourage me, indicating at that stage in the game that you too were not without your frustrations and that as Democrats we should continue to serve our country.

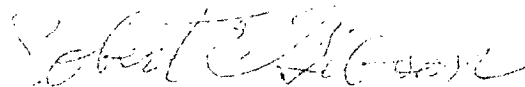
The climax came last week and if you will read my enclosed remarks to Mrs. Van Cleve, the new Director of the Office of Territories in her briefing session here, you will see how Mr. Carver finally "got rid of Gibson." If you wish you can ask both High Commissioner Goding and Mrs. Van Cleve of the impact of my remarks on the group present. They are unaware of the reaction which has come from my colleagues throughout the whole of Trust Territory, whose first intimation was the news dispatched throughout the entire Territory within an hour or so that High Commissioner Goding had accepted the resignation of Robert E. Gibson, Director of Education. I have received many letters and dispatches the gist of which is: "How could this happen?" These communications are from Americans. You will be interested, I know, in view of the image which our country presents to the rest of the world, in the reactions of the Micronesians. They are shocked. "How can Americans do things like this," they ask, "and yet always talk about individual rights and freedom?" Those of them who are well educated come to me and say: "It's easy to see how you get ahead with this Administration. Do exactly what they say and never question anything."

Mr. President, I know a great deal about the Trust Territory and its people, and while I shall no longer be here to help them, I would ask one favor of you. When you are elected as President next November, I hope you will appoint as Secretary of Interior, some man of the caliber of Harold Ickes. I hope that the next High Commissioner of Trust Territory will be given the kind of autonomy, to administer these islands which Commissioner Elbert Thomas had and not be a hamstrung puppet and figurehead as Mr. Goding is. The person chosen should be an inspiring leader and a man of conscience, backed by a capable administrator as Deputy High Commissioner. The Micronesians would respect this kind of man, and, I suspect America would get the kind of approval and cooperation which is her due. We could present to the entire world a picture which would cause men to say: "America know how best to lead the underdeveloped countries and their peoples to independence and strength."

I wish I could sit down and talk to you about these things. I am leaving here July 13 and will be in Missouri at my mother's farm after the first of August, where you may address me

Dr. Robert E. Gibson
c/o Mrs. E. A. Gibson
Maitland, Missouri 64466

Yours sincerely,



Robert E. Gibson

Enc: /

Trust Territory Headquarters
Saipan, Marianas Islands

20090

July 4, 1960

President Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I have just resigned my position as the Director of Education of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. I was hired appointed to this job in 1951 and began my work under the inspired and identifiable leadership of Senator Mitchell Palmer. Some of us in the area and have more responsibility to make this one responsible of the United States as a whole to the world of the progressive and enlightened administration of our democratic country. I have succeeded in some ways and in some in some ways. I would have been disappointed by a very small budget and especially to be required to do in the question "Why is so much money given to countries which are not under American administration and such a reference to this country?"

I could, however, at some of us who worked in the Dept. of Education were as disappointed or as pessimistic as ever. Education - or at least that is the term their work, come to look for someone other than purely country ones. There we found here. The Micronesians were eager for what we had to offer. They have had potential as well as their young people having educated in order that they achieve a place in the modern world. In order of difficulties and frustrations it is with some pride that I can tell you that Micronesians are breaking close to self-government and that every member of the Council of Micronesia - the new-to-be legislative body of Trust Territory - is a product of the last 10 years of administration of Trust Territory under the Department of Education. During that time there have been four different High Commissions, but only one Director of Education. Two of those High Commissions were Republicans committed to a "strong" administration, or to speak in terms of years, 6 of the 10 years were years of deliberate cutting down and deprivation. In education this was particularly hard, since the population increased and education grew by that 10 years more.

In 1959, since I have always been a dedicated and enthusiastic member of the Democratic Party and since I felt I was well qualified by experience and training, I with application to President Kennedy and Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udell, for the position of High Commissioner. I was encouraged to do this by Democratic workers in Trust Territory and helped by such people as Senator Duff, Senator John B. Anderson and Senator Robert Kennedy. My candidacy was not successful which didn't upset me too much as I realized that it would have been no bad at all. However, at that time I received a letter from John Gorton, the Assistant Secretary of Interior, asking me to stand in my position as Director of Education and give Mr. Gorton, Chief, the newly appointed High Commissioner, all the help he would need. Well I have done although I never learned that Mr. Gorton had not meant what he said. In his heart what to do in 1960 he told me I was a "Republican." This suggested me - not the population I am sure to the John Gorton of this world

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I am) but the dishonesty of his approach.

Since that time Mr. Carver has tried to get rid of me by various means, I understand from Mr. Colby, the High Commissioner, that on his various visits to Washington, Carver's inevitable question has been "Have you got all of them yet?" When you were Vice President after our particularly bitter contest of this in- fighting, I wrote to you and you were kind enough to encourage me in insisting at that stage in the game, you too were not without your suspicions and that as Democrats we should continue to serve our country.

The effort was lost with me and if you will send my enclosed remarks to Mrs. Van Cleave, now Director of the Office of Territories in her interesting position here last week, you will see how Carver finally "got rid of them." I do not need to tell you the impact which my remarks had on the game. If you wish you can ask both High Commissioner Colby, and Mrs. Van Cleave. They are members of the reaction which has come from my colleagues throughout the whole of West Territory, these West Indians and the Negroes who are throughout the entire Territory within an hour or so that High Commissioner Colby had accepted the resignation of Robert S. Gibson, Director of Education. I have received many letters and dispatched the gist of which are "How could this happen?" These communications are from Americans. You will be interested, I hope, in view of the large which our country presents to the rest of the world, of the reactions of the Negroes. They are shocked. "How can Americans do things like this," they ask, "and yet always talk to us about individual rights and freedom?" Those of them who are well educated come to me and say: "It's easy to see how you get along with this Administration. Do exactly what they say and never question anything."

Mr. President, I have a great deal about the West Territory and the people, and while I shall no longer be here to help them, I would ask the favor of you. When you are elected as President next November, I hope you will appoint as Secretary of Education, one man of the caliber of English Linn. I hope that the next High Commissioner of West Territory will be given the kind of authority to administer these islands which Commissioner Elliott Thomas had and not be a functioning puppet and a signboard as was Mr. Colby. The present election should be an inspiring leader backed up by a capable administration as English High Commissioner. The Negroes would respect this kind of man, and I suspect America would get the kind of respect and cooperation which she has not and we could present to the entire world a picture which would cause men to say: "America knows how best to lead the under developed countries and their peoples to independence and strength."

I wish I could sit down and talk to you about these things. I am leaving here July 13 and will be in Missouri at my mother's home after the 20th of August, where you may address me

Dr. Robert S. Gibson
of Mrs. E. A. Gibson
National, Missouri 64100

Yours sincerely,

Robert S. Gibson