

June 6, 1967

High Commissioner William Norwood
Headquarters, Saipan

Dear Mr. Norwood:

Just got back from Honolulu and felt I must share with you some of my very personal impressions. Although I know well that you are busy with a thousand and one things in mind I would hope you could find a few second of your time to skim my letter. Since these are my personal impressions I would rather be treated confidentially. I would hope to talk to you more about it in July when time should permit us.

The visit to Hawaii, the chance to observe the State Legislature, meet old acquaintance, and to make new ones were interesting and most informative. I believe we Micronesian Legislators all became a little envious of the size of staff help available to the Hawaiian Legislators, and we learned even the bads along with the good, but on the whole, it was a very rewarding experience. For myself, I take this opportunity to free my mind from the day to day problems and gave some serious thought to the questions of the future of the Trust Territory Islands. In doing so I was able to talk and to hear from UH students, professors, Legislators, and including the Honorable Tom Gill.

Although I have never heard of any official target date as to which the political determination of the Trust Territory will be made there are ample evidence that this very important decision will have to be made in the very near future. As I see it there are six or rather four theoretical alternatives which may perhaps appeal to territorial vote:

1. Complete independence
2. Affiliation (annexation) to the Territory of Guam
3. Affiliation with the State of Hawaii or other States of the Union
4. U. S. Territory of Micronesia
5. U. S. Commonwealth of Micronesia
6. Affiliation with some government other than U.S.

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Choice number 1 and number 6 are unthinkable. The islands are strategically important to the United States plus the fact that the people here are United States oriented. The islands have been shifted here and there to powerful nations for generations, a historical fact, which the people can no longer tolerate. Affiliation with Guam has some Chamorro support in the Marianas, but such association basically does not appeal to the other five remaining districts. Affiliation with Hawaii may perhaps have greater support; but the question of financing these islands and the emerging feeling of nationalism will demand more independence. The only two realistic possibilities, therefore, are Territory or Commonwealth status. I have not made up my mind as yet as to which would be desirable, but felt that the Congress of Micronesia should look into these possibilities beforelong.

Economic Development is an area of deep personal concern. There ought to be a long range economic planning in Micronesia. The world of today is gone and we must prepare the world of tomorrow for our children for generations to come. Some of our people tend to take into consideration only today's economic opportunities --- a characteristic that is not unique to Micronesia.

We Yapese are frequently called the most conservative, reluctant-to-change of all Micronesians. Perhaps we are -- or were. But the young people on Yap, like those on the other islands, are no longer satisfied with a subsistence economy. Someone in the village acquires a Honda. Shortly there are ten. Somebody trades his Honda for a Datsun. Others want a Datsun. Trails or roads which were perfect according to need ten years ago are no longer adequate. Someone wants a filling station; next a garage. Jobs are not available and frustration starts to build. Schools are graduating more and more students each year which adds more to the scarcity of jobs. The seeds of delinquency starting to sprout throughout the six districts. We have no choice but to create jobs and they can't continue to be only in government.

I have come to believe that major real economic growth potential lies in tourism. This should be developed earlier satisfactorily to attract other business and industry as occurred elsewhere in the world. One initial key to tourism, I believe, is, of course, good safe, efficient, dependable, and modern air transportation. This must come first before hotel or resort development can follow. This may serve to answer your wonder as to why I recently wrote to you, Chairman Murphy of the C.A.B. and the Secretary of the Interior urging a speedy and thoughtful decision on air transportation contract.

Most Micronesians with whom I have discussed the problem of air service with oppose PAA, although Senator Amata Kabua and his followers from the Marshalls support their interest. Chief Petrus will undoubtedly support Continental because of the U.M.D.A. involvement, but certain Trukese would cast their vote otherwise if they were free agents.

As you know, I support Hawaiian, as will most of my fellow Congressmen. If I may I would be most privileged to tell you why.

1. To PAA, Micronesia is insignificant appendage to a great round-the-world system. This is demonstrated by the present PAA air contract services in Micronesia.
2. To Continental, Micronesia is a hoped-for springboard to trans-Pacific non-stops. The Continental Lobbyists team headed by former Governor Carlton Skinner visited the islands some time ago was friendly, but did no analysis of the problems in the islands. In fact, in Yap we met coincidentally at the airport, but no effort was made on their part to see what the problems of Yap are like.
3. I seriously question whether or not U.M.D.A. of which I am treasurer should get involved in air transportation or any other ventures at least at the present stage of its development.
4. Even if Continental should win, Micronesia would still remain insignificant in the eyes of their senior management compared to their routes from Chicago to Los Angeles and other key major cities spanning three-fourth of the Continental United States.
5. Hawaiian's approach has been serious from the start. Their 14-man survey team studied and planned for months before coming out here. When flying their 10,000 route survey flight, every man were instructed to gather pages of specific information according to his speciality. I am confident their proposal to you will be far the most detailed and complete you will find. It should have no illusions nor glittering generalities. There will be no vague promises. They know Micronesia.
6. Hawaiian's is also noted for successful inter-islands air transportation services -- a fact worth considering. With its many years experience serving the Hawaiian Chain, the feeling of being island people and deep understanding of Micronesian Islands and its people, I strongly feel Micronesia would be loosing the best bet if the Hawaiian's fail to win the contract.
7. Not until my recent visit to Hawaii did I truly understanding the reason for Hawaiian's greatest interest in the Micronesian Islands. Since 1929, they have been flying the same 316-mile route with the exception of a few years in the trans-pacific military charter business. The Micronesian, expansion they regard as their last chance. In talking with them I believe if successful in securing the route, main focus of their senior management will be devoted to its success. They have good intention and are eager to assist in the development of Micronesia. I do not think Micronesia will be the "tail" instead of the "dog" as it would probably be with other carriers.
8. As far as providing jobs for the Micronesians, Hawaiian's is dedicated to the concept of training and filling all possible jobs with Micronesians.

9. Hawaiian's knowledge of tourism and hotel development assures us of the steps that must follow the air route. Other carriers would probably assure us of the same thing, but Hawaii would probably have the best knowledge and experience of islands tourism and islands hotel development. Furthermore, in developing the islands Micronesia would rather see more foreign firms coming in than to be the "slave" of one single foreign master monopolizes the whole area.

Health, education, and welfare can not help but benefit from improved transportation. It would be a contributing factor in addition to our ability to attract and hold the people with the teaching and technical skills we so badly need. Improvement of education and medical standards must continue to have top priority. I am personally gratified by your awareness in this area and do expect immeasurable accelerating progress.

The "Aloha Spirit" in Hawaii, as I observed, has lasted for generations. Preserving the unique and beautiful aspect of our culture should take precedence when developing these islands. Our identity as Micronesian people found in our cultural pattern should not be forsaken on account of development. With enlightened leadership from your office supplemented by vigilance from both the Micronesian Congress and the District Legislatures much can be done in this area. As expanded budgets make and more construction possible, good architectural planning should be considered and emphasis be given to maintaining certain traits of native architecture. The famous "Yap Hilton" or Rai View Inn, I would think, offers good example of lack of architectural planning in Micronesia. Tourist industry depends on what we can do, unique to these islands, to make Micronesia more attractive.

Many of us in Micronesia feared that with "progress" will come the loss of our land. I am aware that long term leases---55 to 99 years are necessary to attract foreign investment; and yet those titles remain in the hands of the Micronesian people to assure protection of our children and our children's children. With the guidance of your office good land legislation can be enacted by Congress with protective devices of our children and attractive enough to attract capital investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to set down these thoughts and hoped to talk with you more in Saipan. I do realize that you do not have the answer to the many problems confronting this territory but quite a few of us Micronesians do share the burden of thinking seriously about these problems along with you. I will see you in July.

Sincerely yours,

Franc Nuuan