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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-171432

February 19, 1971



Dear Mrs. Mink:

On November 27, 1970, you forwarded to us correspondence concerning allegations of gross misutilization of civilian personnel by the United States Army, Hawaii. You stated that the Supply and Maintenance Agency had been reorganized four times during the last five years, and the usual result is that lower grade positions are abolished and higher level positions remain. You requested a determination of how this situation can be justified.

In October 1969 Headquarters, United States Army, Pacific, issued two reorganization orders effective November 1, 1969, pending approval by the Department of the Army. General Order 761 provided, among other things, for redesignation of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G4, as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. One objective was to combine like functions of that Office with those of the Pacific Materiel Management Agency. General Order 763 redesignated the Pacific Materiel Management Agency as the Pacific Supply and Maintenance Agency. The Department of the Army approved the reorganization effective June 30, 1970. J2440

Our staff has inquired into this reorganization to determine its effect on civilian personnel. We examined documents which showed that a position management and classification review was made of the 381 civilian positions authorized the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics and the Pacific Supply and Maintenance Agency, as provided in Army Civilian Personnel Regulation 505. Two objectives of such a review are to assure careful study of the possibilities of improving position structures and to ensure avoidance of position actions which would unnecessarily increase payroll costs.

The position management and classification review included a study of the need for each position and a determination of whether the duties performed or to be performed were in accordance with job descriptions. The grade and pay classification of 275 positions was not changed, but 106 positions were subjected to further evaluation.

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Although the review was completed in August 1970, some proposed grade and pay changes had not been approved at the time of our inquiry in January 1971.

Most of the employees whose positions were reviewed retained their positions or were reassigned to other positions at the same or higher grades. It was determined that some clerical and support positions were not needed. Sixteen employees who had held these positions were reassigned to lower grade positions. Some of these employees have filed appeals with the Civil Service Commission. Four employees were separated through reduction in force actions. These 20 employees were the last listed in the retention registers for their competitive levels.

It seems evident that action to implement the proposed reorganization was taken prematurely. In some departments provisional position changes were made and employees were detailed to other duties several months before the effective date approved by the Department of the Army and before the position management and classification review was made. The Civilian Personnel Office was not involved in planning and implementation early enough to coordinate position actions and resolve potential problems, and employees were not properly informed about how they would be affected.

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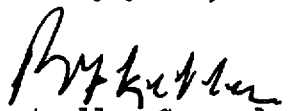
The Civil Service Commission, Honolulu Area Office, has been involved in personnel problems associated with this reorganization since September 1970 when the American Federation of Government Employees requested an investigation of actions which they said appeared to violate the basic merit principles of the Federal Civil Service System. The Manager of the Honolulu Area Office provided us a copy of his November 23, 1970, letter to you describing in detail the events that had occurred. He said that although a serious problem had existed because of administrative errors or oversight, the rights of the individual employees are being protected.

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Since both the Army and the Civil Service Commission have taken action to protect the rights of employees affected by the reorganization, we believe that further review by our staff at this time would not serve a useful purpose.

We trust that our reply is responsive to your request. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,


Acting Comptroller General
of the United States

C The Honorable Patsy T. Mink
House of Representatives