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MANEUVER-GROUNDS, CAMPS, ROADS DESIRED FOR OAHU'S ARMY STRATEGY

Gen. Evans, Commanding Hawaiian Department, Tells the Chamber of Commerce of Needs for Military Organizations—Strategic Highways to Be Big Feature of Plans

Maneuver grounds, camping spaces and good roads are being developed at a rapid rate as part of the defense strategy for Oahu, Gen. Robert K. Evans, commanding the Hawaiian department, told an audience of businessmen yesterday afternoon at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, which proved of absorbing interest from the standpoint of military plans.

Gen. Evans suggested that the chamber, as a patriotic act, help the war department secure land here to accommodate a full division of troops—21,000 men of all branches of the service.

The general's brief and informal talk, together with discussion, by answers to questions and discussion by members, is given herewith from the chamber's stenographic report.

President Smith: "Referring to that portion of the secretary's report in reference to military roads and steps to be taken to further that end, Brig. Gen. R. K. Evans, commander of the Hawaiian department of the United States army, will state his ideas on the subject."

Gen. Evans: "You all know that since the passage of the National Defense Act the army has been largely increased and that the garrison of Hawaii is now definitely fixed with three brigades of infantry, artillery, a regiment of cavalry and a regiment of engineers. The 9th Regiment of Field Artillery has forty seven-inch guns which are going to be hauled around by motor transportation.

"In this connection it may interest you to know that we must have land. We have 7000 men here and they are cramped for room. Here private property is so sacred that if a soldier goes on it he has a charge of trespass brought against him. In some countries soldiers run free, but here we have to own land for our soldiers to exercise on, so we must have more land. If we march from Schofield to Waimanalo, there is no camping ground for the men and they would have to sleep in the road and take chances on an automobile running over them. We suggest that we must arrange for full accommodations for the full regiments. My instructions were to send in a report of necessary lands for the division and the plan is that the government proposes to get land by an exchange of public lands.

about \$25,000 a mile. Of course, that is first-class. "Then there are a number of other strategic roads needed so it will be possible to cross over the mountain range. These roads are all marked down. We must have roads to move artillery, but the infantry can get along anywhere. We must have roads to move the machine guns so if an enemy deploy we can shoot down on them. We have 200 miles of strategic roads in sight that we should have. There is no use in having troops if they are corralled in a bowl and cannot get over the mountain range with their guns and ammunition. So that is the road feature.

"It is an essential feature but we will get them slowly like everything else. It is hard to get money in Honolulu so it will come slowly, but you gentlemen can help the army in getting roads and you can talk more freely than we can. Next winter the War Department will bring in that \$700,000 for those two roads. We will probably have something in for strategic road over Kolekole pass. As far as the army is concerned we are prepared to say that roads are absolutely essential in defense of the island.

"That is about all I can say unless you want to ask some questions. We will get the roads in time." E. I. Spalding: "I would like to ask the general if in his knowledge these roads will be used exclusively for military purposes or whether they will be open to civilian travel."

"Open to Anybody" General Evans: "They will be open to anybody. The land will of course go up in value where these roads are built; people will build homes and open up farms."

Mr. Spalding: "The main incentive for the chamber to do anything would be the defense of the islands." General Evans: "Yes, I think it should be."

William Thompson: "Do you think the road from Diamond Head to Waimanalo would be the second one of importance?" May Use Military Prisoners General Evans: "That road is ordered surveyed and estimated for and another from Fort Kamehameha through the naval reservation is estimated for and surveyed. Those will be the first two. You must start somewhere. There is a plan to use military prisoners for the work. We have a large number of them and we could have some of them build the roads."

Judge Dole: "Will any of these new surveys be parallel to the county roads?" General Evans: "No." Judge Dole: "If you wanted to use the line of the county road would you improve it?" General Evans: "If we did not and ran our motors over it somebody would have to."

Mr. Thompson: "Would a continuation of the road from Waimanalo be within the range of possibility?" General Evans: "When you have that you have a road around the island. We might have a road following the railroad around the west side. That is a good place and there is road most of the way to Kaena point. This is a big subject and it will take a great deal of money and time and work before we get it, but if we go at it systematically we will do something in time. Everything is money."

Detention Barracks Suggested Secretary Brown: "In talking with General Evans a few days ago I will repeat what he said and I think he will have no objection. In connection with the prisoners those that accrue to a division here go to the coast (Alcatraz island). I asked the general about how many prisoners he would have on hand out of a division of men

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of 21,000 and he said about 600. I asked him if those men might be available for road work. He said no, not all of them, but a large percentage if we had some means of keeping them here. I suggested the thought, why not try to keep them here and get a detention barracks. General Evans tells me he will back up a movement of this chamber to that end. I think we might go after it and I give it to you to think about."

Judge Dole: "Would the territory build the barracks?" Secretary Brown: "No, the federal government."

Not Much Barracks Needed General Evans: "We don't need much barracks here in this climate. We used to keep prisoners and work them and we started to build Schofield Barracks with them and we had a corral out there for them. We had money to improve the corral and enlarge it. \* \* \* Hardly any nation that has accomplished great things has done it with voluntary-said labor. We have the pyramids which the Jews built when they were prisoners of war. The price of labor is high."

Judge Dole: "Don't the prisoners want to work?" General Evans: "I suppose so." Judge Dole: "In the territory in a large number of cases the prisoners are not compelled to do hard labor but are allowed to decide whether they want to work or not and a large percentage after a time ask for work."

General Evans: "Our prisoners now only take enough exercise not to get bored." E. H. Paris: "Would the War Department regard it as 'butting in' on the part of the Chamber of Commerce to suggest these barracks?" General Evans: "I could not say. One more word on the subject of land here necessary to accommodate the full division. I think it would be well for this chamber to look at it from the side of the War Department. We must have land, so don't throw obstacles in our way. Some people think the soldier does not need much land. We are not asking for more than is necessary. If the Chamber of Commerce will help get the land it will be a good and patriotic act."

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