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March 19, 1943.

Mr. John Lord O'Brian,
Counsel, War Production Board
5517 Social Security Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. O'Brian:

I reply to your letter of March 4 in which you call attention to the Resolution of the Legislature of Hawaii requesting the Chairman of the War Production Board and the heads of certain other Federal agencies to appoint the Governor of Hawaii as their representative. The resolution apparently also asks that the Governor be permitted to modify or suspend regulations and orders in Hawaii.

In accordance with your request, I inform you of the official position of the War Department at this time with respect to the Government of Hawaii. It is contained in General Emmons' proclamation, copy of which I annex, and which was issued on February 8. On the same date a similar proclamation was issued by Governor Stainback, a copy of which is also annexed.

You will note that the proclamations became effective 30 days after their date, or March 10, 1943.

Inasmuch as the Army has relinquished military control to the extent indicated in the proclamations, it is of course for Mr. Nelson to determine whether he wishes to act in accordance with the request of the Legislature of Hawaii or to establish his independent organization there as the War Production Board has in other parts of the United States and its possessions.

However, inasmuch as the War Department has such a direct and vital interest in the establishment of priorities affecting the military work on the Islands, as well as in other activities of federal agencies named in the resolution, it is the view of the War Department, with which General Emmons strongly concurs, that the Commanding General should be free to deal directly with these federal agencies on matters which affect his interests and such interests of the Navy as are delegated to him. There is not only no need for the Commanding General to approach these agencies through the civil governor, but it would introduce complications and delays if he did so.

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The War Department is charged with the security of the Islands and their development as effective bases of operation for both Army and Naval forces. Both the Army and Navy are engaged in a very large construction program which will continue probably for the entire duration of the war. Both employ large numbers of military and civil personnel. Both procure their supplies from the mainland and from local sources for themselves, their contractors, dealers and suppliers. The War Department feels that it is important that on things which affect their work they should deal directly with the Washington offices through such local federal agencies as are established in Hawaii, and not through a civil governor. The War Department feels that both the military governor and the civil governor should be privileged to request the Federal agencies to suspend or delay the application of certain regulations promulgated by these authorities which are not applicable to Hawaii and which interfere with the progress of military work or with the well-being of the population.

I have talked to General Emmons, who was temporarily in Washington, and he assures me that if Mr. Nelson desires to have his own direct representative in Hawaii, he will be given full assistance and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Julius H. Amberg

JULIUS H. AMBERG
Special Assistant to the
Secretary of War

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