

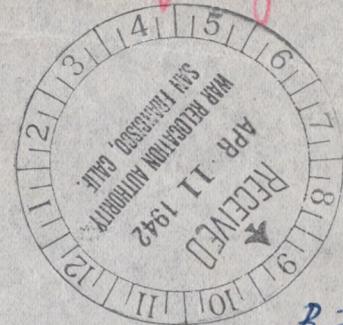
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WASHINGTON



*B2.07*

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

APR -7 1942

AIR MAIL

Lt. Gen. John L. DeWitt,  
Commanding General, Western Defense Command,  
The Presidio,  
San Francisco, California.

Dear General DeWitt:

At the suggestion of the office of the Provost Marshal General I am advising you of the contents of two telegrams received by me regarding the movement of Japanese into Grant County, Washington. Grand Coulee Dam and power plant and transmission lines carrying electric energy from the power plant are located in this county, in which is also situated a considerable area of the Bureau of Reclamation's Columbia Basin Irrigation project which will be served from Grand Coulee Dam when distribution facilities are constructed.

The first telegram dated March 31 from Mr. P. A. Staley, County Auditor, Grant County Coordinator, read as follows:

"Lands in Grant County being sold to Japs. And Japs being moved into county by big corporations who hold contract for supplies to Government. Can't this be stopped. Lands being unloaded to Japs. Grand Coulee Dam in this county. Japs living under and near Bonneville power lines. There is also airport and bombing ranges in this county. Can there ever be a reclamation project under these circumstances. Why build such a project for Japs. Urge immediate investigation."

Upon receipt of Mr. Staley's complaint I wired Mr. F. A. Banks, the Supervising Engineer of the Bureau of Reclamation at Coulee Dam, who reported on pertinent matters as follows:



"Retel first Japanese entry into project area. Parker advises that inquiry yesterday reveals that Moses Lake people want Japanese farmers to come in near there and that Quincy people object to Cedar Green enterprise which plans to employ Japanese labor near Quincy. In both cases the Japanese have come on to lands outside District. Our advice that Army no longer will permit voluntary migration. \*\*\*\*\*"

The concern of the Bureau of Reclamation rests primarily on the presence in proximity to Grand Coulee Dam and transmission lines, taking electric energy from its power plant, of Japanese whose removal from the sensitive areas of the Pacific Coast was found desirable. The importance of Grand Coulee Dam as a source of power for war industries has been recognized by the designation of the area surrounding the limits of the dam property defined as zone A-2 in your proclamation of March 2. It is noted that zones A-120 to A-123, inclusive, relating to the Ephrata Bombing Ranges, are established by Public Proclamation No. 2, dated March 16, 1942.

OK

No construction work on the irrigation system of the Columbia Basin project is immediately planned, but there would doubtless be an adverse effect on the future of the project as a result of the presence of Japanese in the area. There is also a serious economic question as to the ability of lands in the Columbia Basin, without irrigation, to support Japanese or any other farmers.

I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Milton S. Eisenhower, Director of the War Relocation Authority with headquarters at the Whitcomb Hotel, San Francisco.

I will appreciate being advised of any action you may take with respect to this complaint.

Very truly yours,

*John C. Page*  
Commissioner.

CC - Regular Mail

CC - Mr. Milton S. Eisenhower,  
Director, War Relocation Authority,  
Whitcomb Hotel,  
San Francisco, California.

Regional Files, Washington D. C. .002  
Miyamoto

B 2.09

Memo from Lt. Col. Cress for Col. Bendetsen  
April 13, 1943

Subject: Military Intelligence Officers of WRA Projects.

It occurs to me that perhaps one officer of the Military Police Organization guarding each relocation site might act as project Intelligence Officer. This Officer, of course, would be in the same relation to the project authorities as the Military police Organization to which he is assigned. He would cooperate with but not be subject to orders of the WRA project personnel.

I believe some such plan will be necessary at the Parker Project in view of the limited time available for arrangements. However I feel that the Intelligence Officer on all projects within the Pacific Coast Theater of Operations should come from the Army. This will permit continuity of policies of WCC and WRA. It will also allow the closest coordination in the execution of military policies effecting these evacuees. Since the responsibility of the Military Commander is continuous, I believe his own personnel should be utilized to furnish early information of any activities inimical to the war effort. Finally, I believe that the performance of the Military Police as exterior guards will be facilitated by efficient Intelligence activities within the project.

Please let me have your reaction to this proposal as soon as practicable. If we are to do this, the subject undoubtedly will have to be taken up with Headquarters of Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, and in addition the Provost Marshal General should probably be consulted.

Regional Files. Wash. D.C. :002

Miyamoto

Memo from Lt. Col. <sup>Zrd K</sup> Evans to Col. <sup>E. F</sup> Cress  
April 14, 1942

1. With reference to your memorandum concerning military intelligence officers at WRA projects (attached), General DeWitt has defined a policy wherein no military agencies will operate in any respect within the confines of reception centers.
2. Our policy is that the policing of the interior security of the center is the responsibility of the camp management. In this connection, we have hired police officers and at a propitious time expect to request the F.B.I. to perform a shakedown inspection of the whole center.
3. The only conditions under which General DeWitt will permit the military to operate within a center is in the case of the military police having to enter to quell a riot or in some other emergency.

*Med.*

Memo from B.Y. Read, Colonel, A.G.D. to Commanding Generals  
May 28, 1942

1. Prior instructions on the subject of functions of military police units at the assembly centers and relocation centers for Japanese evacuees are rescinded and the following instructions are substituted therefor:

a. Purpose of the evacuation center. The evacuation center has been established for the purpose of caring for Japanese who have been moved from certain military areas. They have been moved from their homes and placed in camps under guard as a matter of military necessity. The camps are not "concentration camps" and the use of this term is considered objectionable. Evacuation centers are not ~~concentration~~ internment camps. Internment camps are established for another purpose and are not related to the evacuation program.

b. Operation of the evacuation center. The center is operated by civilian management under the Wartime Civilian Control Administration, Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army. A civilian director is in charge of each center. Civilian police available will be on duty to maintain order within the camp. The civilian police are responsible for the search of individual evacuees and their possessions for contraband. The civilian police are responsible for the escort of visitors and evacuees throughout the camp. The camp director is responsible for all means of communication within the camp.

c. (1) Functions of Military Police at evacuation centers. The military police are assigned to the center for the purpose of preventing ingress or egress of unauthorized persons and preventing evacuees from leaving the center without proper authority. The assembly centers in the combat area are generally located in grounds surrounded by fences clearly defining the ~~limits~~ limits for the evacuees. In such places the perimeter of the camp will be guarded to prevent unauthorized departure of evacuees. The relocation centers are generally large areas of which the evacuee quarters form only a part of the center. Those centers may have no fences and the boundaries may only be marked by signs. At such centers the military police will control the roads leading into the center and may have sentry towers placed to observe the evacuee barracks. The balance of the area may be covered by motor ~~patrol~~ patrols. The camp director will determine those persons authorized to enter the area and will transmit his instructions to the commanding officer of the military police. The camp director is authorized to issue permits to such evacuees as may be allowed to leave the center.

(2) In case of disorder, such as fire or riot, the camp director or interior police are authorized to call upon the military police for assistance within the camp. When the military police are called into the camp area on such occasions the commander of the military police will assume full charge until the emergency ends. The question of the disposition of unmanageable evacuees is not a responsibility of the military police.

(3) The commanding officer of the military police is responsible for the black-out of the evacuation center. A switch will be located to permit the prompt cut-off by the military police of all electric current in the camp. He will notify the camp director of his instructions relative to black-outs.

(4) The commanding officer of the military police is responsible for the protection of merchandise at the post exchanges furnished for the use of the military personnel.

(5) Enlisted men will be permitted within the areas occupied by the evacuees only when in the performance of prescribed duties.

(6) All military personnel will be impressed with the importance of the duties to which their unit has been assigned, the performance of which demands the highest standards of duty, department and military appearance.

(7) A firm but courteous attitude will be maintained toward the evacuees. There will be no fraternizing. Should an evacuee attempt to leave camp without permission he will be halted, arrested and delivered to the camp police.

(8) Commanding officers of military police units will be furnished copies of operating instructions issued to the camp director. They are required to maintain such close personal contacts with the camp director and his assistants as will assure the efficient and orderly conduct of the camp, and the proper performance of the duties of each.

By command of Lieutenant General DeWitt:

Signed B. Y. Read  
Colonel, A.G.D.  
Adjutant General

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West

April 10, 1942

Room 427  
Whitcomb Hotel  
San Francisco, California

Memorandum:

To: Robert K. Lamb

From: John W. Abbott

Subject: Interview with Lt. Colonel Boekel

Colonel Boekel presented the following points:

(a) He is of the opinion that Congress past a law two or three weeks ago which presumably would exempt all those aliens over 50, who have been in the U. S. since 1924. Such classification would still leave them aliens but not enemy aliens, and would exempt Italians and Germans in this category. He would like further information with respect to this bill.

(b) Concerning the note sent by the Congressman in regard to telegram received by Mr. Tolan from an attorney named Harvey, Mr. Boekel said he had conferred with Harvey and that the attorney was now satisfied that his clients were on the same footing as those he indicated in his telegram (as coming under section 310 of the Nationality Act).

(c) I told Colonel Boekel I had spoken with Colonel Bendetsen on the question of stateless people, Austrians and others. He agreed that clarification on the status of these people was very much needed. He hoped we would continue our efforts along this line.

(d) The Colonel had expected to hear either by letter or wire from Mr. Thomas, who, he said, had promised to keep in touch with him on developments in Washington. I would suggest that it might be well for Len to write Colonel Boekel.

(e) One point we should try to discuss with Eisenhower is the problem duplication of effort which will ensue if a coordination is not had between the alien reception center division of the Army's Civilian Affairs Branch and Mr. Eisenhower's War Relocation Authority. I got the impression in an interview with Mr. R. C. Nicholson, Regional WPA Director now serving as head of the alien reception center under the Army's direction, that his work and Eisenhower's are headed for over-lapping if the matter is not straightened out soon. Incidentally,

the opinion appears to be gaining here that projects of some kind must be set up soon to avoid a serious lowering of moral in the centers established thus far, at Manzanar and at Santa Anita. Estimated 8,000 Japanese are apparently in these two places and thus far virtually no work has been provided. This is no ones fault in particular but the problem is serious nevertheless. I hope we can get a chance to talk to Eisenhower about the situation. Among the projects under consideration by Mr. Nicholson are vegetable gardens, Soy Sauce Factory and a home for veterans convalescing from the current war.

Regional Files, 710, Wash., D. C.  
Miyamoto

*Evacuation*  
WDC  
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TT from Karl R. Bendetsen to Governor Maw, Herbert B.  
April, 1942

This is in further reply to your letter of April 13, 1942, which arrived during my absence in Washington.

With specific regard to the points set forth in your letter, the following comments are made.

1. As clearly outlined to you in my original presentation at Salt Lake, the Federal Government has assumed full responsibility for handling the Japanese problem. There is now no question with regard to this nor was there any at the time of my appearance in Salt Lake.

2. Any mass movement of evacuees under Federal supervision will be to shelter erected on projects under complete Federal supervision. As to whether evacuees will be returned to their former places of residence cannot now be predetermined by administrative officials. This is a matter for the Congress to determine when the time comes.

3. There has never been any disagreement but that evacuees should be self-supporting, if possible, and should contribute to the fullest practicable extent to the war effort.

4. and 5. The evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry is being and will be carried forward under complete Federal supervision. The determination of the services which evacuees can perform will be made by the Federal government. However, the advice and assistance of the state and other qualified sources will doubtless be sought by the War Relocation Authority.

- (a) That the labor be voluntarily recruited
- (b) At prevailing wages
- (c) With responsibility definitely imposed upon the state and local governments to maintain order and prevent direct action
- (d) In shelter provided by the employer with necessary minimum standards. And if the labor is seasonal, cost of transportation to and from reception centers to be borne by the employer.

7. The use of CCC camps has been exhaustively considered since the initiation of the program. Their use is not feasible because of the fact that the number of guards and the administrative personnel required for a 200 person camp is as great as that required for a 2,000 person camp. Use of portable CCC camps will be made wherever it is to the economic advantage of the government to take them down and reassemble them together on projects.

8. Comment has been made on this in 2 above. An educational program is, of course, highly desirable. As far as preventing the sale of lands to persons of Japanese ancestry is concerned, it would appear that this is well within the powers of the states to accomplish, for the individual states control the title of the lands therein.

9. The suggestion that there be some form of registration is, of course, entirely sound. During these times it would be very advantageous to adopt a system of registration of all persons.

10. and 11. Comment has already been made on paragraphs 10 and 11 above.

12. Under no condition should evacuee labor be imported or used in competition with other available labor. I am sure the war Relocation Authority heartily concurs.

TT from Karl R. Bendetsen to Governor Maw  
April, 1942

13. The cooperative attitude of the several states in assisting the Federal government in the solution of mutual problems is much appreciated. With this cooperation the common objective--victory--will be assured.

Thank you for your letter. The very evident and painstaking thought you have given this problem is much appreciated.

Regional Files, 710, Wash., D. C.  
Miyamoto

TT from J. L. DeWitt to Col. Bendetsen  
April 23, 1942

Subject -- Copy of letter

The Honorable Sam C. Ford  
Governor of Montana  
Helena, Montana

My Dear Governor Ford.

I have your letter of April 11, 1942, in which you comment at length upon certain phases of Japanese evacuation and refer to the need of additional labor in the production of sugar beets.

You have suggested that Montana is not only willing but anxious to receive evacuees for the purpose of fulfilling labor supply requirements in agricultural production, provided Federal troops are furnished in order to guarantee the security not only of the communities concerned, but also of the evacuees.

I am well aware of the need for the widest distribution of available manpower in the maintenance of production. However, present military resources are not such as to permit the use of Federal troops for the purpose indicated by you. The evacuation program contemplates accomplishment in an orderly fashion under Federal supervision. Evacuees will be transported under appropriate military escort from their homes to Assembly Centers and thence to reception centers on approved sites having resettlement and relocation opportunities. These sites will be under some military police patrol. They will be in all instances designated as prohibited zones, the right of ingress and egress being subjected to absolute military control. However, the supply of military police will not be sufficient to permit private employment under the supervision of Federal troops on scattered farms or throughout an extensive agricultural community. It is, therefore, impossible favorable to regard the suggestion contained in your letter.

The responsibility for the maintenance of law and order is primarily that of local and state officials, and it is only where there is a complete breakdown in the ability to discharge this responsibility that the Federal Government may enter the scene. While it is doubtful whether many Japanese would volunteer for such work, by reason of the wide-spread fear of direct action, if any Japanese are willing to volunteer for labor in Montana sugar beet fields, permission will be readily granted, provided official assurances are forthcoming from the chief executive of the state concerned and from local county officials, that full responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and the prevention of direct action is incumbent upon them. It must further appear that such labor will be paid prevailing wages, that it will not be imported to compete with any other available labor, and where the work is of a seasonal nature, that the cost of transportation from the assembly or reception center and return is absorbed by the employer. Of course, the responsibility for providing shelter and the minimum standard of living conditions is also to be discharged by the employer.

If the conditions named above are fulfilled, I will readily consent to the recruitment of Japanese labor on a voluntary basis. At present there are no reception center sites under consideration in Montana for the reason that no site has been

*Evacuation*  
*Equal*

*B 2.07*

TT from J. L. DeWitt to Col. Bendetsen

-2-

discovered capable of providing resettlement and relocation opportunities for not less than 5,000 people. Reception centers must meet this minimum in order that the number of military police required for patrolling is kept at the minimum. Should a suitable reception center site be developed in Montana, the conditions imposed upon the recruitment of labor to work in private employment would remain unchanged.

I trust this fully answers the inquiries made in your letter.