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HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION
ON
NOMINATION OF EDWARD E. JOHNSTON, OF HAWAII, TO
BE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF
THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

APRIL 30, 1969

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INTERIOR NOMINATION

HEARING

COMMITTEE ON

INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES SENATE

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NOMINATION OF EDWARD E. JOHNSTON, OF HAWAII, TO BE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE TRUST TERRI- TORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1969

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, at 10:10 a.m., in room 3110, New Senate Office Building, Senator Henry M. Jackson (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Jackson, Gravel, Allott, Jordan of Idaho, Stevens, and Bellmon.

Also present: Jerry T. Verkler, staff director; Stewart French, chief counsel; James H. Gamble, professional staff member, and Klaus Wiebe, assistant minority counsel.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will please come to order.

The purpose of the hearing this morning is to consider the nomination of Mr. Edward E. Johnston, of Hawaii, to be High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. A biographical sketch of the nominee is before each member of the committee and will be inserted in the record.

(The biographical sketch referred to follows:)

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I. Personal—Name: Edward E. Johnston; Spouse's name: Clare; Home address: 4924 Waa Street, Honolulu, Hawaii; Zip code: 96821; Home telephone: 373-3412; Business telephone: 536-2777; Place and date of birth: Jacksonville, Ill., January 3, 1918; Marriage date: August 26, 1950; Children: Janice, 16, born May 24, 1952; Karen, 13, born October 21, 1955; Resident of Hawaii since 1946.

II. Education—Illinois College, Jacksonville, A.B. in psychology and economics, 1939; Phi Beta Kappa; Active on debate teams both high school and college; State High School Champion of Illinois 3 years; reached final round of National Forensic Tournament in 1934 and 1935.

III. Business—Advertising, newspaper and radio fields prior to World War II. In insurance industry in Hawaii since 1948. President and general manager of 50th State Insurance Associates, Inc., 1960-66; Merged into Hawaiian Insurance and Guaranty, Ltd., 1966, and became vice president of the firm.

IV. Military—United States Air Force, Private to Captain, 1942-48; Captain to Major, 1951-52.

V. Political—Chairman, Honolulu County Committee, 1955-58.

National Convention—Delegate 1960 and 1968; Alternate Delegate, 1964.

Chairman, Republican Party of Hawaii, 1965.

VI. Government—Secretary of Hawaii (Lieutenant Governor), 1958-59.

Chairman, Hawaii State Board of Economic Development, 1960-63.

VII. Civic—President, Hawaii Chapter of Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriters; Director and former president, Easter Seal Society; Honorary member of the Ala Moana Kiwanis Club; Member of the Waialae Iki Community Association; Pacific Club; and Member of the Central YMCA.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, this committee obviously has a very deep interest in the Trust Territory. In 1968, Senator Burdick, the chairman of our Territories Subcommittee, and Senators Metcalf and Moss made a very extensive tour through all the districts of Micronesia, spending the better part of a month visiting the islands and inspecting many of the facilities that have been constructed as a result of increased Federal appropriations. This committee also considered and the Senate passed in 1968 a proposed Status Commission to look into the political future of Micronesia and legislation to establish a revolving credit fund to spur economic development. A number of other bills also resulted from the committee's tour of Micronesia, and some of these have been enacted into law. I merely mention this to demonstrate, of course, our continued interest in the economic and social development of the Micronesian people.

We are interested in making further progress in that area, and I am gratified to note that the Secretary of the Interior is making a trip to Saipan and surrounding islands within the next week. I am very hopeful that upon his return the administration will be in a position to make some recommendations to the Congress about the future relationship of the United States with the territory and that these may be translated into legislative proposals for our consideration.

We are very privileged to have with us the very distinguished senior Senator from Hawaii, Mr. Fong, who will introduce the nominee and make some comments at this time. I know that Senator Fong has had a long and continuing interest in this area of the Pacific. We are delighted to have you with us, Senator, and would welcome any comments that you may wish to make at this time.

STATEMENT OF HON. HIRAM L. FONG, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF HAWAII

Senator FONG. Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am very happy to be here this morning.

I have the pleasure today of presenting Mr. Edward E. Johnston, who has been nominated High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

I have known Ed Johnston for nearly all of the 23 years he has lived in Hawaii. During that time, he has ably demonstrated his abilities both in public and private life. He has a record which I believe eminently qualifies him to serve as High Commissioner in Micronesia.

Mr. Johnston was born and educated in Illinois. A native of Jacksonville, he was graduated from Illinois College with a degree in psychology and economics. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his senior year.

Mr. Johnston was engaged in newspaper, radio, and publishing activities in Illinois prior to World War II.

He is a veteran of both the Second World War and the Korean conflict. In 1942, he joined the Air Force as a private and by 1948 rose to the rank of captain. He served an additional 2 years during the Korean war, then resigned his commission as a major in 1952.

Most of his military career was spent in the Pacific and Asian areas: in Hawaii, the Philippines, Japan, and several of the islands now included in the Trust Territory. (1)

Mr. Johnston entered the insurance business in Hawaii in 1948 and was affiliated successively with the First Insurance Co. of Hawaii, the Von Hamm Young Insurance Department, the 50th State Insurance Associates as president and general manager, and the Hawaiian Insurance & Guaranty Co., Ltd. as vice president. He is a former vice president of the Honolulu Board of Insurance Underwriters and president of the Hawaii Chapter of the Chartered Property & Casualty Underwriters.

In 1958, Mr. Johnston was appointed by President Eisenhower and confirmed by the Senate as Secretary of the Territory of Hawaii, a position equivalent to that of Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawaii today.

He was active in the transition of Hawaii from a territory to a State. He served as Acting Governor when the statehood bill was in its final stages of passage. Beyond his normal duties, he carried out heavy responsibilities in connection with the numerous and complex transitional functions of government during this historic period for Hawaii.

This experience in Hawaii should be invaluable to Mr. Johnston in administering the affairs of the Trust Territory. He will be able to draw upon this knowledge of public administration gained during a critical turning point of Hawaii's history just as the Islands of Micronesia themselves are now entering a decisive stage in their political destiny.

In addition to his tenure as Secretary and Acting Governor of Hawaii, Mr. Johnston served for 4 years as chairman of the Hawaii State Board of Economic Development. This agency gave strong impetus to the launching of the new 50th State in an era of unprecedented economic growth. I believe the able leadership which Mr. Johnston furnished Hawaii at that time is the caliber of leadership which can benefit the Trust Territory today.

Important as these qualifications are, Mr. Johnston possesses a quality indispensable in administering an island network like Micronesia. This is the quality of knowing how to handle human relations.

During his quarter century of residence in Hawaii, Mr. Johnston lived among the cosmopolitan population of the islands. He worked with and for the people there; in short, he truly became one of them.

He developed a keen understanding of the many ethnic groups and a proper sensitivity to the problems and aspirations of peoples living in an insular environment. From this close and friendly relationship, he accumulated a wealth of wisdom, perspective, and appreciation of the political, economic, social, educational, and cultural aspects of an island society.

Mr. Johnston is not a stranger to Micronesians. He has made the acquaintance of present and future leaders of Micronesia. He has learned the art of listening, and he has listened long and thoughtfully to their problems.

Mr. Johnston is fully aware of the unique status of Micronesia as the only United Nations trust area under American administration. There is no other place on this globe where the American flag flies over an area with this special form of government.

Events in that far-off Western Pacific region are accelerating, gaining momentum even while the vast distances separating the numerous islands are shrinking rapidly under the impact of the 20th century.

America's interests in the trust territory are becoming more important with each passing year. Under these circumstances, we need an able, experienced, and dedicated leader in Micronesia. We have such a leader in Mr. Johnston.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I respectfully request that this committee act favorably on his nomination as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you, very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you Senator Fong for your very fine statement. We are all delighted to have you, especially since you are a former member of this committee. We are glad to have you with us this morning. I am sure you may have some other things you may wish to do; however, we would be delighted to have you stay.

Senator FONG. I would like to remain.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, fine. I think Mr. Johnston that it would be appropriate if you would just recite your background and some of your thoughts about the duties and responsibilities of what I think is an extremely important position. We will have an executive session in which you will have a chance to discuss matters that would be more appropriately considered in an executive session. I have some questions myself that I would like to ask at that time.

Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD E. JOHNSTON, NOMINEE TO BE COMMISSIONER OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Mr. JOHNSTON. Well, thank you Senator. I have no prepared statement, but I do consider this a tremendously challenging position. I am well aware of the problems in Micronesia today and also well aware of the great potential that this area has. I am approaching this position with the idea of doing everything I can to build Micronesia and to further improve the relationships between the Micronesian people and the United States.

The CHAIRMAN. Let's see. When you got out of college and before you went into the service, what did you do?

Mr. JOHNSTON. I was employed as a salesman in the printing industry and also sold display advertising for a daily newspaper. Then for about a year prior to my entrance into the Air Force in World War II, I was a radio announcer in Danville, Ill.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Then after the end of World War II you stayed in the service for about 6 years?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir. I stayed in the service until May 1948.

The CHAIRMAN. Then after you got out, what did you do?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Then, I went into the insurance business in Hawaii and have remained in the insurance business except for the time that I served as Secretary of Hawaii and for an additional 2 years in the Air Force during the Korean emergency.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you have your own insurance agency?

Mr. JOHNSTON. I did at one time, sir. 50th State Insurance Associates was an agency which I founded in 1960, after I had served as Secretary of Hawaii. In 1966, this agency was merged into a larger firm, Hawaiian Insurance & Guaranty Co., Ltd., which now operates in six of the Western States. I became a vice president in the larger firm.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, in regard to your chairmanship of the Honolulu County Committee, is that a Republican committee?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Fifty-five from Fifty, was that a full-time job.

Mr. JOHNSTON. No, sir. It was not and neither was the State chairmanship in which I served for the past 4 years. They were both in a volunteer capacity.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; and you carried on your regular business?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you severed your connections with your insurance business?

Mr. JOHNSTON. I have, sir. I was in Hawaii over this past weekend and on Monday of this week, I did, officially in writing, sever my connection with Hawaiian Insurance & Guaranty Co.

The CHAIRMAN. You are, of course, aware of the history of the Micronesia area, especially during the important period at the end of World War I, when it was placed under the League of Nations mandate and administered by Japan. And you have, I think, a pretty good comprehension of the problems that have continued since that time to the present.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you have any public comments that you wish to make concerning our responsibility in this area as a trustee.

Mr. JOHNSTON. I think it would perhaps be more appropriate if I deferred any such comments until after Secretary Hickel's trip to Micronesia and after I have had a chance to actually see things on the spot and perhaps be on the job a few weeks.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I am sure you will agree that there is a real need to improve the economic lot and to make more viable the economy of Micronesia.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir. I think that there are great opportunities in the fields of fishing, possibly to some extent in small farming and agriculture, to at least make the area more self-sufficient, and certainly a tremendous area of development in tourism. Some of the plans for the development of the tourist industry are really fascinating. I think that this will be a good thing for Micronesia and for the relationship between the United States and Micronesia.

The CHAIRMAN. And of course, I assume that you feel quite strongly in favor of greater participation by the people of Micronesia in the Government.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Well, I think that is essential, Senator. I think this should be one of our priority goals to see that more Micronesians are involved in the government of their own area.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Allott.

Senator ALLOTT. Well, I want to welcome you, Mr. Johnston, to this hearing. I think one of the satisfying things to those of us on this committee who are and have been concerned with Micronesia is the interest that the people of Hawaii as a whole have shown in this trust territory and its development, an interest which you apparently share. Since your name was first suggested for this position, while I know that your natural closeness to this area brings you far closer than most of us in the continental United States, have you had any opportunities to discuss with various persons the present situation and conditions there?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, I have Senator. I have had the opportunity to meet with some of the members of the staff of the previous High Commissioner. I have had the privilege of meeting for an hour or so with the Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia which passed through Hawaii about 6 or 7 weeks ago. I have met a number of the leaders in the Congress of Micronesia as they have passed through Hawaii either to or from Washington for various budget hearings and other reasons that they were coming to the Nation's Capital.

Senator ALLOTT. You are aware, of course, of the need out there to develop schools, hospitals, and civic facilities which those people, at the present time, do not have to any great extent?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes, sir. There has been prepared a master plan for each one of the six districts that I think has great merit and I am sure will be considered by the various district legislatures, Micronesian leaders, as well as the trust territory administration. There is another very interesting opening scheduled for September, at Koror in Palau, when the first vocational training center complete with dormitory facilities will be opened. I think this will be extremely important in the overall educational picture to train Micronesians for specific jobs in the economy of the trust territory.

Senator ALLOTT. Well, I think I must say, one of the things that interested me most was your very fine academic background, and with that type of background, I felt sure that you would be interested out there in many of the same things that this committee is. I have no further remarks or questions Mr. Chairman, but I would ask that the two wires that have been sent here—one from the speaker of the Micronesian Congress and one from Senator Amata Kabua, president of the senate—be included in the record at this point.

(The telegrams referred to follow:)

APRIL 1969.

HON. SECRETARY HICKEL,
Interior Department,
Washington, D.C.:

Met Mr. Johnston briefly in Honolulu and was favorably impressed. I have great confidence that he will be an excellent High Commissioner whose administration will be more successful and more responsive to the needs and desires of the people of Micronesia. It will be an honor and pleasure working with him and supporting him in every way possible. As the president of the senate I would like to suggest strongly that Mr. Johnston's role as High Commissioner would be more harmonious and productive, particularly in relation with the people and their representatives in the Congress of Micronesia, if he is assisted by a man with the knowledge, experience, understanding and respect of and for the Micronesians such as Peter T. Coleman as the Deputy High Commissioner. Senator Amata Kabua sends-----

APRIL 1969.

For Office of Secretary. Please pass to Ed Johnston my congratulations for his nomination as High Commissioner Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. I met Mr. Johnston in Washington and Hawaii and was impressed and hope he is confirmed by Senate. Speaker Micronesian Congress Henry sends

Senator JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no questions, but I too would like to welcome Mr. Johnston. I appreciate you coming to see me before when your nomination was pending and at that time we discussed the many matters relative to your new assignment. I was impressed then, and I am impressed now with your qualifications, with

your outlook on your prospective job, and I look forward with pleasure to being one of those who confirms you to this position.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. I, too have no questions Mr. Johnston, but I remember you well from the days of the statehood battles. As a former resident of a former territory, myself, I am happy to see that you will be out there in this new position, because I feel you understand a little about the problems that they face lacking self-government. I hope that you will continue working toward that end in your new position. I understand that you will have a few Alaskans out there working on your staff, but before you shape them up check with me.

Mr. JOHNSTON. I might say, gentlemen, that it's a pleasure to be here in person today. One of the reasons is that the last time my name came before the Senate Interior Committee for confirmation, it was in the last few weeks just before we were granted statehood. I was unable to get back to Washington because Governor Burns was here and I had to stay there so Senator Stevens officially represented me and presented my name at that time. So it is a pleasure to be here at the same time as Senator Stevens now and be able to appear in person before you.

Senator STEVENS. As I recall, we all departed the scene shortly thereafter.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Bellmon.

Senator BELLMON. I want to make a couple of comments that I thought would be of much interest, since I have been on Tinian. I was a member of the forces that captured both those islands in World War II. I lost many very fine friends during the combat that took place there. Also, in 1965, I was able to go back to Saipan and Tinian for a visit. I was amazed and frankly appalled at the disinterest shown by the government there during the time the islands were under the management of the first Commission. When we took those islands sometime in 1940 to 1945, they were very thriving, economic units. The Japanese developed a splendid sugarcane industry there and they were heavily populated, and the people generally seemed to be getting along well. At the present time, or in 1965, the fields are generally abandoned to brush of one kind or another, and the airports are in many cases hardly useful any longer. There are some magnificent beaches on the island, and no one is making any use of them at all.

It seems to me that here is a real challenge to your government to improve the lot of the people there and so make better use of the natural resources of these islands. So I am very pleased at your interest in this position. I believe that you are a resident of Hawaii, and I do not want to try to draw you out and get an expression from you on exactly what could be done with these areas, except that I do feel you have a great challenge. I would like to say that I am very anxious to work with you, because as I said, when I first went to these islands, I hardly could help but realize the potential they had. I know that part of the problem with the people out there is jobs. I believe also, it is encouraging to let the world know the potential that is there, so that outside capital will be attracted, and draw tourists. It can be developed into one of the vacation attractions in the world.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Bellmon.

Did you want to make any comments Senator Allott?

Senator ALLOTT. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Any further questions?

Senator ALLOTT. Just one thing, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome here an old friend of mine, Mrs. Betty Farrington, the very distinguished director of the Office of Territories. She has had a distinguished career in government.

The CHAIRMAN. The chairman would like to join in that expression. I served with her late husband. I also served with Betty Farrington as the delegate from Hawaii. I want to extend to you a warm welcome as you have to me on so many occasions.

Mrs. FARRINGTON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Any further questions? If not, the committee will go into executive session.

(Whereupon, at 10:35 a.m., the committee went into executive session.)

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