

1/28/20

Memo:

This letter has been typewritten for your convenience but the work has been done personally. It has not been revised, however, on account of my work which requires me to be actually at my desk on an average of twelve hours out of the twenty-four.

It has occurred to me that this letter might be revised and rewritten in form for publication in the Army + Navy Register or elsewhere.

I have a retained copy of letter.

EBM.

COMMANDING OFFICER
MARINE BARRACKS, MAIN STATION
PARRIS ISLAND, S. C.

January 28, 1920

My dear Governor:

It is a pleasure for me to have occasion to write to you again, after having been separated from your staff for more than a year. My subject is one, however, which has frequently recurred to my mind in the nature of an injustice being permitted through lack of publicity and a consequent lack of appreciation of the part played by Guam during the World War.

It has now come to my attention that the D. S. M. has been awarded to Commander Poyer for service as Governor of Samoa during the war. Admiral Knight has said that Samoa was regarded as in the war zone, on account of the operation of German wreckers in that neighborhood. In the case of a governor whose administration was so skillful as to create an atmosphere of appreciation and gratitude on the part of the Samoans toward the government of the United States, this constituted a great service toward keeping an important part of the U. S. territory in the right kind of spirit to carry on the war. It was, indeed, a direct contribution to the winning of the war. The same, Admiral Knight is again quoted as saying, applied to the marine officers who were recognized for service in Haiti, where there was danger of the establishment of German bases. Why does not the same apply to Guam and why should the administration of that U. S. territory be overlooked now while the history of that period is being recorded?

Furthermore, during the recent hearings of the subcommittee of the Senate naval committee on naval decorations, it was remarked, incidentally, that no recommendations had come from Rear Admiral Fullam, whose force in the Pacific did tremendously important work against German wreckers and in being in great readiness, as they were bound to be under Admiral Fullam, for any sort of sudden service. Admiral Knight hoped that Admiral Fullam would make some recommendations later. Did not our night alarms show that we were in great readiness for any sort of sudden service? Why has not Admiral Knight declared Guam to be in the war zone and made recommendations in accordance with the merits of the situation?

All of these accomplishments of Commander Poyer, the Marine Officers in Haiti, and Admiral Fullam are deserving of meritorious recognition, but the administration of Guam during the World War

is justly entitled to full recognition for similar meritorious accomplishments. Congress has never taken the trouble to enact laws for the Island of Guam; it has failed to reciprocate or do its part in return for the patriotic efforts of the people of Guam to win the war, an example being the humiliating failure to appropriate a mere \$50,000 to tide over the suffering natives after the typhoons of 1918; and they have apparently failed to realize the importance of Guam as a naval base. This might prove to be a most opportune time for the enlightenment of Congress which, when it sees the light, sometimes enacts just rewards.

Your administration as Governor of Guam during the World War certainly entitled you to the appreciation and gratitude of all the peoples of Guam as well as of the people of the United States. It might well be noted here that Guam was most assuredly in the war zone from the very start, since the first warship of the enemy to be sunk after the entrance of the United States into the World War was sunk in the principal harbor of Guam, and enemy raiders continued to roam the seas in that vicinity throughout the war. I have no data at hand but the records will show that approximately 386 out of the 391 officers and men of S.M.S. CORMORAN were rescued from the sea. Under your administration, the people of Guam made a noteworthy record in the purchase of Liberty Bonds and in contributions to the American Red Cross. This was a result of pure patriotism inspired by the Governor of Guam. The formation of the Guam Congress was a farsighted diplomatic conception of the Governor, although the chief benefits derived consisted of the moral effect produced and the lesson taught to the patriots of Guam that their Island was not yet ready for self government, despite the petitions for independence formerly engineered by the radical element. The Guam Industrial Fair has been made a lasting institution as a testimonial of your successful civil administration and the wisdom of your system of political economy.

The Guam Militia is a living monument to the Military Government of Guam and furnishes an example which even the United States of America might emulate to advantage, thus furnishing a subject or accomplishment worthy of the serious consideration of Congress. This matter is considered entitled to much elaboration but I have no statistics at hand.

As for being in great readiness for any sort of sudden service, Guam prepared herself beyond the reasonable expectations of Congress. Attention might be invited to the system of outposts and signal stations; the readiness of batteries both as to materiel and personnel; the arming of the Marine Insular Patrols with German pistols and ammunition from S.M.S. CORMORAN; the arming of the Guam Militia with German rifles and ammunition from S.M.S. CORMORAN; the salvaging of the larger guns from S.M.S. CORMORAN for service by the Guam Militia; the organization of the Guam Militia as an auxiliary defensive force to augment the Marines or to relieve them for other war service; and the volunteering of the Guam Militia for all kinds of war service, without pay and equipped at their own expense with considerable sacrifice involved.

As for the danger of the establishment of German bases, the records will show that there was not only a very great danger of that but that moreover there did at one time exist a very imminent danger of the capture of the Island of Guam by the Germans.

I do not, of course, expect any direct tangible results from this letter but it has seemed to me that Guam's war record has been slighted as far as any official recognition is concerned. I trust that I have not made any serious errors in the above references to Guam and that you will not consider this as overstepping the bounds of propriety.

We were glad to find that General and Mrs. Cole are friends of yours, General Cole being my immediate commanding officer. Mrs. Manwaring and I assure you and Mrs. Smith of our very kindest regards.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward B. Manwaring

Captain Roy C. Smith, U.S. Navy.