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April 8, 1942

Hon. Edwin C. Johnson
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Johnson:

I received your letter of April 4 at Salt Lake City just as the conference with state officials was about ready to begin.

Voluntary evacuation led to many difficulties and therefore was discontinued by General DeWitt. Those who did voluntarily evacuate got into trouble, as you know.

The Governors and Attorneys-General of the various states made it abundantly clear that they wished this evacuation to be on a planned, orderly, Federally protected and Federally supervised basis. I am immediately submitting to the Attorney-General, Mr. Biddle, the question you raise with respect to taking Federal control of those who did evacuate prior to March 29.

I shall write you again.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eisenhower
Director

MSE:ns

CONFIDENTIAL

April 8, 1942

Mr. Edward Deschamps
R.F.D. # 2
Missoula, Montana

Dear Mr. Deschamps:

On the plane returning to San Francisco I read the note you handed me at the hotel in Salt Lake City. As I stated at the conference, we wish to establish each reception center on publicly owned land where there is opportunity for the evacuees to raise their own food; other public work should also be available. With such a protected and widely supervised community established, I most sincerely believe that arrangements can be worked out from that point on for the Japanese to engage in private work at prevailing wages.

I still believe this despite the direction the conference took in Salt Lake. I do not believe, however, that many Japanese will move out of assembly points under Army control to engage in agricultural work this spring simply because the necessary protective services are not available.

Needless to say this letter is confidential and I will treat your reply the same way. I hope you will let me know whether or not, in your judgment, there is a location in the neighborhood of Missoula that will meet our needs.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eisenhower
Director
War Relocation Authority

MSEisenhower:HC

TELETYPE

April 8, 1942

Morrill M. Tozier
Room 302, Administration Bldg.
Department of Agriculture
Washington D.C.

Sorry that I was not able to teletype you the highlights of the Salt Lake conference which was a confidential meeting. As the meeting turned out the highlights did not make suitable grist for foreign propaganda mills. Rather, they would be wonderful propaganda for the Axis. We will, however, today or tomorrow issue the first detailed statement on the relocation program which I will teletype to you and which should be useful to C.O.I. and C.I.A.A.

A complete statement regarding the Salt Lake conference will be sent to you as soon as prepared.

John Bird
Director of Information
War Relocation Authority
Whitcomb Hotel Bldg.
San Francisco, California

JB:jc

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April 8, 1942

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disposit.*

Hon. Francis Biddle
The Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Biddle:

Under separate cover I am sending you an account of what took place at a rather tragic conference with various state officials in Salt Lake City yesterday. No doubt Tom Clark who left for Washington immediately after the meeting will give you some of the details.

Just as the meeting was about to open I was handed the enclosed letter from Senator Johnson of Colorado who demands that by some method I take back into federal control those Japanese who voluntarily evacuated prior to March 29. All the Governors want the same thing done. Will you please have someone advise me at the earliest possible moment just what the legal situation is on all this?

The whole picture here is much worse than anyone in Washington can imagine. We are going to have to fight every step of the way to do a decent job. //

Respectfully yours,

Milton Eisenhower
Director

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Enc.

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April 9, 1942

Hon. Herold D. Smith
Director, Bureau of the Budget
Washington, D. C.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr. Smith:

My experience thus far in developing the program for the permanent relocation of Japanese evacuees from West Coast military areas definitely indicates that the situation facing us is much more difficult and dangerous than it originally appeared to be.

We had been planning for the orderly, planned evacuation of Japanese to large reception centers on public lands, where certain combinations of public and other types of work could be developed. We had in mind the following five-point program:

To explore the possibilities of such a program and to explain what we had in mind to the officials of states in which we might be operating, a meeting was called at Salt Lake City on April 7. The meeting was attended by Governors or their representatives, attorneys general or their representatives, Extension Service Directors, Agricultural War Board Chairmen, and Farm Security State Directors, from

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ten of the far western States. Colonel Karl R. Bendetsen, assistant chief of staff in charge of civil affairs, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, and Tom C. Clark, chief of the civilian staff, War-time Civil Control Administration, joined me in conducting the meeting.

In the face of all these conflicts, and because of the exceedingly bitter and dangerous sentiment toward Japanese evacuees in these States,

we are compelled in the early stages of the program to declare each Relocation area to be a military zone under protection of the Army. Of necessity, for the protection of the evacuees, the economic and community life will be developed almost exclusively within the relocation area, and will not extend beyond the boundaries of the defined military zone in which each center is located.

This also means, of course, that economic opportunities for the evacuees, and possibilities of utilizing their skills and abilities in production that contributes to the war effort, will be limited to the first three parts of our proposed program: (1) Public works, (2) Food production on the project, and (3) manufacturing that can be carried out on the project.

At the meeting, you may easily pick out the points of conflict and the various attitudes represented at the conference. Please understand that we sought to make this report as objective as possible, and that it probably does not fully reflect the extremes in opinion voiced at the meeting.

Sincerely,

M. S. Eisenhower
Director

C O P Y

April 15, 1942

Hon. Herbert B. Maw
Governor of Utah
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Governor Maw:

A copy of your letter of April 8 addressed to me at San Francisco has been sent here by air mail. It may be that Mr. E. R. Fryer, Regional Director of the War Relocation Authority in charge of the San Francisco office, has already written you. If so, this reply may duplicate something you have already received.

First of all, let me say that if I had to do the thing over again I would not call a large meeting such as we had at Salt Lake City. I would try to meet separately with the agricultural interests and with the executive heads of the interested States. One difficulty in the meeting was that one group wished to have Japanese evacuees made available immediately for work in sugar beet fields before the military establishment is prepared either to separate the appropriate evacuees under the orderly evacuation procedures under way, or to provide protective services. On the other hand, we were simultaneously discussing the perfectly understandable desire of State executives to be given certain elementary assurances with regard to the management of evacuees.

I am in Washington now, meeting with the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, the Attorney General, Members of Congress, the Secretary of War, and others to get agreement on basic policies.

I did not intend to convey the impression, and I am sure Colonel Bendetson did not, that we intend to do nothing whatever about the Japanese who have under voluntary evacuation come into Utah and other States. What I did say, and what I am still puzzled about, is that I have difficulty in seeing how the Federal Government may bring back into a controlled area those citizens who did move out voluntarily. Certainly, however, we intend to construct reception or relocation centers to which those now being evacuated will be moved and to which those who voluntarily evacuated will be given every inducement to move. I am taking the question of requiring voluntary evacuees to move to reception centers up with the Attorney General.

As I indicated at the Salt Lake meeting, from here on there will be no haphazard, voluntary evacuation or infiltration. It will be an orderly Governmentally-managed and Governmentally-protected process.

Now, when families are once settled in reception centers and we thereafter face the problem of evacuees' moving out into season private employment, it is necessary to have such protective services as are needed to guarantee law and order. Here, as I understand it, you have suggested that the States should supervise the distribution of Japanese, provided the Federal Government would allot necessary funds to the States. I am also taking this up with the War Department and other appropriate officials.

You may be certain that officials either of the War Department or of the War Relocation Authority will get in touch with you in advance if it is planned to establish a reception center in your State.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eisenhower
Director

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