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AMERICAN LEGION

1943-45

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ans.
4/5/43

Mr. Fisher: I thought this carbon might be of help.
JRC C.

C O P Y

Americanism Committee
The American Legion; Department of California, 17th District
912 Rowan Building . Phone Michigan 1144
Los Angeles, California

January 18, 1943

#1/2/43 Ruth - I have done nothing about this.
He may be worth seeing in L.A.
Jm F.

Mr. Joseph Conard
2538 Channing Way
Berkeley, California

Dear Sir:

I have been appointed as Chairman of a Committee to investigate and report to the Legion on problems surrounding the Japanese during the war and also after it is over. In this connection I am advised that you are connected with the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council.

If you have any literature or information which will assist in fairly and completely setting forth the problems and methods for their solution, I would greatly appreciate receiving it as I am sure it will be of substantial assistance.

Yours very sincerely,

s/ Ben S Beery

Ben S. Beery

BSB:lb

LEGION ADOPTS PASADENA'S VIEWS ON JAPANESE QUESTION

So pleased was the National executive committee of the American Legion with an article written by W. W. Colton of Pasadena regarding exclusion of Japanese from the United States, that the article was adopted as the official viewpoint of the American Legion.

from The Pasadena Post, May 11, 1943

The article referred to above follows.

ONLY ONE WAY OUT

The murder of General Doolittle's flyers by an exultant Japanese government became known at the height of a silly but dangerous campaign to release and resettle the "loyal" Japanese on the Pacific Coast and in Arizona. It is hoped this horrible, official execution, which was patently preceded by torture, will bring the inherent sadism and savage appetites of the Nipponese race sharply to the attention of the grandmothers - old and young, male and female - who, in the mistaken interests of justice, would repopulate the Far West with unassimilable aliens, whose presence, now or a hundred years from now, could only end in tragedy and disaster.

As for making distinctions between "loyal" and "Disloyal" Nisei, the people of this area know such a proposal constitutes the ultimate horseradish. It simply can't be done. The mind of the Japanese-American is utterly inscrutable to the Caucasian, though he lives next door for a lifetime. Most of the internees protest their allegiance to the United States, which is obviously to their advantage. But the extent of the Pearl Harbor Day riots at Manzanar and Poston give many of them the lie. And, not one instance has been published of a "loyal" Japanese giving information of traitorous activities on the part of a single person among the thousands of disloyal brethren. The grandmothers can't answer that one, except to say, "They're human beings", which may possibly be so but which has nothing to do with the danger of turning them loose in the designated war zone.

To release them to the interior, where they might acquire property and form rapidly-multiplying colonies - forever alien - would likewise be a tragic move. The mistaken humanitarians of the east and midwest who, for many years, opposed California's alien land laws and the Oriental Exclusion Act because they were so far from the situation they didn't know what they were talking about, find, in this threat, their chickens come home to roost. In sheer self-defense and with only a hazy idea of what the Japanese infiltration would mean, the Michigan State Legislature has passed a doubtfully constitutional exclusion act of its own; the war industries of Pittsburgh have stated emphatically that they won't hire them; and almost every state suggested as a haven for them has protested frantically if sometimes informally.

The Nipposese are out of place in this country - they will always be out of place. Their residence anywhere in the United States, with their child and female labor making the underselling of white farmers and merchants a foregone conclusion, would eventually be as tough and dangerous for the Japs as for their Caucasian neighbors. Race riots might ensue. Bitterness would always be present.

With the welfare of both American and American-born Japanese at stake, there is but one way out. It can be used immediately at the close of this war - it can never be used again. Send them back across the Pacific to live among their natural kindred. Their opportunities for social acceptance and self-respect lie there.

Would they be humiliated by such a procedure? Only for a year or two, after which they would become social and economic leaders of their communities. Would they prosper? Anywhere. Would they encounter competition? With millions of Oriental and Pacific island acres to which they might be transposed - not too much. Would their removal be constitutional? The Constitution was made for amendments in crises. Would they undergo financial hardships because of deportation? No. Their property has been sold or is in the process of being sold at a fair market price and all transactions can be completed before the war is over. Will the opportunity to deport them in a humane manner occur again? No. Because with hard cash in their hands, the Nisei upon release, will buy property at once and tie themselves to the soil. Will the opportunity to deport them at all occur again? No. Because they propagate too rapidly and, in all likelihood, they will never again be entirely assembled in camps under the arbitrary control of federal authorities. Will resettlement in the Orient or Pacific islands cost money? Plenty. But far less than the retention of the Nisei in America, with the specter of their possible domination of western agriculture, the menacing race problem caused by their fecundity and the almost certain stimulation of World War III as a result of unceasing and unavoidable bitterness between irreconcilable opposites living together.

The time comes to men and nations when an unpleasant purgative is the only way to health. That time, for the United States, is about to arrive.

from the Pasadena Bulletin of May 1, 1943, published
by Pasadena Post No. 13 of the American Legion

COPY

AMERICAN LEGION
HOLLYWOOD WORLD WAR II
POST 591

2035 North Highland Avenue
Hollywood 28, Calif.

Address Your Reply To:

Milton Luban, Chairman Publicity Committee
1439 1/2 North Sierra Bonita
Hollywood, 46, California
Hillside 0733

The first Japanese-American veteran of World War 2 to become a member of the American Legion.

Harley M. Oka, member of American Legion Post 591
Hollywood World War II
Age 28
Two brothers in U. S. Army now serving overseas
Oka born in Santa Ana, Calif.
Schooling: Huntington Beach, Calif. and
Woodbury Business College, Los Angeles, Calif.
Voluntarily enlisted in U. S. Army, not drafted
Honorable Discharge from U. S. Army December 14, 1944

In California again since abt. December 27th, 1944

Parents in Relocation Center at Poston, Arizona

Post 591, American Legion, Hollywood World War II, on January 9th, 1945, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

R e s o l u t i o n !

Whereas, We as members of the American Legion are pledged to support the Constitution of our country and

Whereas, We consider the guaranty effected by article 14 of the Constitution to be of great importance to us in the maintenance of our democratic ideals and

Whereas, recently there has been much controversy and agitation in the Western States and particularly in California attacking the rights of American citizens of Japanese descent and

Whereas, affected by these unjust attacks are many American citizens who have served in our Armed Forces not only in World War 1 but are still serving in World War II, many of them having received citations and commendations for valor beyond the call of duty and

Whereas, among this falsely attacked group are loyal American veterans who have served and are serving actively and patriotically as American Legionnaires and

Whereas, the order of evacuation issued by the U. S. Army has now been vacated and

Whereas, we are aware of the fact that disloyal Japanese and such Americans of Japanese descent who are suspect will be kept in custody of the government with a view toward deportation and de-naturalization after the war and

Whereas, the American Legion has full confidence in the judgement of our military authorities and

Whereas, there have been grave assaults upon the inherent rights of fellow Americans and

Whereas, there is now being waged a persistent campaign of intolerance, prejudice and hatred against them and

Whereas, there is cause for grave suspicion that certain elements are waging this campaign behind the cloak of false patriotism although their only true consideration concerns their selfish economic advantage;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the members of Post 591 American Legion, Hollywood, World War II, Department of California hereby declare:

1. We the members of this Post condemn any discrimination of whatsoever type against any American citizen based on the stand that he or she is of Japanese or any other racial descent.
2. We as veterans of World War II have been fighting for the ideals of and principals guaranteed by the U. S. Constitution and are much concerned over the actions of certain groups and individuals who are attacking these ever ideals for which we have been fighting.
3. We strongly condemn any efforts to establish a false distinction among American citizens based on race, color or religious creed, such distinctions being a complete violation of the constitutional provision that there be no such distinction established among American citizens.
4. We therefore condemn the action of the Hood River Post of the American Legion in effacing the names of American soldiers fighting overseas from their honor roster as a shameful act which discredits and humiliates the name of the American Legion.
5. We urge all comrades of our Post and all other American Legion Posts and all citizens who have the welfare of the nation at heart to safeguard the constitutional rights of all Americans regardless of race, color and creed.

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HOLLYWOOD WORLD WAR II POST 591

AMERICAN LEGION

- - -

Hollywood, California

Tuesday, January 23, 1945

7:00 p.m.

- - -

1 (The meeting of Hollywood World War II Post 591,
2 American Legion, was called to order by the Post Commander,
3 and the proceedings had continued to the point where the roll
4 call of officers was called for, whereupon, a man, apparently
5 a veteran of World War I, in the uniform of the American
6 Legion, asked to introduce District Commander Horton.
7 Thereupon, District Commander Horton, accompanied by six
8 Legionnaires in uniform, apparently veterans of World War I,
9 proceeded to the platform, took over the microphone, and the
10 following occurred:)

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Comrades, as District
12 Commander, it becomes my unpleasant duty to take over this
13 meeting that you, my comrades, may get my story without inter-
14 ruption.

15 I came here a little over a month ago and recited to you
16 certain matters that should be adjusted, and some of those
17 have been adjusted.

18 First of all, Sergeant-at-arms, will you ascertain if all
19 present are members of the American Legion? To simplify that,
20 is there anybody here who is not a member of the American
21 Legion?

22 MR. GOULD: Comrade District Commander, I rise to a
23 point of personal privilege. As a member of this Post, I
24 desire to make this statement to the membership here that the
25 actions of the 24th District Commander in taking over this
26 meeting are not in accordance with the Constitution of the

1 State Department of California nor of the National Constitution.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: You will have plenty of time
3 to make that statement afterwards.

4 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: A point of privilege is raised
5 and I demand the privilege --

6 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Sergeant-at-arms, remove
7 this man.

8 (At this point there were shouts from the membership of
9 "Take them out.")

10 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: A member of our Post has raised
11 a point of privilege and I demand that he get it.

12 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: No.

13 (At this point there were shouts from the membership of
14 "Take him out.")

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Comrades, I presumed that
16 this would happen, and if you want to belong to the American
17 Legion I would suggest that you be courteous and hear what
18 this is all about. If you will be patient and listen to what
19 this is all about instead of popping off I am sure that you
20 will be happy that you did.

21 (Scattered applause.)

22 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: A member of this Post has raised
23 a point of privilege.

24 A VOICE: We don't want no Japs.

25 VICE COMMANDER CANN: May I have the floor a minute,
26 please?

1 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Comrade, if you will wait
2 until this is through. If you will listen to what is to be
3 said, I am sure that you will be satisfied that this is being
4 handled in the proper manner.

5 MR. GOULD: Comrade District Commander.

6 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: Comrade Horton, you came up and
7 said you were taking over this meeting. A member of this
8 Post is asking a point of privilege. How are you taking over
9 this meeting?

10 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: I will answer that after the
11 meeting is finished.

12 (At this point there were shouts from the membership of
13 "Answer him now", and various other shouts from the membership.)

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Comrades, I wish that you
15 would realize that the American Legion is composed of 12,000
16 Posts, and I would -- fellows, just be patient and listen to
17 this story.

18 A VOICE: I don't like Japs and never will. To hell with
19 the Japs.

20 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: Is that man a member of this
21 Post?

22 A VOICE: I am a member.

23 MR. GOULD: Comrade Commander.

24 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: You said you were going to take
25 over.

26 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Your commander has graciously

1 accepted and I am taking over.

2 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: There is a point of order
3 raised.

4 MR. GOULD: The Judge Advocate, Comrade District
5 Commander, is the officer elected to answer questions on
6 points of privilege and I desire that that question be answer-
7 ed by the Judge Advocate of Post 591, Hollywood World War II
8 veterans, whether or not the action of the 24th District
9 Commander is constitutional. We are running on a democratic
10 basis and the preamble to the constitution sets forth that
11 that is so. The constitution and by-laws of Hollywood World
12 War II Post 591 are set forth, and the charter of Post 591
13 was granted by the State Department of California. The duties
14 of the 24th District Commander^{are}/as set forth in the constitution
15 of the American Legion, Department of California, and the
16 by-laws, Article V, and there is no authority in the 24th
17 District Commander to take over any meeting. If there are
18 any charges to be made --

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: That is your opinion, and
20 if that is all you have to say, thank you.

21 MR. GOULD: I want an answer from the Judge Advocate of
22 Post 591.

23 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: There is no authority, to my
24 knowledge, for the 24th District Commander coming over and
25 taking over.

26 (Applause.)

1 If the Commander of the 24th District has any knowledge
2 I do not have he can back it up, or anything the American
3 Legion has. We want to hear it.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: I will say it right now.
5 You are a member of the 24th District whether you like it or
6 not. You are a member of the American Legion and not an
7 isolated, independent organization, and as the senior State
8 officer in this department I am taking over for the purpose
9 of this meeting. That is my authority and that is where I
10 stand. If you dispute it, show me where you have any right.

11 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: As a legal man I want your
12 authority. I do not want your word. You show us where the
13 Department Commander has the right to take over any meeting
14 in your district.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: I am not the Department
16 Commander. I am the District Commander.

17 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: Do you have that authority?

18 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Yes, I have that authority.
19 I don't need it. You are not informed on it.

20 Comrades, I have come to you with a spirit of friendli-
21 ness because --

22 A VOICE: Who are you to take the floor?

23 (At this point there was disorder.)

24 A VOICE: Are you a bunch of dopes? Are you going to
25 let them come here and take over our meeting?

26 A VOICE: Let us hear what it is all about.

1 MR. MORGAN: Comrades, you are behaving like a bunch of
2 Mexican hoodlums.

3 MR. LUBAN: I wouldn't use the word "Mexican". That is
4 no way to put it.

5 MR. MORGAN: He is our District Commander and he has
6 certain rights representing the Department of California.
7 There are certain things going on in the Post. We have our
8 charter at the will of the 24th District. They are the ones
9 who say whether we have a charter or whether we don't have a
10 charter. Jesus Christ, men, when somebody comes into your
11 home do you treat them like this?

12 A VOICE: If he takes over, yes.

13 MR. MORGAN: I have the floor. Just a minute, please.

14 A VOICE: You asked a question.

15 MR. MORGAN: There are a lot of things you fellows
16 don't understand. There are a lot of things you have never
17 heard. You are going to hear a lot before this meeting is
18 over tonight. The District Commander has come into this
19 Post and we have our charter at his will.

20 A VOICE: That is bunk, for one man to do that.

21 MR. MORGAN: All right, I rest.

22 MR. GOULD: Comrade Morgan stated that the 24th District
23 Commander had the power to take away the charter of Post 591.
24 Now, the rules and regulations and the Trial Manual of the
25 American Legion provide in Section 1, Title 4, that a charge
26 that any Post should for any good and sufficient cause have

1 its charter cancelled, suspended or revoked may be initiated
2 by any intermediate body between the Post and the Department.
3 Said charge shall be in writing, signed by the respective
4 Commanders and Adjutants of the intermediate bodies or
5 Posts as the case may be, and sworn to before any official
6 authorized to administer oaths.

7 Then the procedure goes on with regard to a trial by
8 the Executive Committee appointed by the State Department of
9 California. There is an opportunity given the officers of
10 our Post to have witnesses present to testify under oath,
11 a transcript is made, and any other records. The democratic
12 process that is set up under the constitution of the United
13 States is set up in the constitution of the American Legion,
14 and we are all proud of that.

15 We desire to operate in accordance with the preamble of
16 the constitution that was read when this meeting was opened.
17 We are all anxious to live as a practical every day fact
18 under the constitution, not only of the United States, but
19 the constitution of the Legion, and I know we are all proud
20 of it. But we do not desire to have any of our rights, any
21 of our freedoms, taken away by any action that is not in
22 accordance with the constitutional procedure.

23 If the 24th District Commander had requested the privi-
24 lege from our Commander to address our meeting, as he has
25 done in the past, and as have other visitors, I am certain
26 that the reception to him would have been the same reception

1 that we all desire, that is, an opportunity to be heard, an
2 opportunity to answer any questions, an opportunity to
3 freely discuss the problems that confront us today, and that
4 is all we want.

5 (Applause.)

6 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Thank you, Comrade Gould.
7 That is a very beautiful **speech** but it has nothing to do with
8 the point in question. That is exactly what I was trying to
9 avoid, a trial and suspension of your charter, and if you
10 will be kind enough to listen you will realize what I was
11 trying to arrive at.

12 As previously stated, I came here a month and a half
13 ago in the friendliest feeling. You know full well that I
14 was one of the original organizers of this Post. The proposi-
15 tion was suggested to the Membership Chairman of the Holly-
16 wood Post by me long before Johnnie ever got in touch with
17 any of your fellows. The idea was mine originally. I am
18 more anxious for its success than any man in this room.

19 My only object in coming here was to see if I could not
20 get those of you who are sincerely interested in learning
21 the Legion program to operate as a Legion Post and not as an
22 independent, one-man identity. That is my only object in
23 coming here to you.

24 When I came here in November I complained that you were
25 not cooperating in the Legion program, that you were not
26 entering into the hospital program, that you had not paid

1 your dues to the District or County Council, that you had not
2 examined discharges of the members as they were entered on
3 your rolls, that you had not selected or elected delegates,
4 or at least they had not appeared, at any of the points that
5 they should have appeared, and that you had made a one-man
6 rule and a one-man Post. Am I right?

7 (At this point there were shouts from the membership of
8 "No".)

9 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Am I right when I say I did
10 present those matters to you?

11 A VOICE: Yes, but you are not right when you say this
12 is a one-man Post.

13 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: I did present those matters
14 to you. The question of who you like and don't like doesn't
15 enter this matter at all. I am not interested a particle
16 in anything excepting the good of the Legion.

17 Now, what has been done about the above? We have had
18 very little cooperation on the Legion program. I am assured
19 you are examining the discharges before you accept them in
20 some instances, that you are going to attend the hospital
21 commission meetings and visitations, that you have paid your
22 dues. As a result of that meeting in November you had a
23 special Executive Committee meeting and you know what you
24 agreed to do. At that very meeting a check was made out for
25 the dues of the District and your Commander carried it with
26 him for more than two weeks before he finally turned it in to

1 one of the District officers.

2 Now, Comrades, with that forewarning that all of those
3 many items were cause for suspension of the charter, you
4 still carried on under the same plan without attempting to
5 get on the band wagon of the Legion as a Post.

6 I have maintained then and maintain now that your
7 Commander by temperament and ability was not qualified to
8 direct this Post, particularly in its formative stages. He
9 has made many speeches where he usually insults the older
10 members. He has not kept his promises. He has promoted
11 discontent and lack of unity in this Post. The Legion must
12 be strong, and to be strong it must be unified.

13 We have an Americanism program in the American Legion
14 containing 34 separate and distinct programs which take in
15 many activities, one of which is radical research, and the
16 Department of California has set that aside as a special
17 commission because it requires study and long experience of
18 individuals to work on that particular activity. The only
19 activity we find you engaging in is one that you apparently
20 know the least about, and that is one that comes under the
21 head of radical activities. The splendid program of the
22 Legion that you have not entered into, that many of you could
23 have been interested in, has been brushed aside and you have
24 taken on one of these spectacular things, and now you have
25 grasped one of international consequence, when you enter into
26 a program such as you did at your last meeting.

1 This program of the Japanese is one with which you are
2 not familiar. You could not be familiar with it. You read
3 an occasional newspaper that tells you something but you
4 don't know the underlying motives back of it or the actions
5 of the Army. Why should you or any Legion Post take it upon
6 yourselves to carry this matter to the public to prove that
7 there is disunity in the Legion and start a controversy that
8 could be such a hot fire that it would sweep through the
9 whole organization?

10 Now, Comrades, I know that most of you are sincerely and
11 honestly interested in the American Legion and its program.
12 I came here tonight and used this method rather than the
13 method I have at my control, being elected as District
14 Commander and being the intervening officer between the
15 Department Commander and yourselves, to file charges which
16 I refuse to do at the moment. I do not want to file those
17 charges. I came here to appeal to you and I would like to
18 have a gentleman that I have brought with me explain to you
19 certain things that you are not familiar with if you will be
20 courteous enough to listen to what he has to say. Then I
21 will give you the message that I came here to bring you.

22 I want you to listen to Dr. John R. Lechner, a Doctor
23 of Divinity, who has been for many years connected closely
24 with the Korean underground and the spy system in Hawaii,
25 and perhaps is the best informed man on the Japanese situation
26 on the West Coast. May I present Dr. John R. Lechner?

1 DR. JOHN R. LECHNER: Comrades, I happen to be in a
2 very tough spot and I do ask your indulgence, every one of
3 you.

4 In the first place, I am not a member of the 24th
5 District. I am not an officer of the District. I have no
6 connection with this Post or with your new Post.

7 However, I have felt a keen sense of pride that
8 Hollywood should nurture a young organization which was
9 destined to become and will become the outstanding unit of
10 the American Legion for the new World War veterans in
11 America.

12 This is an experiment. If some of you feel badly at
13 the display of temper a few minutes ago, let me suggest that
14 you recall that 26 years ago we young fellows at that time
15 had as much vim and vigor and determination that we were
16 going to do certain things, and we felt exactly the same way
17 at some of our meetings. So you are really good Legionnaires
18 to start with.

19 However, there is one very important thing to consider,
20 and please believe me when I say it, because it has been my
21 privilege to visit the hospitals, to see the boys, not this
22 month or this year but for 26 years. I have talked to these
23 men who reach out from their hospital beds for consolation
24 and they have a real problem which means life to them and
25 hope. They have turned to the American Legion.

26 If the Legion has done things from time to time -- and

1 they have. I have gotten my spanking. It was just a year
2 ago when I got the backing of my district and went to
3 Washington with 200 resolutions from that many Posts and
4 Departments. I made mention of the fact that most of the
5 Posts in the Department were behind it, and when I came back
6 the boys up north in San Francisco gave me a very, very
7 hard, tough spanking. They said that I had claimed to
8 represent the Department, which I did not do, but the impres-
9 sion was there and so I was guilty.

10 I took that on the chin but it was hard. It was hard
11 because I just went to a little town, a few weeks after
12 that, the town of Santa Maria, and the pastor of the
13 Methodist Church circulated 3,000 copies of a church bulle-
14 tin filled with villification against me and headed by a
15 statement that I was repudiated by the American Legion.
16 Every place I went, even to Salt Lake City and Denver, and
17 when I was back in Detroit, I got the same thing there. But
18 it didn't make me bitter. It made me feel that bad, but it
19 didn't make me bitter because, Comrades, I see an endless
20 vision of the things that I have seen for 26 years of men
21 who would not have had a chance, of families who would not
22 have had a chance, if it had not been for the 300,000 files
23 that I saw and rubbed my fingers across some of them in
24 Washington in the Rehabilitation Department. The heart and
25 soul of the American Legion has been to give those Comrades
26 a fair break and a chance for their families. We have got

1 a real program there.

2 We talk about delinquency. You know, in a new Post
3 like this we ought to have two or three nights just given
4 over to what the American Legion has done to give us a
5 challenge and a vision for the next 25 years under your
6 leadership.

7 Five hundred thousand boys every summer are taken off
8 the streets and put into junior baseball. The American
9 Legion sponsors more Boy Scout troops than any other organi-
10 zation in America, 4,000 Boy Scout troops. It pays the bills
11 for them, provides leadership for them, and provides camps
12 for them.

13 In the 12,000 Posts there is hardly a community in
14 America that has not been given an ambulance, an iron lung,
15 a swimming pool, a Salvation Army building, as we did in
16 Inglewood. The boys have done these things.

17 Certainly within the American Legion from time to time
18 we have made mistakes, but when you leave here tonight
19 remember that the American Legion is far bigger than I am,
20 far bigger than you and all of us here. It is bigger than
21 those 50,000 men who are discharged every month now, most of
22 them hospitalized. It is as big as the 600 who are amputa-
23 tion cases every 30 days now. It is as big as the things
24 which twelve million men are fighting for across the seas.

25 So, your Commander has asked me -- I want no part in
26 your deliberations, but he asked me to give you something of

1 my experience on one problem, because I believe that perhaps
2 a very serious and unwitting mistake was made.

3 All of us agree on one thing, I am sure, that any man
4 who served under the Colors, under the Stars and Stripes,
5 fighting for America, who has an honorable discharge, is
6 entitled to membership in the American Legion.

7 (Applause.)

8 Any American citizen of Japanese extraction who fought
9 for this country and who has shown his loyalty by that fact
10 is entitled to every privilege and opportunity the American
11 Legion has to offer. But that is not the point. The point
12 is that the American Legion is in the toughest spot we have
13 been in for a long, long time, and the thing that makes me
14 feel so badly in getting that verbal spanking is because the
15 American Legion stuck its neck out to have it shot at by the
16 very organized groups which for 20 long years, Comrades,
17 fought the preparedness program of the American Legion, which
18 alone could have stopped Hitler before he ever got started
19 in the Ruhr, and then stopped Mussolini and Hirohito. Those
20 same groups have used the American Legion for suckers in
21 the things that I am going to tell you about that you have
22 not heard before because it has not come out in the Press
23 yet.

24 I believe as you do, every one of you, that Hood River
25 Post of the American Legion did a childish, foolish,
26 impetuous thing in removing the names of the Japanese from

1 its honor roll.

2 A VOICE: Why?

3 DR. LECHNER: Why?

4 A VOICE: Yes.

5 DR. LECHNER: Because they were entitled to have that
6 place from their service. I have asked for the privilege of
7 the floor and the courtesy. Will you please extend that to
8 me? I am not in a debate and I don't want to be heckled.
9 Please give me the privilege of presenting the things that I
10 have found out.

11 This is not my feeling on this matter as far as you are
12 concerned, but the very fact that your Post went on record
13 criticising another Post of the American Legion was exactly
14 what the Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and
15 Fair Play wanted, and what the Communist Party in point 3 of
16 their 26 points program wanted. In point 3 the Communist
17 Party leadership has ordered its members to minimize the
18 Japanese situation. Following that the next sentence is,
19 "Smear any persons who would attract attention to the Japanese
20 menace."

21 There is one organization, the Churchmen's Committee
22 for Christian Peace, headed by Dr. Palmer of the University
23 of Chicago Theological Seminary. It was the vice president
24 of the University of Chicago, who, addressing the League of
25 Women Voters in April, 1944, in Washington, D. C. who made
26 this astounding remark in answer to a question from the

1 floor as to whether he would defend the United States
2 against Japan. He said, "I would go all the way to Tokio
3 to fight the Japanese if this were a just war."

4 The Methodist Conference of Southern California, a
5 year and a half ago, lost by one lay vote -- the ministers
6 voted 90 percent for it, but one lay man was able to tip
7 the balance against the resolution, and this was the
8 resolution, "If the Japanese should invade California soil
9 we would extend the hand of fellowship and demonstrate
10 the efficacy of Christianity."

11 Comrades, we are in a war, a hard, tough war, in which
12 our boys are fighting for everything they have got, fighting
13 for America.

14 Just last week I had the experience in my own home,
15 Comrades, I found my little girl crying as if her heart were
16 broken. I couldn't stop her for an hour. She could hardly
17 speak for hours afterward because she got word that her
18 sweetheart or fiance was in a hospital in the Phillipines.
19 The next day my other daughter had the same experience.

20 You know, this is a tough thing we are up against and
21 we should look at the problem at home as it relates to the
22 Japanese question. So, there are just a few little things
23 I want to tell you from my records from 20 years' experience
24 in Intelligence work on un-American activities. This is not
25 new. I am not like the one who testified down here a year
26 ago at the California Assembly Hearing. When he was asked

1 how long he had been interested in the Japanese question,
2 and he is one of the leaders, head of the Civil Liberties
3 Union in this area, he said, "Oh, since Pearl Harbor."

4 He was asked, "You were not interested in the Japanese
5 question before?"

6 "No."

7 "Did you know any Japanese before?"

8 "I can't say I knew any Japanese before Pearl Harbor."

9 He, like thousands of others, has gone overboard with-
10 out knowing what is in back of the matter.

11 The reason we have a problem, Comrades, is because the
12 Japanese colony in the United States was guilty of things
13 that no other racial group in America would have been guilty
14 of. Consequently, it takes the problem out of what we call
15 the minority racial sphere and places it in the sphere of
16 National security. It has nothing to do with the Japanese
17 because they are yellow. If it had anything to do with the
18 Japanese because they were yellow, then we would have a
19 different attitude from what we have toward the Chinese here,
20 the Koreans, and the Filipinos, whom we are treating absolute-
21 ly as our equals and with exemplary conduct.

22 Before Pearl Harbor it was my privilege to work closely
23 with the Korean Intelligence Service, and through that
24 and other sources we ascertained some of the organizations
25 on the Coast, just a few of them, such as the Japanese
26 Military Servicemen's League, 7200 members on the Coast,

1 every man of whom was sworn to die for Japan; 4800 members
2 of the Comradeship Society, which is the American arm of
3 the Black Dragon, every man sworn to die for Japan, and
4 many of them Japanese-Americans, and probably the most
5 dangerous group of all. In California we had 11 separate
6 organizations with branches in almost every city in the
7 state.

8 The Kibei is a Japanese-American, an American citizen,
9 born here, who went back to Japan at the expense not of his
10 family, not of himself, but at the expense of the Japanese
11 government.

12 In 1938 my old friend -- not my friend, but one I got
13 a great kick out of watching because he was so crazy, he
14 was one of the men the Federal agents picked up before Pearl
15 Harbor. His name is Nakamura, the head of the Japanese
16 Association in the Los Angeles area. He was connected with
17 the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and operated the Sukiyaki
18 restaurant, and in August 1938 he formed a new association,
19 the literal translation of the name of which was "Calling
20 Home the second Generation Association", and they delegated
21 a man to go to Japan to ask the Japanese government,
22 "For God's sake, send these boys back as quickly as you can.
23 Send back as many as you can because the criticism is so
24 high against the Japanese colony because so many Japanese
25 boys are in Japan."

26 The Japanese newspaper here, the Kohi, admitted there

1 were 25,000 American citizens of Japanese extraction getting
2 their indoctrination in that year and entering their military
3 training.

4 We have made the contention from time to time that the
5 W. R. A. has not come out openly and above board in telling
6 the people on the Coast how they were going to solve the
7 problem, nor did they have any disposition to meet with
8 organized groups and solve the problem. Mr. Myer has from
9 time to time debated it. The announcement came out when the
10 eviction order was suspended that only a few loyal Japanese-
11 Americans would come back to the Coast, and at one reloca-
12 tion center 900 in that one camp made out applications.
13 There are nearly 50,000 Japanese, Comrades, not loyal
14 Japanese-Americans, but 50,000 Japanese-Americans and alien
15 Japanese in the program, and Mr. Myer has given the reloca-
16 tion centers six months to move the 55 percent of the
17 evacuees still left in some of those camps back to
18 California.

19 The statement has been made, and it has been given to
20 us in the Press and from certain people from the Pacific
21 Coast Committee on American Principles of Fair Play, composed
22 of many of the leading doctors and religious leaders, and
23 the impression is given that the Federal Bureau of Investi-
24 gation and the Army have checked thoroughly every Japanese
25 coming back to the Coast.

26 Comrades, if you want a program to render a service to

1 the people of California, I will give you a challenge as a
2 Post to get the military branch which is fighting this war,
3 the military branch of the Army, not the civilian branch
4 which originated this W. R. A., but the military branch --
5 get the Western Defense Command Commanding General to agree
6 that the United States Army will accept responsibility for
7 the Japanese coming back here.

8 I have here a written statement from Congressman
9 McNary as of May, 1944. Two letters went from the Assistant
10 Attorney General of the United States, over the Department
11 of Justice and the F. B. I., and the other from the military
12 branch of the United States Army, both of them denying that
13 they have anything to do with the release of Japanese, and
14 in one statement the F. B. I. said that a year ago the
15 F. B. I. participated in a joint board which was examining
16 the loyalty of Japanese in the Western Defense Command.
17 Then the F. B. I. withdrew because the W. R. A. was able to
18 overrule the F. B. I. advice, and since then the precautionary
19 agency has been negative.

20 I believe, Comrades, that American citizens on the
21 Coast, especially war veterans, have a right to insist that
22 every Japanese coming back here be thoroughly tested by a
23 responsible body, and then when the Army or the F. B. I.
24 declares them to be loyal we will take them at their word
25 and they will be entitled to every privilege extended to
26 citizens here who are assumed to be loyal on the Coast at the

1 present time.

2 Now, that is not the only thing. Behind this movement
3 the American Legion has been used as a front in their
4 pamphlets, half a million pamphlets going out quoting the
5 Department Commander of the Legion, and now the action of
6 the Post up here in Oregon that has gone out in hundreds of
7 thousands of leaflets showing the wild, fanatical ideas of
8 those on the Coast as compared to people who want to look
9 at this question realistically and citing the Hood River
10 Post as an example of the type of mind of those who desire
11 to have the Japanese restricted. Now the action of this
12 Post has given them additional material to send out.

13 But there is a more harmful plan behind it. Fortunately
14 we were able to get it through Japanese sources last week
15 from the Hart Mountain Japanese paper, which was the only
16 one that gave a leak of the information that I am going to
17 tell you about.

18 Last month at Salt Lake City the first National
19 Conference of the Japanese-American citizens League in three
20 years was held. Leaders from all over the country, many of
21 whom I know, were there. All of their editors and all of
22 their front men and public relations men were there. The
23 War Relocation gave it their sanction or their authority,
24 and Dillon Myer was booked to speak, but he didn't get there
25 because something happened.

26 Attending that conference in a joint session were

1 representatives of the American Way, the Pacific Coast
2 Committee on American Principles and Fair Play, and some of
3 our leading churches interested in the Japanese question.

4 This is the four-point program which they adopted, and
5 this is why, Comrades, we have a problem in the action that
6 was taken here, which was purely, I know, a mistake.

7 Point No. 1, restore to all Japanese all losses sus-
8 tained as a result of the evacuation, including loss of
9 earning power for three years.

10 Before I would submit to that kind of a program,
11 sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union, which would
12 result in a series of damage suits against the government
13 to recover loss of earning power just because they happened
14 to have been sent to the evacuation center for security
15 purposes, I would yell from the housetops a challenge to
16 these organizations, "For God's sake, do something for the
17 twelve million boys who are out there fighting for America."
18 Some of them are lying in hospitals from now on to the end
19 of time like the ward that I learned about today where none
20 of us could even go in, the basket department, so horribly are
21 those boys maimed that no one can go in.

22 Comrades, I want to make this statement, that not one
23 of these Japanese has ever visited a government hospital and
24 put a cigarette in the mouth of a Comrade there, a man who
25 fought for America and for them.

26 The second point is to provide --push the campaign under

1 way now to get the 60,000 Japanese at Tule Lake to sign a
2 little slip of paper the W. R. A. puts out saying they are
3 going to uphold American institutions and everything they
4 said for the last three years they did not mean. The
5 article says, "Give them another chance."

6 In other words, the plan is to dump on California, not
7 loyal Japanese-Americans who fought in Italy, but 60,000
8 disloyal Japanese from Tule Lake.

9 Comrades, again, we are in a war. I wonder if that kid
10 who came to my house at twelve o'clock last night with his
11 duffle bag just to have an hour with me because he is pulling
12 out again -- he has been overseas two years in the Pacific
13 and he has to go back again, and a car was waiting outside
14 to take him down because he was due at three o'clock in
15 San Pedro -- we had a highball together and I said, "I hope
16 to God you get back as sound as you are now." He told me he
17 was willing to take it. He hates the south Pacific. He
18 went through hell there and he is going back again with a
19 smile on his face because he feels he owes it to this country.
20 Are we square to those kids if we compromise with the enemy
21 here at home?

22 The next point, No. 3, is to push the program in
23 Washington to have Congress grant American citizenship to all
24 Japanese aliens in the United States.

25 Listen to that now. Dr. Gordon Sproul, president of the
26 University of California, that great scientist, that I saw

1 Dillon Myer make a sap out of sitting on a platform in
2 Pasadena two months ago when he stepped into a field he
3 knew nothing about -- he would not know a Japanese from a
4 Korean, and they are using him for a front. The program is
5 to grant to all Japanese aliens in America American citizen-
6 ship.

7 If I hold a glass of cream in my hand, what would
8 happen if I put water in it? It was yellow cream, rich
9 cream, and if I put water in and kept pouring water into
10 that cream there would be nothing left but a glassful of
11 dirty, inky water that looked like dishwater.

12 Comrades, you can talk American citizenship and
13 Americanism, but if you put all the rot and dirt of the world
14 in it you will have very little left that is clean and pure
15 and like the citizenship that our fathers had.

16 The fourth point, and the final point is to open
17 immigration to Japanese after the war.

18 That is the program, and I believe the American Legion
19 has a great responsibility in taking the leadership in
20 solving this problem, this and other problems.

21 It is a responsibility, and a new Post like this
22 should take the advice and counsel of the older men on a
23 matter that is so hot politically in the Nation. You have a
24 right individually to do as you wish and no one has the
25 right to dictate to you, that is not American, you have a
26 right to do that, but you have a responsibility and the

1 American Legion at large has a responsibility. We hold in
2 our hands, Comrades, the only hope that is left for a free
3 world for tomorrow, and I believe that within America the
4 American Legion is the cleanest, is probably the most
5 sincere, the most broad, to cover all classes of life, capital
6 and labor, black and white and yellow, Catholic and
7 Protestant and Jew, and the American Legion in the future
8 may be the hope for the preservation of those democratic
9 principles for which you fought and for which thousands will
10 still die.

11 My prayer is, Comrades, that we have the right spirit,
12 open-minded, eager to learn and to cooperate, and if there
13 is a bad speck any place, a bad apple that might destroy the
14 barrel, don't compromise. Don't compromise. Take the apple
15 out. The price is too great, the future is too serious.

16 Thank you, Comrades, for your wonderful reception and
17 attendance.

18 (Applause.)

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER HORTON: Thank you, Comrades, for
20 your very fine attention and your sincere appreciation of
21 this splendid work for the American Legion and the cause of
22 American principles.

23 I think my story is simple, Comrades. I hope you will
24 believe me when I assure you again that I am more interested
25 in the success of this Post than anyone in the District.

26 You have, and I don't need to tell you again, had the

1 greatest opportunity of any Post that I have ever heard of.
2 The facilities of this half million dollar building have
3 been given to you. The Hollywood Post has gone all out to
4 help you time and again. We have stood by with some of the
5 most brilliant members of the American Legion, willing to
6 give you any advice you might seek, always volunteering to
7 help with advice which you have totally disregarded.

8 The matter of whether or not you could take a Jap into
9 your Post if you wanted him is the matter in question. The
10 Post is the judge of its own membership as far as creed or
11 race is concerned.

12 We in the District criticize only the method by which
13 you did that, the flagrant manner in which you flaunted to
14 the Legion this breach. I am advised that you went way to
15 Santa Ana. You set forth that you were tolerant and that is
16 why you went after this Jap, but I have been advised that
17 this Jap came back merely to settle his personal affairs and
18 then was going away from California, and in my opinion you
19 were grossly intolerant and not tolerant at all.

20 You have perhaps disturbed plans for this Jap who
21 wished to be loyal and who wished to abide by the decision
22 expressed many times in Congress. Only yesterday the
23 expression was made in Congress that if the Japanese wants
24 to prove his loyalty let him stay away from California where
25 they are already starting to dynamite them. That is a
26 statement in Congress only yesterday.

1 It is not a question of whether you could legally take
2 him in. That is perfectly all right if he wanted to come
3 in.

4 Now in addition to what Dr. Lechner said, you all
5 have had the opportunity to look into the minutes of the
6 American Legion, particularly the last convention, and
7 therein you will find a resolution in which I had a part
8 and in which I investigated all of the evidence before the
9 resolution was prepared, and that is in reference to the
10 Fellowship of Reconciliation, wherein certain alleged
11 ministers and other persons who are members of an organiza-
12 tion calling themselves the Fellowship of Reconciliation,
13 are engaged in circulating, particularly among high school
14 students, literature containing doctrines identical with
15 those issued by the propaganda offices of Japan, opposing
16 the sale of war bonds, all participation in the war effort,
17 contributions by our citizens to the blood bank, and other
18 activities for which other persons have been tried and
19 convicted. Therefore, the resolution was passed condemning
20 those activities and setting up a commission to investigate
21 them. It was proven that this group of so-called ministers
22 was back of the whole program of setting forth the Japs in
23 this fashion as a means of furthering their end to undermine
24 this country. They are supported by the Friends Society of
25 Philadelphia and they are opposing the Legion in their express
26 desire to keep the Japs out of California.

1 Bear in mind, Comrades, this Jap problem is not a new
2 one with the American Legion because of the war. For many,
3 many years we have exposed the equipment of the purse
4 seiners with torpedo tubes and we have shown that they have
5 been definite spies on the fortifications on our coast for
6 many years.

7 I want to repeat what Dr. Lechner said again, we are in
8 a war. I have four nephews and a son over there, all in the
9 Pacific area and some in the Phillipines. I received a
10 letter from my son the other day asking, if I wanted any
11 souvenirs to get somebody else to get them because he would
12 not touch one of the dammed things, he hates the Japs so bad.
13 When he left here he used to kind of like them, but he has
14 seen things that have happened to his buddies.

15 We should not have any sympathy in our hearts for an
16 expressed enemy.

17 On the question of your action on the matter of the Hood
18 River Post, I agree with most every other right-thinking
19 Legionnaire that it was a childish thing for them to do up
20 there. However, we are Legionnaires and we are not advertis-
21 ing to the world that we are disunited.

22 The Department of California has for years maintained
23 a policy which they enforced that any resolution adopted by
24 a Post, District, or Area concerning the policy of the
25 American Legion be referred to the Department Commander for
26 his attention, and that no such resolution be given publicity

1 through the Press or be sent to officials of the state or
2 national government or other representatives without the
3 permission of the Department Commander or the Department
4 Executive Committee.

5 That was enacted in August, 1937, and re-enacted in an
6 Executive Committee meeting on December 11, 1938. That is
7 the mandate of the American Legion and you are a member of
8 it and you must abide by it if you wish to continue as a
9 Legion Post.

10 We know full well in the Legion, and we insist in the
11 Legion that totalitarian nations have a right to maintain
12 the form of government they want. It is none of our affair.
13 We are not interested. But we are determined that they are
14 not going to force their form of government on us, and any
15 battles we have against Communism, Fascism, Naziism, or
16 any other form of ism are for the protection of our American
17 way of life, not from any particular animosity to any particu-
18 lar group, but the Communist Party has infiltrated into every
19 organization, and the method and manner of your handling
20 this whole situation smells to high heaven of the tactics
21 pursued by the usual Communist group.

22 Unwittingly, as it must be, it was uncalled for because
23 you had something no other new Post had in all the whole wide
24 world, you had an organization, powerful, wealthy and capable
25 right at your elbow to offer you advice at all times.

26 My only charge -- and it is not against you boys individ-

1 ually -- my only charge is that you have had faulty leader-
2 ship, extremely faulty leadership. I maintain again that
3 by temperament and ability your Commander is unfit to lead
4 you. This seeking of publicity was not only a breach of
5 the Legion authority, but it was done in a manner as though
6 he were the National Commander and the all-powerful Legion
7 itself. No man is bigger than the Legion and no Post.

8 We have a communication from the Department Commander.
9 He knew I was coming here tonight, and he will be here in
10 two or three days. I want to assure you again and again
11 that my first consideration is to save and not destroy this
12 Post. I know many of you boys are swell fellows and you
13 mean the right thing, and I am just giving you this message,
14 that between now and your next meeting you will clean up your
15 own linen. I will take no action whatever. At a conference
16 which will be held in a few days it will be decided whether
17 or not that will be the end of the matter.

18 Comrades, let me assure you again that I am saying
19 these things to you in the friendliest spirit. I am telling
20 it to you straight from the shoulder without pulling my
21 punches because I am putting my finger right where the
22 trouble lies and nowhere else. Comrades, I know you can do
23 it. You have got a lot of fine fellows here. You have a
24 wealth of men to draw on. Go to it now and make a good Post
25 and curb this fellow's activities, his publicity particularly,
26 and we will be for you all the way and I don't mean maybe.

1 Now, thanks again for your splendid attention and I
2 want to assure you it was done for your good. Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 (Whereupon, other matters were disposed of, after which
5 the following occurred:)

6 MR. KENT: Comrades, I ask you to stay because I want
7 a chance on the floor to defend myself and I am going to read
8 you, with your permission, from a statement which I have
9 prepared. I am going to make it as short as possible.

10 You voted me into the Executive Committee as a member of
11 the committee and our Commander has made me Chairman of the
12 Americanism Committee of our Post.

13 Inasmuch as the program of the Americanism Committee is
14 concerned I would like to mention that I refused to function
15 in my capacity as Chairman of the committee until I had a
16 mandate from the Post to act as such. I therefore drew up a
17 10 point program which, after a few alterations, was
18 approved by the Executive Committee on October 17th, 1944.
19 The program was reprinted in the Americanism Bulletin of
20 December, 1944.

21 I believe I can take it for granted that all of you
22 have read Nos. 1 and 2 of the Bulletin, i.e., the issues of
23 November and December. In all fairness I will admit here
24 that both bulletins were written entirely by me, and that I
25 now stand back of any statement I have made in these
26 bulletins.

1 You have heard my report at the meeting of January 9th
2 in which I gave you a factual report on the American-
3 Japanese question, at which time I also read to you Article
4 14 of the Amendment to the U. S. constitution.

5 At this meeting Comrade Leo L. Shibley proposed a
6 resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Post with
7 the result that we have received nationwide favorable
8 comment. Since then Comrade Shibley has re-joined the Army
9 as a Sgt. Gunner in the Air Force, and I feel that it is
10 only fair to him who is absent that I admit here that I
11 co-authored with him the resolution which he read.

12 I have never in my life belonged to any organization
13 subscribing to left or right wing ideas. You all know that
14 I have been in business in this town now for about seven
15 years -- maybe some of you don't know it.

16 At the age of 41 I volunteered for the Army, and I have
17 a letter here with me in which my draft board complains to
18 me that I have caused them considerable trouble in trying to
19 get into the Army at my age. A representative from Post 43
20 happens to be a member of that draft board and has been
21 responsible for getting me into or voting me into the
22 Hollywood Veterans' Council.

23 As to the newspapers, I read where the Daily News of
24 Los Angeles -- I am not going to bore you with that. That
25 and the New York Times, Life and Time are the subversive
26 newspapers I am reading. I have not belonged to any

1 political organization and I have never gone into politics
2 before, and I don't intend to. You will all remember my
3 non-partisan speech in which I explained to you that I will
4 not run for Commander, any officer or anything of the sort
5 now or ever.

6 Now it is my very unpleasant duty to read to you a
7 letter which I received on January 17th, two days after the
8 meeting of the 24th District, over the signature of Comrade
9 P. A. Horton, Commander of the 24th District:

10 "Dear Comrade Kent:

11 "You are hereby removed as a member of the
12 Americanism Committee of this District; for the good
13 of the Legion.

14 "A carefull investigation of your activities,
15 speeches and writings reveals, your criticism of the
16 mandates, policies and programmes and that your
17 tactics too closely resemble the 'Plan' of those
18 rabble-rousers and un-american groups which are so
19 hostile to the ideals of the American Legion.

20 "We cannot permit such activities to be cloaked
21 with the respectability of membership on the Americanism
22 Committee of this District."

23 As you know, I have never done any writing outside or
24 any speeches except the report of the Americanism Committee.

25 I do not deny that the Commander of the District has
26 the right to remove me from the Americanism Committee of

1 the 24th District of which I was a member by his appoint-
2 ment. However, I do submit that his accusations regarding
3 my work and behavior are entirely untrue, malicious and
4 libelous in character.

5 In accusing a member of the Executive Committee of this
6 Post, and the Chairman of your Americanism Committee, of
7 rabble-rousing and un-American activities, Comrade Horton
8 has directly accused not only me but also you, the members
9 of Post 591. I do not need to defend myself before you and
10 I do not intend to, as my conscience is clear. I therefore
11 submit the matter to you.

12 Thank you.

13 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: Comrades, you have just heard
14 the letter written by the Commander of the 24th District.
15 Do you grasp the significance of that letter? He has with-
16 drawn from membership on the Americanism Committee of the
17 24th District our chairman of the Americanism Committee of
18 this Post. He has not only asked for his resignation and
19 withdrawn him from that committee, but he has insulted him,
20 and not only him but this Post. I think it is about time,
21 Comrades, that the Commander of the 24th District has stuck
22 his neck out far enough. I suggest as a protest to his
23 action that every member of Post 591 who is a member of a
24 committee of the 24th District withdraw in protest, and I
25 make that in the form of a motion.

26 (The motion was seconded.)

1 MR. GOULD: Comrade Commander, as a member of this
2 Post I am in favor of that motion, and also I would like to
3 make a part of that motion a vote of confidence in the
4 Chairman of our Americanism Committee. I would like to put
5 that in the form of a resolution.

6 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: A point of order. It will have
7 to be presented separately from this motion.

8 MR. GOULD: I will withdraw my second motion and bring
9 it up later.

10 A VOICE: In the first place, get this No. 1 point.
11 Every bit of this has come by what started before and at the
12 beginning of the meeting. This direct insult to your own
13 integrity for voting this man in has come about because--
14 let us be candid -- of this Japanese question.

15 The thing I want to get at is this: Before any vote of
16 confidence or anything else is brought up, I want you to
17 know the score. There is a sheaf of telegrams, letters, and
18 messages from all over the United States here present and
19 the publicity man has them, giving such a complete and over-
20 whelming endorsement of what this Post has done that,
21 believe me, you are going to be awfully proud when you hear
22 them. I don't mean insignificant people, but the men who
23 are running this nation, the men behind the churches, the men
24 behind almost every institution of learning in this country
25 have sent in telegrams and letters to us.

26 We have taken the first step that is vitally necessary

1 in the American Legion to reinstate the faith of the people
2 and the American fighting men in this organization. I am
3 being perfectly candid about this. The letters are here.

4 Now, I have worked with Bill Kent on his Americanism
5 Committee, and I am one of them. All of this business
6 looks like phenagling.

7 Here is the crux of the whole thing. The only trouble
8 we are in, the only trouble Bill Kent is in, and the
9 trouble that our Commander is in, stems from one single
10 thing, and when you vote on what is coming up, the vote of
11 confidence for Bill Kent, remember this one point, please,
12 that it has all come up because for the first time a single
13 Post has dared to get up on its hind feet and demand that
14 the actual living principles of the constitution be made a
15 reality instead of giving lip service to them. Now, remember
16 that when this comes up.

17 A VOICE: A point of order. Judge Advocate, do you
18 know or does anyone know if the Comrade Commander of the
19 24th District can do something like that?

20 MR. KENT: He can remove me. He is in charge of his
21 own committee. He makes the appointments and he can remove
22 them. In other words, when he made the removal he was
23 legally in order.

24 A VOICE: Then he was in order and we can't do anything
25 about it. It has gone through. I am not trying to get
26 into the discussion, but I think Bill is a hell of a good

1 kid, a 41 year old kid. Let us, for God's sake, not over-
2 step. If I am out of order on this you will tell me, but
3 I want a point of order brought out so we know what is
4 going on. Am I right?

5 MR. KENT: A point of order, Comrade. I may be out of
6 order and if so will you please correct me.

7 I have not protested against my removal from the
8 Americanism Committee of the 24th District. I have merely
9 tried to submit my case to you. This has been on my mind
10 now for over a week, in which I have gone through -- well,
11 it was an emotional strain; I became a father a week ago,
12 and those of you who are fathers, and I may also address
13 myself to the older Comrades of Post 43, will know what I
14 mean. It is a bit of an emotional shock.

15 I do not deny the right of Comrade Commander Horton
16 to remove me, but he should not accuse a man who in the past
17 has never been in politics, a man who does not take his
18 views from any organization or party or anything of the
19 sort. I have only one belief that I stand behind, and that
20 is the constitution of the United States.

21 That is what I am driving at, and I have come here to
22 defend myself -- not to defend myself, but you have read
23 what I have written in the two bulletins of the Americanism
24 Committee. I say that I have never done any speaking or any
25 writing outside of my own Post. I am a business man, not a
26 politician, not one who wants to impose his opinions on

1 anybody else.

2 I have given you factual reports, and I repeat again
3 that I stand behind every word I said, but I would like to
4 go home tonight and have a bit of peace. I want to know
5 this, is backing up the United States constitution and
6 precepts un-American? Am I a rabble-rouser or not? I would
7 like to know that so I can go to bed tonight and have a good
8 night's rest.

9 JUDGE ADVOCATE KLEINER: It is moved that every
10 Committee member of the 24th District for Post 591 withdraw
11 from every committee of the 24th District until our Comrade,
12 Bill Kent, is restored to membership upon the Americanism
13 committee of the 24th District.

14 A VOICE: I for one am sorry that the other motion came
15 up because I think this one should have come up first. There
16 have been some rather serious accusations made against a
17 member of our Post in his capacity as chairman of the
18 Americanism Committee, and he has been removed by the
19 District Commander. I want to make the motion that our
20 Executive Committee ask Comrade Horton to present to us his
21 proof of the allegations he has made against Comrade Kent
22 and bring the report to us at the next meeting.

23 (The motion was seconded.)

24 COMMANDER SCHNEIDER: Any discussion?

25 MR. KENT: Comrade Commander, despite the fact that I
26 wanted to go home from here vindicated and at peace in my

1 mind, I do not object to this because, as I said before, my
2 conscience is clean. Thank you.

3 MR. LUBAN: I would like to amend that. If, as we all
4 expect, Commander Horton refuses, and, in other words, just
5 makes a lot of noise and does not prove his allegations, I
6 would like to suggest that he apologize to Comrade Kent and
7 to this Post, publicly and before the whole Post.

8 MR. GOULD: I would like further to amend the motion
9 that if what takes place vindicates Comrade Kent, we resolve
10 that we have full confidence in the loyalty, integrity,
11 personal ability, and sense of responsibility of Comrade
12 William F. Kent, the chairman of our Americanism Committee,
13 and that if he is vindicated by our Executive Committee as
14 a reward for Comrade Kent's effective contribution to a
15 practical application of the preamble of our constitution,
16 the national and departmental constitutions, and the consti-
17 tution of the United States, we recommend that a citation for
18 meritorious conduct be given to Comrade Kent by the American
19 Legion.

20 (The motion was seconded.)

21 (The question was put and carried unanimously.)

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Mr. John Holme - attorney at law; past commander of Hollywood American Legion, and past chairman of the Americanism Committee of the American Legion, took the place of Mr. Shoemaker.

MR. MARSHALL

The question has already been answered affirmatively in Southern California. American citizens of Japanese ancestry, like those of other ancestries, have shown that they can and want to support our constitution and work loyally with the rest, and are making their own contribution to the national world and wellbeing. It is important for us to maintain a high standard of fair and equal treatment for people of a minority. The United States Army, in permitting those loyal * * (Japanese to return?) said: "The people of the state situated within the Western Defense Command are assured that the records of all persons of Japanese ancestry have been carefully examined, and only those persons who have been cleared by Military Authority have been permitted to return. **** "

MR. ODEMAR

We not only feel that the Japanese resettlement in California during the war is not in the best interests of the state, but feel that their return is definitely against the best interests of California and of the whole American union, and for several reasons. The first and foremost reason in my opinion is that no person who has been taught loyalty to an enemy power - Japan in this instance - from early youth, either in the schools and churches of that enemy country or in their Japanese language

schools and churches in this country, could be expected to be loyal to this country. The number of Japanese born in the United States who have freely admitted their disloyalty to this country is the best evidence of that fact, and there is still no way to measure the mind or heart of others who may say they are loyal for some ulterior motive of their own.

McWILLIAMS

California will have 2500 guests --- (at the coming conference). ***** There can be no question but that this will be the most important meeting ever held in California, for upon it the future peace of the world will depend. While these delegates are preparing a new --?--- a handful of misguided and misinformed Californians will meet in Sacramento ---. This meeting will not be devoted to peace and freedom but to spreading the seeds of hate and it can only have the effect of embarrassing the American delegation at San Francisco. *****
*****will contain a sweeping declaration in favor of racial ***. Now is the time for the three west coast states to join in such a declaration. I submit that now is the time for these states to join the United Nations.

HOLMES

The question divides itself into two parts. Should the Japanese be permitted to return during the war? Should the Japanese return after the termination of hostilities? The answer to the first question must be "No". General DeWitt had been intercepting

unauthorized communications emanating from certain areas along the Pacific Coast. These acts ceased after the Japanese were evacuated. To prevent sabotage and espionage, no person of Japanese extraction should be permitted to return to California.

The second question is more difficult to answer. The answer should again be "No". Our experiences with the Japanese over the years have shown that they are a handicap to our economic life. They, by their educational practices, have contributed little to our social or economic life. It is not to the best interests of California to allow them to return to California after the termination of the present war.

- - - - -

"I was interested in your statement - I gained the impression that you were opposed to the return of both citizens and aliens.

Mr. Holmes: "I would be opposed to the return of both citizens and aliens during the war. After the war it becomes a question of economic and social life, and I am satisfied from the observations that I have made of the Japanese all my life - and I was born in California - that they do not assimilate themselves into the life of the citizens of the United States, whether they are born here or of foreign ancestry, and they do not contribute to our economic life and therefore I feel that they are a definite handicap.

- - - - -

"Mr. McWilliams, to carry out your thoughts of the peace conference to its ultimate -- then I gather you would suggest we lay down our arms now -

Mr. McWilliams): I am in favor of the prosecution of this war with our present enemies to the utmost and to a conclusion of unconditional surrender in both instances.

Then you feel that the United States may be properly defended by allowing all of the Japanese to return here merely because the Army has stated that they have found nothing -

You have the assurance of the Army that all these persons have been carefully examined.

- - - - -

(Some conversation on the matter of whether or not there was danger of sabotage and espionage since evacuation, and also the testimony of Gen. Wilbur at the hearing of the application of a Japanese who wanted to come back to L.A.)

Japanese homes were found with guns at the time of the evacuation.

No person of Japanese descent has been convicted of sabotage or espionage.

The Japanese were evacuated from this Coast before the road of the bombs at Pearl Harbor had ceased. But they were not evacuated from the Hawaiian Islands and there was no sabotage there, nor has any person of Japanese descent been convicted there -

But at what time were they permitted to be on the streets and what time were they permitted to come back on the streets?

Do I understand that your theory that these people are not capable of being assimilated is because of their race?

That is part of the answer.

How do you account for the confidential missions given to persons of this ancestry? What else does a man have to do besides lose his life for this country?

No one has ever argued that those in the Army are disloyal.

About half of them came from the Hawaiian Islands and half from the main land.

What percentage does 18,000 bear to the total eligible Japanese who could either have been inducted or enlisted in the armed forces of the United States?

I think we can assume the Selective Service has drafted -

About 100,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were evacuated. About 70,000 of them were citizens. If you take a figure of 9,000 -

Over 11,000 have signified their desire to be repatriated to Japan -

The number does not exceed 2,000.

I have the figures of Secretary Ickes in February of this year.

Do you count in that figure children; do you include the very old?

If an alien has asked for repatriation to Japan he will not be allowed to come back, - if he has any tendency to be fiercely loyal to the Emperor of Japan.

What if any processing ever went through that you know of? Is it not a fact that the War Relocation Authority passed out a

series of questionnaires and that the answers that came back were exceedingly small as to loyalty? Later that there was a campaign run through the relocation camps urging that all Japs should express their loyalty and that after that a new questionnaire came out? The only actual investigation is that. The F.B.I. has made no examination and the Army has neither the time nor the facilities to make any examination.

How can you tie that in with the certificate that the Army has also made careful examination?

The Army and Navy Intelligence is limited to acts against the Army and Navy and that would sabotage the Government at war. It does not do into the question of man's opinion before the war.

You said these people as a race are incapable of assimilation. Why should you be concerned with their loyalty?

Loyalty to a community and toward a nation is the first attribute. A loyal citizen during a war does not do anything to embarrass his government. This is not a question of civil rights. All loyal Americans of all races, creeds and colors will act only for the best interests of the people of the United States as a whole. After the war the question will be social and economic.

McWILLIAMS

I think this question should be answered in the affirmative. When these people were evacuated from the West Coast we assumed that the whole question was a question of military authority. I think the same assumption should be applied today. The Army has said the military situation has changed and they are satisfied that those who are returning are loyal. These questions are referred to by

the United States Supreme Court. - - - - - There would not be a national or racial minority in the United States who could feel one iota of security in its rights. California is not a sovereign or autonomous head and is governed by the Constitution of the United States and these people are citizens of the United States against whom no charges of any kind or character have been filed. Race has nothing to do with the question of loyalty.

ODEMAR

The argument in opposition to the return of the Japanese to this area has not been based upon race, but has been based upon the background, education, church affiliations, Shintoism - where the individuals are taught that the Emperor of Japan shall sometime rule the world, and it is the duty of every Japanese to lay down his life for that Shinto god. It has been very significant to me that the affirmative has had nothing to say about the benefit or best interest to California that will be procured by the return of the Japanese. It is normally the burden of the affirmative to show the question. With the thousands and thousands of Japanese who have gone in the military forces, we cannot risk the security of this country by allowing them to return while we are at war.

MARSHALL

It is difficult to understand what story is to be told the parents of these men who are serving in the United States Army - that the state from which they departed on their mission on behalf of the country has concluded, by groups of citizens acting

on their own responsibility, that it is not to the best interests of the state that their parents should return. Justice Murphy, in the Korematsu case, said:

"No one denies, of course, that there were some disloyal persons

Press Release dated June 23, 1924, issued by the California Joint Immigration Committee, received from the Chairman of that Committee, James K. Fisk, Adjutant of the American Legion, Department of California, on September 19, 1941.

San Francisco, California
June 23, 1924

The Japanese now legally residing in California are here practically upon invitation of the Federal Government, since their admission was sanctioned by Administrative policy and Departmental operation.

They are entitled under treaty and law not only to protection for themselves, their families and their property, but also to the right to engage in any occupation not in conflict with the provisions of the alien land law. It is due to the dignity of the State and to our own self-respect that they be treated with scrupulous regard for their rights and with courtesy as well.

The four California organizations by whose authorized executive officers this statement has been issued - - the American Legion, State Federation of Labor, State Grange, and Native Sons of the Golden West - declare their intention to secure by every means in their power, such rights as the Japanese ~~and~~ or other aliens may be entitled during their residence in this State, to protect them from discourtesy of any kind, and to aid in apprehension and punishment of those who may cast discredit upon State and Nation by the commission of overt or unfriendly act against such resident aliens.

Morgan Keaton,
Dept. Adjt. - The American Legion

Paul Scharrenberg,
Secy-Treas. State Federation of Labor

C.A. Bodwell, Jr.,
for George R. Harrison, Master
California State Grange

Edward J. Lynch,
Grand President Native Sons of the
Golden West.

Statement by the
Willard Straight Post, American Legion
on Postwar Military Defense

AMERICA STANDS in urgent need of a program of national defense for the postwar period. As immediate and positive steps in that direction the Willard Straight Post (No. 842, New York) of the American Legion urges the following:

1. United and non-partisan support of all Americans for the momentous steps now being taken to set up a world security organization. This organization, together with such international agencies and agreements as those dealing with relief, civil aviation, food and the like, offer the world's—and our own—ultimate best hope of peace and security. Success of such efforts is worth whatever purely national adjustments may be required to attain that goal.

2. Drawing up concrete specifications for a postwar military establishment, including army, navy and air forces, large enough

- (a) to carry out any commitments we may undertake as part of a world security organization; and
- (b) to provide adequate protection, both for our country itself and our outlying bases, until we have some conclusive evidence of the success or failure of the world organization. If that organization succeeds, we may look forward to the gradual reduction of national and international armaments; if it fails, we shall be chiefly dependent upon our own armed resources.

3. Adoption of a congressional bill or joint resolution creating a Presidential Commission, with a civilian majority, and an army, navy and air force minority, to consider the requirements of such a program of national defense and report within a year after its appointment. This Commission should be bi-partisan and should consider all relevant matters, including the possible desirability of combining the army, navy and air forces in a department of national defense or other form of unified organization; the relative size and importance of the three services in view of our geographical and strategic position; compulsory military training and various other means of recruiting personnel for our whole establishment.

The three steps suggested above, the Post believes, offer a sound and constructive approach to the rounded program that our country so vitally needs. Up to now, only one major item—compulsory military training—has been offered for general public consideration. In spite of what seem to us the grave defects of compulsory training, the Willard Straight Post preserves an open mind on the question if the total picture—including the nature of the world organization actually set up and the needed size of our postwar navy, air forces and army—finally indicates that our requirements can be met in no other way.

Meanwhile, on the basis of the best information and analysis now available to us, it is our considered judgment that compulsory training actually would hinder, rather than help, an adequate program of national defense.

Our first approach is military. Competent authorities have not yet offered the public specific figures on how large our postwar military establishment should be. We can, however, with some confidence set forth our defense needs in terms of the following fundamentals:

- (a) A navy adequate to defend our country and outlying bases against any power or combination of powers; and to meet the commitments we have recently undertaken with other countries of the Americas for joint defense of the Western Hemisphere.
- (b) A large and mobile air force to join with the navy as our forward line of defense.
- (c) A readily expansible, thoroughly trained and equipped army, of size to be determined but of far greater strength than that which we maintained between 1920 and 1940.
- (d) An adequately staffed and financed research organization devoted to the study and development of war techniques and equipment.
- (e) Pilot plants for the production of war material and constant revision of plans for the prompt conversion of our industry to a wartime basis.
- (f) Adequate stock piles of strategic materials.
- (g) The necessary intelligence service to keep us fully informed of developments elsewhere.

Authorities agree that we shall need these fundamentals, regardless of whether or not we have compulsory training.

Financial questions arise at once. The program of fundamentals is costly. With the return of peace there will inevitably come a time when the public will not tolerate unlimited expenses for military purposes. There will be increasing pressure to hold down or reduce appropriations. We feel that universal training carries the grave risk of giving this country a false sense of security, so that we might feel "safe" in cutting down the navy, or the air arm, or our research

activities, or some other service really crucial to our defense. Likewise, military training might divert not only funds but time, energy and leadership from more vital channels.

Again looking at military matters, we find compulsory training may offer more shadow than substance. The proposals now before Congress call for universal military training, not actual military service. In the best possible circumstances, a training program that takes in about one million young men a year would give us only an additional one million trained men immediately available at the outbreak of a war. Personnel returned to civilian life get out of training very rapidly, just as athletic teams do. Those out only a few months would require some re-training, re-equipping and re-grouping. Those out a year or two, more so; those out two years or more a pretty thorough re-training; and those more than five years out probably would be little better than raw recruits.

It is a wasteful and inefficient system that would, over a period of, say, twenty-five years, train twenty-five million men and then be able to use only about three million in actual war without extensive additional training.

Meanwhile, industrial questions arise. It would take about a year and a half to get our industry converted and placed on a full war-production basis. It would take equally long to assemble the transport—ships and planes—to send and supply large bodies of men overseas. In that time, we could raise and equip armed forces—not with antiquated material and routine, peacetime training, but with the very latest combat equipment and training under the supreme stimulus of actual wartime conditions. As two World Wars have shown, it is always to our advantage to meet and defeat the aggressor overseas before he reaches our shores. To give us time to assemble and exert our force at a distance, we must rely on a large and efficient navy and air force, regardless of whether we have compulsory military training.

Our whole American tradition is against conscription. In the light of our tradition, it seems probable that after memories of war recede in years of peacetime, young men called up for military training would react to it with boredom and chafing. We recall the dangerously low morale of men summoned for training in 1940, when we were not actually at war, even though France had fallen and our peril was increasing daily.

Undoubtedly military training would benefit some of the trainees. If, however, our aim is improved health, or education, or vocational

training, such ends can be more effectively achieved by other means. Health measures, for example, should be aimed at the entire population and not given only to those already physically fit for military service.

We stress again our belief that America's central task is to build peace for our country by building peace for the world. We take a proper pride in this country's actual and moral leadership in the historic moves to set up a world organization. To take the unprecedented step of establishing universal military training now could be interpreted by many as proclaiming in advance our belief that such efforts may fail. It would disrupt the normal lives and educational processes of millions of our young men and expose us to the dangers—unknown in America's history—of the growth of a military caste and the emergence of a military, authoritarian point of view in our civil affairs.

This Post believes that so fundamental a change should not be made until the millions of our voters in the armed services overseas can have a chance to participate in the decision. We now have actually under arms and in service—and probably will continue to have for the next few years—many times the number of men that any training program could provide. We are completely safe in holding our decision in abeyance until we have the report of an impartial authoritative commission such as this Post suggests.

If universal military training ever appears necessary, there will be ample time to begin it. Meanwhile, sound ideas of national defense point to other and more necessary fundamentals. Sound hope for peace—as well as solemn obligations to our men who have fought and died—demand that America give its utmost to building world security.

Correspondence about this statement should be addressed to
Mark Wiseman, Commander, Willard Straight Post
14 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

May 1945

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the American Veterans Committee, Oakland Post No. _____, stands for fair treatment of veterans and their families of whatever ancestry, and

WHEREAS, in some areas of rural California are groups and individuals who are fomenting boycotts and other discriminations against persons of Japanese ancestry, professing to do this in the interest of agriculture and local business, and

WHEREAS, this agitation has the effect of keeping out of the community farm laborers who are entitled to be there, therefore, we

RESOLVE, that we see no reason why Congress should accept the pleas of agricultural employers for more of the taxpayers' money to bring them more Mexican national laborers, while a program of race discrimination against laborers and farmers continues with their active participation or tacit consent.

JOGA 1 HX

JOG

HOOD RIVER, ORE., DEC. 5--(UP)--THE HOOD RIVER AMERICAN LEGION POST TODAY CITED THE ALLEGED "DUAL CITIZENSHIP" OF PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY BORN IN THE UNITED STATES AS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR STRIKING THE NAMES OF 16 JAPANESE-AMERICAN SOLDIERS FROM ITS WAR MEMORIAL PLAQUE.

THE NAMES OF THE 16 JAPANESE-AMERICAN SOLDIERS SERVING FROM HOOD RIVER COUNTY, SOME OF WHOM ARE OVERSEAS, WERE REMOVED FROM THE PLAQUE LAST WEDNESDAY. THE ACTION BROUGHT SHARP CRITICISM FROM THE PORTLAND, ORE. COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION.

THE LEGION POST PASSED A RESOLUTION, AT A MEETING OF THE POST, SAYING "THAT THE NAMES OF THE JAPANESE SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED ON OUR MEMORIAL PLAQUE UNTIL THEY HAVE COMPLETED THEIR TOUR OF SERVICE, AND/OR A DECISION BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY HAS BEEN RENDERED ON THEIR DUAL CITIZENSHIP."

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE LEGION SAID THE GROUP UNDERSTANDS THAT ANY JAPANESE BORN IN THIS COUNTRY IS REGISTERED IN JAPAN, AND THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT PAYS \$25 TO THE PARENTS OF ANY BOY BORN HERE.

THE RESOLUTION ASSERTED, "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR OUR GOVERNMENT TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN LOYAL AND DISLOYAL JAPANESE," BOTH ALIEN AND AMERICAN-BORN, AND THAT THE EVACUATION FROM PACIFIC COAST AREAS OF THESE PERSONS WAS TO FURTHER THE SECURITY OF MILITARY AND NAVAL OPERATIONS.

Stiller
458 S. Spring St., Los Angeles
Phone MICHigan 9521

For release Thursday A.M.

April 19, 1945

Expressing regret that he did not find World War I Legionaires as tolerant as his comrades in World War II, Harley Oka, young U.S. veteran of Japanese ancestry, yesterday resigned from California's Hollywood World War II Post No. 591 of the American Legion.

Publicity accompanying Oka's admission to the Legion a few months ago caused a furore that brought to the surface bitter differences between today's returning veterans and some of the older men in high office in the California American Legion on the Japanese question.

Oka's resignation letter stated:

(INSERT)

Oka's resignation follows closely on the heels of the Legion's State Executive Committee's unexpected approval of the action of 24th District Commander P. A. Horton in taking over a meeting of the Hollywood World War II Veterans' Post and compelling its membership to listen to a speech by John R. Lechner inciting hatred against American citizens of Japanese ancestry. Horton's action had previously been censured by California Department Commander Ed W. Bolt.

William F. Schneider, Commander of Hollywood World War II Post, who received the Oka resignation, stated that he did not know whether the Post will accept it, but that in any event it will be a great shock to hundreds of fine Americans all over the country who had sent congratulations to him when Oka joined the Post, which was at about the time of the unfortunate American Legion incident in Hood River, Oregon.

Common American Principles

Stiller
MI 9521
458 S. Spring St.

13

For release Friday A.M.
April 20, 1945

Close on the heels of the resignation of a Japanese-American veteran from the Hollywood World War II Post of the American Legion, Post Commander Wm. F. Schneider has himself resigned. Both resignations are due to a clash between Legionnaires of World War II and some of the Legion leaders and groups of World War I on the question of discrimination against American citizens of Japanese descent.

Schneider's letter of resignation to his comrades states that as Commander of Hollywood World War II Post #591 he had done everything in his power to uphold the letter and spirit of the mandates of the American Legion which specifically prohibit discrimination against any citizen because of race, creed or color. His letter continues:

"In line with that policy, our Post recently admitted to membership a World War II veteran of Japanese ancestry, an action that was highly commended by enlightened Americans in all parts of the United States. But that action was also followed by severe censure by the World War I veteran who happens to be our 24th District Commander. He humiliated us and our new comrade by forcibly seizing control of one of our Post meetings, and insisting that we listen to a vicious speech inciting us to race hatred against fellow citizens and comrades of Japanese ancestry.

"This shocking behavior on the part of our District Commander has just been approved by the Executive Committee of the American Legion, Department of California. To us World War II veterans who had no idea of the intolerance of some of the older Legion leadership in California, it is a blunt challenge to either accept that kind of leadership or get out. Personally, I see no other course than to resign as Commander and member of this Post and to seek to continue my comradeship with enlightened veterans in some organization whose leadership is less hostile to the principles we have been fighting for than the Executive Committee of the American Legion Department of California.

"I want to thank those comrades of the Post and also those Legionnaires of World War I who have supported us in our fight for tolerance, and against race hatred."

The HOOD RIVER, OREGON, Incident

Herald-News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
December 2, 1944

JAP NAMES TAKEN FROM MEMORIAL

HOOD RIVER, Dec. 2 (AP)—The Hood River post of the American Legion has erased the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the U. S. army from its county war memorial, Commander Jess Edington said today.

Many of these soldiers are serving on overseas battlefronts, the post reported.

Edington said his post would attempt to have excluded from the Hood River valley all persons of Japanese ancestry, including those moved from their homes to inland areas for security purposes by the army.

In addition, the commander said, his post would cooperate with the Gresham Legion in a similar plan there.

Commander Edington, explaining the action, said: "Hood River county has the highest per capita percentage of Japanese, compared with white citizens, of any county in the United States. We simply want to let them know that we don't want them back here."

The vote, taken at a well-attended meeting of the post some time ago, found some dissenters, Edington said, but the majority in favor of the proposal was heavy.

The Legion post erected the memorial plaque about 18 months ago, and originally inscribed on it the names of all Hood River county citizens serving in the armed forces.

Times, New York, N. Y.
December 3, 1944

MEMORIAL BARS JAPANESE

Legion Post Erases Names of 16
Serving United States

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 2 (AP)—The Hood River Post of the American Legion has erased the names of sixteen Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the United States Army from its county war memorial, Comdr. Jess Edington said today. Many of these soldiers are serving on overseas battlefronts, the post reported.

Mr. Edington said his post would attempt to have excluded from the Hood River Valley all persons of Japanese ancestry, including those moved from their homes to inland areas for security purposes by the Army. The commander added that his post would cooperate with the Fresham, Ore., Legion in a similar plan there.

Statement by the SECRETARY of WAR

Herald Tribune, New York, N. Y.
December 15, 1944

Stimson Lauds Army Record of U. S. Japanese

He Cites Loyalty to Nation;
Protests Rise at Oregon
Legion Post's Snub of 16

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 (AP).—Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, said today it was "wholly incongruous" that service men of Japanese extraction who have demonstrated their loyalty to this country should be subject to "unworthy discrimination."

Responding to a question at his news conference, Mr. Stimson said he had no first-hand knowledge of "regrettable reports" of discrimination against Japanese-American soldiers on the west coast and therefore could not comment on special cases.

At present, however, he added, there are 13,000 Japanese-Americans who are serving or who have served in the armed forces.

The 100th infantry battalion, in combat on the Italian front, is made up entirely of Japanese-Americans. It has an outstanding record and has been cited for gallantry, Mr. Stimson said.

The 442d Combat Team, also Japanese-American, has since been organized, he said, and has fought courageously and well on the European front.

Idaho Statesman, Boise, Idaho
December 15, 1944

Stimson Raps Hood River Post's Action

HOOD RIVER, Ore. (UP)—A protest flared across the nation Thursday night against the removal of the names of 16 Japanese-American soldiers from the Hood River American Legion post roll of honor.

But in face of comment from Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson that such action "was wholly inconsistent with the American ideal of democracy," and a reproach from a New York City Legion post that the erasure of the names was a reflection on the entire Legion, the Hood River post stood silently by its action.

The names of the 16 Japanese-Americans remained missing from the honor roll of this farming community on the Columbia river—home of the famous Hood River apple—and Post Commander J. B. Edington, told of Secretary Stimson's views and the New York Post protest, replied tersely:

"No comment."

The Hood River Post explained previously that strong opposition in the area to the return of Japanese-Americans from inland relocation centers to which they had been sent after Pearl Harbor had inspired the erasure of the 16 names.

Stimson told his press conference Thursday that it was not consistent with Democratic ideals "that these loyal citizens should be subjected to any discrimination." He praised the fighting spirit of Japanese-American soldiers, many of whom have distinguished themselves in the fighting against the Germans in Italy.

Times, Los Angeles, Calif.
December 15, 1944

Stimson Decries Jap Discrimination

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14. (AP)—Secretary Stimson said today it was "wholly incongruous" that servicemen of Jap extraction who have demonstrated their loyalty to this country should be subjected to "unworthy discrimination."

At the present, he added, there are 13,000 Japanese-Americans who are serving or who have served in the armed forces.

Reactions in the AMERICAN LEGION

Michigan Free Press, Detroit, Mich.
December 7, 1944

A DESERVED LEGION PROTEST

It is good to learn that Wolverine Post 360, the American Legion, has made strong protest to the recent indefensible act of the Hood River (Ore.) Post of the Legion in removing the names of 16 Japanese-Americans from the Hood River Community Honor Roll.

Reading's Post 360 sends notice of its "disgust and alarm." It suggests to the Hood River commander that "you and your Post review the reports of the actions of the Japanese-American regiment in Italy, where the larger per cent of the personnel hold the Purple Heart medal, and their decorations for valor exceed most other organizations.

It proposes, too, that the Constitution of the American Legion be re-read to "see if your reported action conforms to the spirit of tolerance, democracy and 100 per cent Americanism" as set forth in that document.

Commander Leonard F. Grimm, of Reading, declares also:

"It is the opinion of this Post that your reported action is not only an insult to those men whose names were removed, but also to every member of our armed forces and to the American Legion as well, upon whom this action has brought discredit and shame."

Strong words, these, but no stronger than the occasion merits. It is acts like that reported from Hood River that make one wonder when, if ever, democracy will truly flower everywhere in America.

Journal, Salem, Oregon
December 13, 1944

Japanese Invited To Join Legion

New York, Dec. 13 (AP)—Sixteen American soldiers of Japanese ancestry have been invited to become members of Capt. Elvidere Brooks Post, No. 450, American Legion, after the war.

Post officials took the action because they said they felt a "black eye" was given the legion by the Hood River, Ore., post which caused the names of the 16 men to be erased from its war memorial last week.

Times, New York, N. Y.
January 20, 1945

SCHEIBERLING URGES RESTORING 15 NISEI

CHICAGO, Jan. 19 (AP)—Edward N. Scheiberling, national commander of the American Legion, recommended today immediate restoration of fifteen names of service men of Japanese ancestry, or Nisei, which were removed Nov. 29 from the Hood River, Ore., Legion Honor Roll.

In a telegram to J. B. Edington, commander of Hood River Post 22 of the Legion, Mr. Scheiberling asked that all the removed names be restored except that of one individual who was dishonorably discharged from the Army.

In a statement accompanying his announcement of the telegram Mr. Scheiberling said:

"The American Legion has always maintained that bigotry and race hatred have no place in American life, and the action of this one individual post, of more than 12,241 posts of the American Legion, was ill-considered and ill-advised, and contrary to the ideals and purposes for which the American Legion is organized."

Asserting that the Legion had recommended to the Government that return of Japanese to the Pacific Coast area be deferred until the "military emergency has terminated," the commander said that the order permitting their return placed upon the Government the responsibility for their conduct.

Star, Washington, D.C.
December 22, 1944

Legion Slur at Japs Scored by D. C. Post

Expressing conviction that all members of the armed forces are entitled to "fair and just treatment" without regard to racial origin, Justice Department Post No. 41, American Legion, has condemned a reported slight to veterans of Japanese ancestry by an Oregon Legion post.

The Hood River (Ore.) Post recently removed from its honor roll the names of several servicemen on the ground they were of Japanese ancestry. A resolution approved by the Washington group said such action is "inconsistent with the doctrine of democracy" and "repugnant to the principles of the American Legion."

Journal, Salem, Oregon
December 9, 1944

Rebuke Levelled at Hood River Post

Cheney, Dec. 9 (AP)—The Cheney, Wash., American Legion Post No. 72 has sent a communication to the Oregon and Washington Legion departments protesting the action of the Hood River, Ore., post in excluding names of 16 Japanese-Americans from a county war memorial, Paul Rozell, post commander, said yesterday.

Rozell said the communication stated "... we think such action is contrary to the Americanism we have sworn to support and defend. To foster racial persecution and discrimination is to imitate the methods of our enemy, and to betray the ideals of America and also the Legion."

TEXT OF AMERICAN LEGION PROTEST ON
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Following is the text of a resolution that originated with Northfield Post No. 84, was adopted by the Third District convention of June 20, 1943, and on Aug. 21, 1943, was passed by the State Convention of the American Legion, Department of Minnesota.

This resolution is being circulated by the Northfield Post No. 84. The text:

Whereas, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees equal protection, under the law, to all persons irrespective of race, color, or creed, and

Whereas, one of the cardinal principles of the American Legion is its support of the Constitution of the United States, and

Whereas, at its National convention in 1942, the American Legion accepted as one of its war aims the following statement: "We condemn religious prejudices, racial or national antagonisms as weapons of our enemies," and

Whereas, there appeared in the official publication, the American Legion Magazine, for June, 1943, an article entitled "Japs In Our Yard," by one Frederick G. Murray, M.D., which urged, among other proposals, that native-born American citizens of Japanese descent, without regard of proved loyalty or good character, be re-located on islands in the Pacific ocean-in direct violation of our constitutional guarantees-and urged this, not as a military measure but as a social, political, and economic policy.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we, the Department of Minnesota, the American Legion, do vigorously protest against our National magazine being used to foster race discrimination and hatred, in violation of the constitution of the American Legion and the Constitution of the United States.

Be it further resolved, that the officials in charge of the publication of both the American Legion Magazine and the National Legionnaire, be instructed that it shall be their policy not to permit the publication of such articles as urge or advocate policies in conflict with the basic principles of the American Legion, and

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be submitted to the National Legion Publications commission at the National convention at Omaha, for adoption by said commission, and

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be submitted to the National Legionnaire for publication in the first available issue.

ARTHUR S. HOUSTON,
Post Commander

CHAUNCEY M. LARSEN,
Incoming Commander

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS
COMMITTEE:

EVERETT D. PHELPS
VINCENT R. HUNT
ANDREW MELDAHL

RESOLUTION UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY
LOS ANGELES POST NO. 8, AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA
AT ITS REGULAR MEETING HELD DECEMBER 21, 1944

WHEREAS, there has been considerable controversy and agitation since Pearl Harbor regarding the rights and status of American citizens of Japanese descent; and

WHEREAS, included among such Americans are those who have served in the American armed forces in World Wars I and II and those who are now serving America in various combat areas with heroic distinction; and

WHEREAS, among that group are those who have served actively and patriotically for many years as our comrades in the American Legion; and

WHEREAS, we have personally observed their conduct and activities as members of our own Legion Post and as members of the 17th District of California; and

WHEREAS, there have been grave assaults upon the rights of these fellow Americans and there has been and now is being waged a persistent campaign of intolerance, prejudice and hatred against them; and

WHEREAS, our attitude toward Americans of Japanese ancestry is of transcendent importance not only to them but to all Americans of whatever ancestry since it concerns a preservation of our constitution and the maintenance of the rights guaranteed thereunder; and

WHEREAS, the order of evacuation issued by the military authorities has now been vacated and the return of a number of the Japanese to our community is anticipated; and

WHEREAS, we are of the conviction that the time has come for a fair, honorable and American expression regarding this so-called Japanese problem:

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE members of the Los Angeles Post of the American Legion, do hereby declare:

1. There must be no discrimination whatever against any American citizen based solely on his Japanese ancestry. We are deeply concerned over the widely disseminated expressions of certain groups and individuals which seek to deny these Americans their rights as such and attempt to establish a distinction between them and other citizens solely by reason of their race in disregard of the constitutional provision that there be no distinction between any person because of his race or color.
2. We particularly deplore any expression emanating from an American Legion source which refuses to accord any American ex-service man or service man the same rights, privileges and honors as any other citizen solely because of his ancestry.
3. We urge our comrades in the American Legion to see to it that the persons and property of the Japanese returning to our community are safeguarded and protected and that they be accorded their full rights and privileges under the constitution without reservation.

Pacific Citizen, Salt Lake City, Utah
January 6, 1945

Nisei War Veteran Joins Omaha American Legion Post

Examiner, San Francisco, Calif.
January 12, 1945



JAP JOINS LEGION—Harley M. Oka, left, a Japanese-American who received a medical discharge last month from the Army, is congratulated by Cmdr. William F. Schneider after joining Hollywood Post No. 591 of the American Legion, composed entirely of World War I veterans. Kingsley Morgan, center, second vice commander, said the post was the first in the Nation to admit a Japanese-American to membership.

—Associated Press Wirephoto.

CHICAGO — Corporal Tachio John Ando, who recently was given a medical discharge from the Army, became a member of the American Legion Post No. 1, Omaha, Nebraska, on November 22, 1944.

Corporal Ando was born at Joliet, Montana, where his family is engaged in farming. He entered the service on October 29, 1941, was assigned to the Coast Artillery and received his training at Camp Wallace, Texas. His overseas assignment was in the Caribbean area.

At the present time Corporal Ando is recuperating at the Veterans' Hospital at Hot Springs, South Dakota, and states that the attendants are doing everything possible to restore him to good health, and that he is receiving every consideration by the hospital staff and the townspeople of Hot Springs.

With reference to his becoming a member of the American Legion Corporal Ando stated: "I joined the American Legion and I am proud to be a member as the records clearly show what the Legion has done for the boys to date, and I know that they are going to work even harder to improve conditions for the service men. The Legion representatives of this small community keep in touch with us and are always glad to help in any way possible."

When asked for further comments relative to the evacuation and the relocation program, Corporal Ando stated: "The Nisei have proved their loyalty on the fighting front and I feel that we can further prove our loyalty in going forth from the centers and help out in any way possible at this critical time when the country is suffering from a labor shortage. It would benefit the war effort as well as be a personal financial gain. Relocation is the golden opportunity to start up again instead of waiting for the end of the war."

Reactions of SERVICE MEN

Exponent, Clarksburg, W. Va.
January 6, 1945

Unfortunate Blunder

The American Legion has admirable and ambitious war plans for assisting returned veterans and for intensifying and increasing its Americanism activities. And it is unfortunate that one of the Legion posts appears to have taken a step, presumably in the name of Americanism, that has aroused the resentment of some of our fighting men.

The Army newspaper Stars and Stripes carried a story stating that the Legion post in Hood River, Ore., had advised Japanese-Americans there to sell their property and get out of town. The story came to the attention of First Army veterans who had fought side by side with Japanese-American troops—one battalion of whom had been rescued from a German trap by these Nisei soldiers—and the result was considerable indignation.

The Japanese-American situation has been botched up sufficiently in its official handling without misguided private individuals or groups adding to it. The splendid record of the Nisei fighters who have gone from our concentration camps into the Army might well serve to remind overzealous Americans that skin pigmentation in itself is not a badge of disloyalty.

Minnesota Legionnaire, St. Paul, Minn.
January 10, 1945

Yank Buddies Speak Well of American-Born Jap Fighters; Resent Slur of Oregon Post

Under the title "Champions Of the Nisei" the St. Paul Pioneer Press of Jan. 2 had this to say editorially:

A few days ago it was predicted in these columns that the Hood River, Oregon, chamber of commerce would soon be trying to suppress the flood of "testimonials" that the misguided action of the local American Legion post was likely to precipitate.

Post officials had erased the names of sixteen Japanese-American soldiers from the village roll of honor, and bought advertising in local newspapers to advise Americans of Japanese descent to sell their Hood River property and never come back there to live.

Since then, the prophecy has been more than fulfilled.

Hood River was denounced in the press and on the air, and numerous Legion posts over the country have invited the deposed Nisei soldiers all of whom are in overseas combat service and three of whom have been wounded in action—to join their units. But these things were just a summer breeze compared to the row that arose when the news reached the U. S. Seventh Army front in Europe.

The Seventh knows something about Nisei soldiers.

Some of them recently rescued a "lost battalion" of the Thirty-sixth Division from a German trap in the Vosges mountains. "Except for them," says one sergeant, "our boys would have been wiped out. A lot of those

Japs lost their lives saving us. It's pretty lousy to be fighting for the rights and liberties of people who would do a thing like that to our buddies."

According to the correspondent who tells the story, nearly every member of the division is writing letters about the Hood River episode—some to relatives, some to the President and members of Congress, some direct to Hood River. An unfortunate phase of the incident is that the whole town gets the blame for the conduct of a handful of its citizens.

Even worse is the fact that action reflects upon the entire Legion organization.

The first draft of most of these letters, the correspondent states, had to be revised to tone down the language. White comrades of Nisei soldiers make little allowance for the strength of local prejudices. . . .

THE STARS AND STRIPES

Friday, January 5, 1945

Legion Post Arouses Ire Of 7th's GIs

By RALPH G. MARTIN
Staff Correspondent

WITH THE 7TH ARMY, Jan. 4 —If the Hood River, Ore., American Legion Post hasn't been getting much mail lately, it can stop worrying.

All along the 7th Army front today, American combat troops (particularly in the 36th Division) were bitching loud and long about a recent announcement by the Hood River American Legion Post telling all Americans of Japanese ancestry that they're not wanted in Hood River County, Oregon, that they better quickly sell any property they have there, that all Nisei soldiers in the American Army have already been scratched off the Legion post honor roll.

Saved Our Lives

This is what the boys of Co. C of the 1st Battalion of the 36th Division had to say about these things, after being in combat for 133 consecutive days:

"People back home ought to know that if it wasn't for the Nisei, a lot of their sons would be dead now. They saved our lives.

(Nisei soldiers of the 442nd Combat team punched through a thick ring of Nazis to relieve the 1st "Lost" Battalion which had been cut off for seven days without food or water. In doing so the Nisei suffered heavy casualties, inflicted even heavier casualties on the Germans.)

"We've been fighting alongside them all through Italy and France. Our boys don't say these Nisei are as good as we are. We say they're a helluva lot better, that they've got more guts. And we ought to know."

"Those Legion people ought to sell their property and give it to these Nisei. They deserve it more. If these Japanese-Americans are good enough to die for their country, they ought to be good enough to live in it."

Legion Disappoints Him

"Why do they keep calling them Japanese-Americans? I'm of German descent and nobody calls me a German-American. Why don't we just call them Americans? Why are some people back home so narrow-minded?"

"We expected more than that from the American Legion. If that keeps up, we don't want to have anything to do with the Legion. I'm just wondering if the Legion Headquarters feels the same way that their Hood River post does."

"I'm ashamed to be fighting for the freedom and liberties of people who say things like that."

Sun, Chicago, Ill.
December 31, 1944

Tribune, Oakland, Calif.
December 31, 1944

U.S. BATTLE LINE VETERANS IRED BY LEGION SLAP AT JAP-AMERICANS

WITH THE U.S. 7TH ARMY, ON THE WESTERN FRONT, Dec. 30—(U.P.)—Hundreds of veteran American soldiers were indignant tonight over an item the Army newspaper Stars and Stripes, which said that an American Legion post in Hood River, Ore., had advised Americans of Japanese ancestry to sell any property they own and leave town.

The dispatch, which moved dozens of G.I.s to prepare a protest to President Roosevelt and congressmen, said the post had advertised in local newspapers that citizens of Japanese ancestry were unwanted.

VIOLENT REACTION

There was violent vocal reaction among doughboys of Lieut. Gen. Alexander Patch's original divisions—the 36th and 45th—who know the gallant record of the 442nd Infantry Regiment, composed mostly of loyal Japanese-Americans, and with which the 36th Division fought in Italy.

Reaction was particularly vituperative against the Legion Post's action, among the First Battalion of the 141st Regiment of the 36th Division—A battalion which just two months ago today was rescued from a German trap near Bruyeres by Japanese-American troops who slashed through German lines to the isolated battalion at great cost to themselves.

There were 81 men on that encircled hilltop when they were rescued and 23 of those same men still are with the company.

"DESERVE MORE"

"Those Japanese-American boys deserve a hell of a lot more than the men sitting back in that Oregon town who don't want them around," one of them observed.

"And we feel pretty lousy having to fight for the rights and liberties of people who do something like that to these Japanese-Americans fighting over here."

Another said his father belonged to the American Legion but "won't when he gets the letter I'm writing

The Front Lines Speak

Jap-Americans' Comrades Indignant at Oregon Slap

Battalion, Rescued from Germans' Trap, Has Strong Condemnation for Legionnaires

WITH THE U.S. 7TH ARMY ON THE WESTERN FRONT,
Dec. 30.—(UP)

HUNDREDS of veteran American soldiers were indignant tonight over an item in the Army newspaper, Stars and Stripes, which said that an American Legion post in Hood River, Ore., had advised Americans of Japanese ancestry to sell any property they owned and leave town.

The dispatch, which moved dozens of G.I.s to prepare to write letters of protest to President Roosevelt and congressmen, said the Legion post had advertised in local newspapers

Brother of Japs' Victim

Pvt. Krukowski, 19, one of the soldiers condemning mistreatment of Japanese-Americans, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Krukowski. He has been overseas since July. His brother, Chester, 22, a baker 3rd class in the Navy, was reported killed in sea action in the Pacific July 18, 1943.

that citizens of Japanese ancestry were unwanted.

There was violent vocal re-

action among doughboys of Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's original divisions—the 36th and 45th—who know the gallant record of the 442d Infantry regiment, composed mostly of Japanese-Americans, with which the 36th Division fought in Italy.

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There were 81 men on that encircled hilltop when they were rescued, and 23 of those same men still are with the company, including Lt. Joseph Kimble, Scranton, Pa., and Sgt. Hiler Hull, San Antonio, Tex.

Hull already has started writing a letter. Kimble said he also would write one, but was undecided whether to address it to President Roosevelt, some congressman, or the Legion post in Hood River.

KIMBLE called in four other veterans who were rescued on the hill—Sgt. Enrique Garcia, Brownsville, Tex.; Tech. Sgt. Clyde E. Armstrong, Farmers, Ky.; Pfc. Virgil Lindell, Billings, Mont., and Pvt. Edwin J. Krukowski, 1651 W. 33d st., Chicago.

"We feel pretty lousy having to fight for the rights and liberties of people who would do something like that to these Japanese-Americans, fighting over here," one of them said.

Times, New York, N. Y.
December 15, 1944

ANTI-NISEI BIAS ASSAILED ON COAST

WRA Aide Denounces Oregon
Legion for Taking Japanese-
Americans From Honor Roll

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 14—

Agitators against any wartime resettlement of Japanese-Americans in West Coast States were denounced today by Robert B. Cozzens, assistant director of the War Relocation Authority, in a letter to the Hood River (Ore.) American Legion Post, which removed the names of sixteen Japanese-American soldiers from its county honor roll.

Mr. Cozzens, himself a Legion member, wrote to the Oregon post commander, Jess Edington, as follows:

"Your disgraceful act cannot be condoned by a vast majority of American Legionnaires nor by the 'lost battalion' rescued in this war by the Nisei, nor by Lieut. Gen. Mark W. Clark, who cited the 100th Battalion of Nisei for bravery in Italy, nor by any fair-minded person who is able to make the distinction between the enemy and loyal Americans of many ancestries who are fighting the enemy."

"You have betrayed the Legion by a deliberate insult to our Army, its uniform and the brave men who wear it," Mr. Cozzens continued. "You have attempted to loosen the cornerstone of our democracy by striking at one racial group of descendants out of the six nations we had declared war against. You desecrate the grave of the Unknown Soldier. For neither you, nor any other man, knows but that sacred resting place may hold the remains of a descendant of an enemy nation. We had Japanese-American soldiers in World War I."

Labor Press Opposes Action

The Oregon Labor Press, representing American Federation of Labor unions, asserted today: "We should not violate our Constitution by denying the privileges given by it to any group, regardless of race, creed or color."

A California State Senate committee's stand against permitting any evacuated persons of Japanese ancestry back on the Coast during the war was "repudiated" by the Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play. This is a group of allied organizations and thirty-two Californians, including Dr. Robert A. Millikan of the California Institute of Technology and Dr. Monroe E. Deutsch, provost of the University of California at Berkeley.

In a telegram to Representative Clarence Lea, chairman of the California Congressional delegation, the signers said that the State Senate "fact finding" committee during its investigation called before it no persons "openly opposed to further racial discrimination against Japanese-Americans."

The San Francisco Chronicle has refused to accept the committee's statement that the people of California were "overwhelmingly opposed" to the return of any Japanese evacuees during the war and suggested that the present uproar was "largely artificial."

Post, Washington, D.C.
December 13, 1944

Letters To The Editor

The writer has been a member of the American Legion for 25 years and has taken an active part in promoting the membership growth and other activities of the various posts of which he has been a member over this period of time. But never has such an unworthy act as this been brought to his attention. The membership of this great organization is supposed to be made up of men and women from all races and is nonsectarian.

Tolerance is one of the cardinal points of the Legion and is even expressed in the preamble to the constitution which is recited in unison at the opening of every post meeting.

This action on the part of the Hood River Post is reprehensible, and cowardly against those who are far from their homes and cannot take a stand in their defense or speak up against the gross injustice done them. It is dishonorable and totally in contradiction to the principles for which our boys are fighting. Such an act as this might be expected in Germany, but it is unbelievable to think that it has occurred in one of the United States.

Shame on the Hood River Post of the American Legion for the blot they have caused to the Legion banner!

SUMMERFIELD A. McCARTNEY.
Washington, Dec. 4.

Tribune, Great Falls, Mont.
December 31, 1944

Seventh Army Soldiers Write in Protest Of Legion Post's Treatment of Loyal Japs

WITH THE UNITED STATES ARMY, on the Western Front, Dec. 30. — (U.P.) — Hundreds of veteran American soldiers were indignant tonight over an item in the army newspaper Stars and Stripes, which said that an American Legion post in Hood River, Ore., had advised Americans of Japanese ancestry to sell any property they own and leave town.

The dispatch, which moved dozens of G.I.s to prepare to write letters of protest to President Roosevelt and congressmen, said the Legion post had advertised in local newspapers that citizens of Japanese ancestry were unwanted.

There was violent local reaction among doughboys of Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's original divisions—the 36th and 45th—who know the gallant record of the 44th infantry regiment, composed mostly of loyal Japanese-Americans, and with which the 36th division fought in Italy.

Reaction was particularly vituperative against the Legion post's action, among the First battalion of the 141st regiment of the 36th division—a battalion which just two months ago today was rescued from a German trap near Bruyeres by Japanese-American troops who slashed through German lines to the isolated battalion at great cost to themselves.

There were 81 men on that encircled hilltop when they were rescued and 23 of those same men still are with the company, including Lt. Joseph Kimble, Scranton, Pa., and Sgt. Hiler Hull, San Antonio, Tex.

Hull already has started writing a letter. Kimble said he also would write one but was undecided whether to address it to President Roosevelt, some congressman, or the Legion post in Hood River.

Kimble called in four other veterans who were rescued on the hill, Sgt. Enrique Garcia, Brownsville, Tex.; Technical Sgt. Clyde E. Armstrong, Farmers, Ky.; Pfc. Vir-

gil Lindell, Billings, Mont., and Pvt. Edwin J. Krukowski, Chicago. "Those boys deserve a hell of a lot more than the men sitting back in that Oregon town who don't want them around," one of them observed, "and we feel pretty lousy having to fight for the rights and liberties of people who do something like that to these Japanese-Americans fighting over here."

Another said his father belonged to the American Legion but he "won't when he gets the letter I'm writing."

One said he was of German descent but that didn't make him an unwanted enemy and that the same should apply to a person of Japanese descent.

Herald & News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
December 17, 1944

TWO OREGONIANS BACK JAP-YANKS

Times-Herald, Washington, D.C.
December 14, 1944

CORP. BILL SHANNON, of the Eighty-fifth, who lost a leg overseas, telephoned a blast against that curious American Legion post, at Hood River, Oregon, which ripped the names of American-Japanese boys, serving overseas, from the legion honor roll: "Our outfit fought right next to those American Japanese of the 100th Battalion in Italy; Ed and they were sensational. Out of 1,200, more than 1,000 of those American-Japanese kids won Purple Hearts. They won one Presidential Unit Citation in Italy, and I think they won a cluster for it in France. Those legionnaires in Hood River who passed that shocking resolution aren't fit to carry the tommy guns of those American-Japs" . . . American Legion posts, as a result of the protest in this space, have been quick to repudiate the Oregonian bigotry. (Capt. Belvidere Brook Post, No. 450, not only passed a resolution of condemnation; also invited the American-Japanese soldiers to join their post) . . . The unknown American soldier of this war may be one of the American-Japanese veterans barred by the Oregon post.

From: "Little Old New York,"
by Ed Sullivan

Portland, Ore., Dec. 16—(U.P.) Two prominent Oregon men today defended the 16 Japanese-American soldiers whose names were removed from the Memorial plaque at Hood River, Ore., American Legion post.

Dr. Harold J. Noble, a marine major formerly with the history department of the University of Oregon, said he commanded a unit of Japanese-American soldiers in the Pacific area, and that his men consistently showed great courage.

G. B. McLean, editor of the service bulletin of the Oregon State Medical society, told of Capt. Robert Kinoshita, army medical corps, who was wounded three times and is again on active duty in Holland.

Rocky Mountain News, Denver, Colo.
December 29, 1944

**Believes Jap-Americans
Have Made Good Soldiers**
Rocky Mt. News

Editor: I am a soldier who has spent two years in foreign service. Upon returning to the U. S. I am astonished at the American Legion of Hood River District with their attitude toward the Japanese boys who are in our uniform. It is an insult to the American uniform if not a blight to the entire American Legion throughout our country. What are we fighting for? Democracy?

I had refrained from joining any organization because I had favored the American Legion. But as long as the American Legion has charters like Hood River District and the attitude they now maintain they can count me out. I can't feel that I need an organization like that to try to help me.

My suggestion to the American Legion Central Committee is it is time to clean house, if nothing more than to lift the Hood River charter and give it to the 16 Japanese and the rest of the boys from there who are now serving their country. Those Japanese boys have two strikes on them now through no fault of their own.

This is their country as well as ours. At least the Constitution says so. Having come in contact with Negroes, Jews, Italian, Polish, German, and Slavish boys in our army, I say they are all good soldiers and have done their part without showing any racial hostilities, and without the usual beefing one hears.

PVT. N. T. WILLIAMS.
Ft. Warren, Wyoming.

Herald, Rutland, Vt.
December 12, 1944

LOYAL JAP-AMERICANS.

To the Editor of The Herald: An A. P. Dispatch of December 2, 1944, given wide publicity in America, stated that "the Hood river (Ore.) post of the American Legion had erased the names of sixteen Americans of Japanese origin now serving in the U. S. Army, from its county war memorial, many of them now serving overseas battlefronts."

My first act upon returning to civilian status after 31 months in the service is to beg the courtesy of your columns to appeal to every post of the Legion in this state to write an official letter to the Hood river post and protest that action, for the following reasons—

1. It is exactly the same action that the Nazis took with the names of Jewish veterans who died for their fatherland in World War I, an action which outraged all liberal opinion even in enemy countries.

2. It is absolutely unconstitutional, in that it shows racial discrimination.

3. It evidences the basest ingratitude to men who were willing to die for their country.

4. It undermines the morale of our troops with whom these loyal Japanese-Americans are serving.

The official War department booklet "Nisei in Uniform" tells of the exploits of the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442d Combat team composed of Japanese volunteers from Hawaii and is sufficient reason to protest such action of our far Western "comrades", which I feel sure every loyal Vermont Legionnaire will disown.

Sincerely yours,

WALDO H. HEINRICHS
Middlebury, Dec. 10, 1944.

The Oregonian, Portland, Ore.
December 17, 1944

Hood River Jap Wounded

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 (Special)—Pvt. Eichi Wakamatsu, Hood River, Or., serving in a Japanese-American combat team, was wounded in action in France October 30, it was reported Friday by the war relocation authority.

Word was received by Wakamatsu's parents at Granada relocation center, Amache, Colo., WRA stated.

Only two weeks ago Commander Jess Eddington of the American Legion post at Hood River announced the post was erasing from the county war memorial the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now in the army, marking a clash between WRA and the American Legion over the treatment of loyal Japanese-Americans.

Two Others Wounded

Spokesmen for WRA said they did not know whether or not Wakamatsu's name was one of those ordered to be erased by Eddington, but that they "assumed so."

WRA also pointed out that Pvt. George M. Hata and Pvt. Hiromu Heyamoto, both of Gresham, also have been wounded in action at the fighting fronts.

Word was received by Hata's parents at the Minidoca relocation center, Hunt, Idaho, that he was wounded in Italy July 4, and word received by Heyamoto's parents at the same center that he was wounded on the French front October 20, WRA stated.

Herald-News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
January 3, 1945

Hood River Jap Gets Bronze Star

WITH THE SIXTH ARMY GROUP IN FRANCE, Jan. 3 (AP) A Hood River, Ore., Japanese-American, PFC George Akiyama, was one of 20 members of a Japanese-American combat team receiving the Bronze Star from Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers yesterday. They are members of the 100th battalion, described as "one of the most decorated units of its size in American military history."

Akiyama's citation declared his "heroic disregard for personal safety contributed immeasurably to the subsequent attainment of the objective and reflects honor upon the U. S. army." The action occurred in the vicinity of Biffontaine, France, where the group was ordered to establish contact with entrapped elements of their battalion.

EDITORIALS and Other NEWSPAPER COMMENT

Times, New York, N. Y.
December 9, 1944

HOOD RIVER'S BLUNDER

The Hood River, Ore., post of the American Legion may have reflected a local prejudice when it recently removed from its war memorial the names of sixteen American citizens of Japanese descent who have served honorably in this war. In certain parts of the West the old and understandable opposition to Japanese immigration has survived in a dislike of native-born Japanese Americans because of the color of their skins. And so the Hood River post may have found some support in taking this way of letting the Japanese-American veterans "know we don't want them back here."

It was not majority support, either on the Pacific Coast or elsewhere. Fair-minded Americans know that discrimination on account of racial origin is the enemy's weapon, not ours. The Portland Council of Churches has answered the Hood River post by calling upon ministers to aid loyal Japanese-Americans in returning to their homes and denouncing racial discrimination as a denial of "the very principles of Americanism which our boys are fighting to preserve." Japanese-American units have done splendid service in Italy. Japanese-Americans have been of great help in the Pacific war. They do not ask recognition beyond that given to German-Americans and other sorts of Americans who have served faithfully. They are entitled to as much recognition. Hood River owes them an apology.

Sun, Chicago, Ill.
December 18, 1944

Not So American

AT LAST reports the American Legion post of Hood River, Ore., still was standing pat, despite nationwide protests, on removing the names of 16 Japanese-American soldiers from the post's roll of honor. Of course, the bestiality of Hirohito's hordes on the other side of the Pacific arouses the anger of civilized men. But the loyalty and courage of the great majority of Japanese-Americans in this war has been amply demonstrated, both in and out of our armed forces, and on the outpost of Hawaii as well as the mainland. The Hood River veterans' action fosters race hatred; they can serve democracy and common decency by repenting of an ill-considered gesture and restoring the names of their 16 fellow-citizens.

Record, Philadelphia, Pa.
December 11, 1944

Who Are Real Americans?

The Gardena post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in California has refused to include names of Japanese-American servicemen, even casualties, on its roll of honor.

Two American Legion posts in Oregon recently erased the names of Japanese-American servicemen from their county honor rolls.

We think that somebody should read the perpetrators of such snide, prejudiced behavior a lecture on real Americanism.

And they might include in the lecture the commendation of Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist, commanding general of the 36th Division.

He asserted that the U. S. Army has never seen finer soldierly qualities than those displayed by the Japanese-Americans of the 442d Regimental combat team. That is the outfit which rescued the "lost battalion" last October on the Western front.

Collier's for January 20, 1945

DIRTY WORK AT HOOD RIVER

IT HAS been a great pleasure to record and applaud here from time to time various manifestations of true American-style tolerance and general decency toward loyal Japanese-Americans in this country—cases where Americans who know what Americanism is have stood up and protected these peoples' basic rights.

We now record, with deep regret, a flash from the other side of the picture; to wit: In Hood River, Oregon, the local American Legion post recently forced the removal from the county war memorial of the names of 16 Hood River Japanese-Americans now serving in the Army.

That is tops in blind hatred, a record of some kind for ingratitude, possibly an all-American low in intolerance and bigotry.

We cannot but believe that better judgment and real patriotism will win out in Hood River sooner or later. The sooner, obviously, the better.

Tribune, Salt Lake City, Utah
December 28, 1944

Hood River Legionnaires Blotting a Glorious Escutcheon

It is a matter of keen regret that the Hood River chapter of the American Legion has placed a blot upon the record of the national organization that no excuse or explanation can erase. When myopic members of that local body removed from the "roll of honor," inscribed a quarter of a century ago, the names of 16 American soldiers of Japanese descent who had shared the risks, suffered the discomforts and made the sacrifices demanded of our fighting men in the first World war, such a demonstration of racial prejudice might have been expected in Germany, but certainly had no place in the United States of America.

Under the federal constitution, which all legionnaires are supposed to indorse and uphold, persons of Japanese parentage born in this country are citizens thereof; they are subject to military conscription and thousands of them are now in Europe taking an active and creditable part in this second World war. What right—legal, moral or military—had the Hood River post to authorize or permit the shameful act of incredible intolerance to be committed in the name of an honored legion of veterans?

As to whether entire responsibility is to rest on the local branch or to fully the whole organization is something Americans are entitled to know—something the axis is gloating over as a justification for its own behavior. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson declared that "such action is wholly inconsistent with the American ideal of democracy." An eastern legion post regretted the erasure as "a reflection on the entire legion." But the Hood River post and its commander, J. B. Edington, refuse to relent or to comment.

The secretary of war told a press conference that the erasure of nisei names, including men who had been wounded in action, is a reflection on the military system. He also praised the fighting spirit of Japanese-American soldiers, many of whom have distinguished themselves or died while fighting against the Germans in Italy.

They do not ask any consideration beyond that accorded Americans of German, Spanish, Chinese or Filipino descent who have served the republic faithfully and fearlessly in this or the last war. But they are entitled to just as much recognition and to more commendation than is due misguided misanthropes who insult comrades in arms and disgrace the noble organization to which they belong.

Be it said to the credit of the legion that many posts have invited the 16 nisei veterans into their membership. Paul Roselle, a legion commander in the state of Washington, is believed to express the views of legionnaires generally in saying:

"We protest because we think such action is contrary to the Americanism we have sworn to support and defend. To foster such racial persecution and discrimination is to imitate the methods of our enemies and betray the ideals of America and the legion."

Evening World Herald
Omaha, Neb.
December, 1944

1905 AND 1944

Those who read Albert O. Jensen's letter in the Public Pulse the other day caught a glimpse of what America means to so many millions of her foreign born. In that excellent letter Mr. Jensen told of the joy that the sight of the Statue of Liberty inspired among the passengers aboard the immigrant ship.

A heart-warming story, one that reminds us again—and we need to be reminded—of the hope and the love that the new country aroused in those who came to live here.

That was 1905. It was not all a world of sunshine for these newcomers. "Hunky" and "Spik" and "Wop" were some of the terms used by certain pure-blooded patriots whose ancestors happened to get here a couple of hundred years earlier. But there was work and opportunity for all. The immigrants prospered and they became Americans.

Today there are thousands of young men, Americans all, returning to their homeland as war veterans. They, too, see the Statue of Liberty if they happen to come by way of New York Harbor.

For most of them it is a joyous homecoming. Many brave soldiers are said to have cried at sight of the Statue. But there are some whose emotions must be mixed.

What about the 16 Japanese-American soldiers from Hood River, Oregon? Their names have been erased from the community war memorial. The town does not want them back.

What about the communities of the South where Negroes know something about the neat arrangement of society on a "master race" and "inferior race" basis?

What to do about it? We can't legislate to enforce tolerance. The case of the Hood River boys shows that in some instances our national unity, even for our common war effort, is resented in certain quarters.

Some how, some way we will have to get back to the elemental love of country, the appreciation of America as a land of opportunity, the kind of thing that Mr. Jensen and his fellow immigrants had in their hearts. We will have to do that before we can even talk of overcoming prejudices.

For if our country is not big enough, physically and spiritually, to accommodate all of its people we may as well yield now to groups that want to curb minorities or grade the qualities of citizenship. We may as well forget about the great democratic experiment we call the American Way.

Gazette, Worcester, Mass.
December 16, 1944

Americans of Japanese Ancestry

At a news conference on Thursday, Secretary of War Stimson took occasion to pay high tribute to men of Japanese ancestry now serving in the armed forces of the United States.

There are 13,000 such men, said Mr. Stimson, who have served in this war. He recalled that the 100th Infantry Battalion, composed entirely of Japanese-American soldiers, fought heroically in Italy and was cited for gallantry. In the European fighting now, he added, the 442nd Combat Team, likewise made up entirely of Japanese-Americans, is compiling a fine record for loyal military service. These things are well known. The members of those units deserve, if anything, special commendation because many of them, before entering the service, had to undergo particular scrutiny in common with all citizens of Japanese descent.

It is good that Secretary Stimson made conspicuous mention of these soldiers. But it is unfortunate that he felt the necessity of doing so. He spoke because of reports from a place called Hood River, in Oregon, that an American Legion post there has erased from its honor roll the names of sixteen members, not because their service in this war bears any blemish, but because they are of Japanese descent.

Happily, American Legion officials in Oregon and elsewhere have been quick to condemn the Hood River post's action. There is no possible justification for so unfair and rank a piece of discrimination. If the post persists in its attitude, there will be no lack of posts elsewhere glad to welcome the sixteen soldiers into honorable membership. Instead of emphasizing prejudice, the Hood River incident may demonstrate the fact that all but a few fatheads in this country thoroughly appreciate the loyalty and service of our Japanese-American soldiers.

It has been necessary for security purposes to keep watch on persons of Japanese ancestry in this country during the war, and intelligent, patriotic citizens in that race group understand the necessity. But any action in that line is strictly a government function. Japanese-American citizens whose loyalty has been demonstrated beyond doubt, through military service or otherwise, merit the respect and decent consideration of their fellow Americans.

Southwest American, Ft. Smith, Ark.
December 27, 1944

Legion Rights Wrong

Justice has been done.

At least it has been done insofar as the action of one group may stop for the wrong done by another. The fact of original injustice must remain.

A few days ago the Hood River, Ore., post of the American Legion caused the names of 16 American soldiers of Japanese ancestry to be erased from its war memorial. Most of these soldiers were on overseas duty.

Now, from New York comes news that these soldiers have been invited to become members of Capt. Belvidere Brooks Post, 45th of the American Legion after the war. Post officials said they took the action because they felt a "black eye" was given the legion by the action of the Hood River post.

A lot of fair-minded persons will applaud the New York post's gesture.

Consider the record of the 100th battalion, composed entirely of Japanese-Americans: A Presidential Unit Citation, 1,020 Purple Hearts, 44 Silver Stars, 31 Bronze Stars, and 9 Distinguished Service Crosses.

What is Americanism—a complexion or a state of mind and heart?

THE ROOTS, AS USUAL, ARE ECONOMIC.

The Hood River, Ore., American Legion post has gained quite a lot of attention nationally, first by scratching the names of Japanese-American servicemen from its honor roll and then by sponsoring advertisements warning Japanese-Americans not to try to return to their Oregon home.

Since most people on the West Coast are clearly better democrats than these Hood River Legionnaires, and less fanatic racists, we suspected all along that there was a burr of some kind under this saddle.

And a news dispatch finally uncovers it.

"Many of the leading (Hood River) Legionnaires are apple-growers."

The Hood valley is rich orchard land. The older orchard men didn't like the competition of highly-efficient, industrious Japanese-American apple-growers. They got rid of the competition when the Army moved all persons of Japanese ancestry out. Now they are advertising that they "can't be responsible" for what happens if the evacuated land-owners come back—hoping, obviously, to frighten the Japanese-Americans away permanently.

Naturally a Legion post in such a community might tend to be dominated by this special interest, which does not hesitate to use the post's name and influence for its own ends.

Offhand, we'd say it is a pretty ugly business.

Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Wash.
December 5, 1944

Intolerance Is Foe of Freedom

There are ominous signs in America that the hatred which has engulfed Europe and other parts of the world is taking root in this land of the free. We seem to have forgotten that America became the cradle of liberty because men came to these shores to escape the hatreds of the old world.

Certainly it bodes ill for the future peace of mankind if the bitterness reflected by the action of American Legion members in Hood River, Ore., who erased the names of 16 Japanese-Americans from that community's war memorial, is permitted to spread throughout the land.

Even while this un-American

thing was taking place members of the Japanese-American Citizens' league met in Salt Lake City "to dedicate ourselves and our communities to building up democratic government of a kind which our returning soldiers will be proud to have fought for."

Attending this conference in Salt Lake City were nine veterans of the 100th Infantry, composed of Japanese-Americans from Hawaii, who had fought valiantly against the Germans at Salerno and in south France. It will be difficult for them to understand the action of the Hood River Legionnaires.

Free men, no matter what their nationality or color, are fighting on every battle front in the world today to destroy the theory of a master race. Racial intolerance should have no place in America.

Herald & Review, Decatur, Ill.
December 31, 1944

Personal, Regional Prejudice

The commander of the Hood River, Oregon, post of the American Legion had the names of 16 American soldiers removed from the community service honor roll because they were of Japanese ancestry. The action drew criticism from many Legion posts throughout the nation and Secretary of War Henry Stimson called the move "wholly incongruous" with the spirit of democracy.

The commander of the group insists that the names will not be returned to the honor roll. He refuses to comment on the fact that most of the soldiers are members of the all-Japanese-American 100th Infantry Battalion, one of the most decorated single units in the Army. The group holds the Presidential citation and more than 1,000 of its soldiers wear individual awards. Three of the Hood River Nisei are among the 1,020 battalion members wearing the Purple Heart for wounds received in action.

The Oregon post commander has been rebuked by Legion posts throughout the country because his action, prompted by a West Coast distrust of all Japanese-Americans, reflects upon the national organization of the American Legion which has held to a sensible and tolerant policy in relations with the Nisei.

Organization leaders who are blinded by personal and regional prejudice are a blight not only upon their own groups, but upon the nation and all the nations which make up the world in which we must live.

News, Miami, Flo.
December 12, 1944

A Fire To Fight

There has been much alarmed comment on the thing the American Legion Post of Hood River, Ore., did. What it did was to strike from the county war memorial the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry who are serving with honor with the American armies overseas.

The act gives plentiful occasion for alarm. It is an act of such intolerance as to be hardly believable, yet there it is.

We cannot begin too soon to fortify ourselves against the spirit here manifested. It goes counter to all we know as American, yet it will be exhibited by men who think of themselves as first of all Americans. It takes patient education to render such things impossible. Church, school and press cannot move too fast in establishing a spirit which will be immune to the appeals to prejudice which are all too sure to mar the peace.

Journal, Milwaukee, Wis.
December 17, 1944

The 'Hood River' Black Eye

The Capt. Belvidere Brooks post No. 450 of the American Legion in New York City has invited 16 American soldiers of Japanese ancestry to join the post after the war.

This action was taken by the New York post to offset the "black eye" given to the legion when the Hood River (Ore.) post of the legion caused the names of these 16 servicemen to be stricken from the local war memorial. Unfortunately, not all of the 16 will be able to take advantage of the invitation of the New York post—because death on the battlefield has already broken the ranks of the Japanese Americans from Hood River.

How can the legionnaires in Hood River look each other in the eye?

Eagle, Brooklyn, New York
December 17, 1944

Remember U. S.-Jap Heroes

The action of an American Legion post in Hood River, Ore., in striking from its roll of honor the names of 16 American-Japanese members has been widely and properly criticized by other Legion posts, the War Relocation authorities and government officials as un-American and calculated to foster race hatred within the United States.

To condone the action of the Oregon Legion post would be to follow along the Axis propaganda line which long has sought to pit Jewish-Americans against Gentiles, isolationist Americans against internationalists and so set the Allies quarreling among themselves.

To impugn the valor or loyalty of these American-Japanese who have so clearly proved their courage by deeds and blood is cowardly and a disgrace.

Telegraph, Alton, Ill.
December 7, 1944

Harmful Bigotry

The action of a West Coast city, which recently decided to strike the names of Japanese-Americans from its honor-roll of servicemen, qualifies the country for the unwanted honor of the most-bigoted in the country.

The men who made the decision probably look upon themselves as super-patriots, but their patriotism is fortunately not the sort to which the majority of Americans subscribe.

Republican, Waterbury, Conn.
December 16, 1944

Fantastic Intolerance

Fantastic is the only word for the reported action of the Hood River, Ore., American Legion post in removing the names of 16 soldiers from the town honor roll because they are of Japanese ancestry. In deploring the action Secy. of War Stimson cites the magnificent record which loyal Japanese-Americans have been making in our country's service. And a striking circumstance is that most of the sixteen who have been taken off the honor roll are fighting in France and three of them have been wounded.

.....
There is little doubt that the indiscriminate packing off of these people was in many instances less a measure of public safety than the seizing of a pretext to satisfy an old animosity. And nothing brings home the vengefulness of this racial feeling so dramatically as this honor roll instance at Hood River.

Japanese-Americans on the West Coast are a small racial minority compared to the Negro population of the South, yet a certain type of Far Westerner apparently is blood brother of the lynching mobs that have given Dixie so poor a name for tolerance. In this vicious Hood River case, the misled Legionnaires should be offered plenty of evidence as to how the rest of the country feels about such vile repayment to men who are so splendidly vindicating their Americanism.

Free Press, Burlington, Vt.
December 14, 1944

Recognition for Nisei

Lieut.-Col. Waldo H. Heinrichs, recently returned to Middlebury college after 31 months of active service with the wing intelligence of the eighth fighter command in England, made timely and pertinent comment in his letter which appeared in our news columns yesterday.

He deplored the action of the Hood River (Oregon) post of the American Legion erasing the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the United States Army, from the county war memorial. He called upon American Legion posts in Vermont to protest that action.

.....
It is a dangerous policy to prejudge individuals on the basis of the sins of their race. It is equally dangerous to go to the other extreme and assume that because some of a specific group have done exceptionally well that all deserve high praise. It is necessary in this life that every individual should stand on his own record, regardless of background, ancestry, color, race or associates. That is the American principle and one of the major principles we are upholding in this war. We must not forget it.

Times, Hartford, Conn.
December 4, 1944

ABUSING JAPANESE-AMERICANS

(Milwaukee Journal)

On the West Coast many otherwise respectable organizations—including the American Legion, which should stand for the finest kind of Americanism—have been engaging in a bitter hate campaign against the Japanese-Americans. They have sought to direct the enmity for Japan against these citizens. The West coast press has also played a disgraceful role in this attack.

What kind of Americanism is it for the city of Gardena to omit from its honor roll of citizens the names of 17 Japanese-Americans in the service of our common country? What kind of Americanism is it for the American Legion to revoke the charters of two posts made up of Japanese-American veterans of the first World War? What kind of Americanism is it for the Legion in Portland, Ore., to protest the efforts of local citizens to provide some volunteer care for a Japanese cemetery?

The attitude expressed in these actions is a disheartening sign that we have a long way to go to achieve the kind of tolerance and democracy we fight for.

Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah
December 16, 1944

Strawberry Land Intolerance

If professional arouasers of race hatred inspired the Hood River post of the American Legion to remove the names of sixteen American soldiers from the post's roll of honor merely because those soldiers happen to be citizens of Japanese ancestry, those rabble rousers must be frothing today.

For, instead of launching into a race hatred program in the secret, devious and nasty ways so well described by the author of "Under Cover," the Legion boys in this famous Oregon strawberry region proclaimed the members' intolerance in an open and extraordinary manner calculated to attract national attention and national disapproval.

If professional apostles of hate were behind the action, they probably advised deep and dark methods that would have promoted the discrimination and injustice intended, but that would have been difficult to observe and expose to the fresh air of public opinion.

The forthright manner in which the Hood River boys launched into their intolerance program indicates they are probably more wholesome than their action would indicate. The flood of messages and telegrams they are receiving will be informative and educational to the Hood River post and to the American public.

Hood River Legionnaires have provided an opportunity for a great many groups and individuals to stand up to be counted among those whose hatred is confined to hatred of intolerance.

News, Indianapolis, Ind.
December 19, 1944

Our Japanese-American Patriots

One of the most heartening news events of the last many months has been the action of the Captain Belvidere Brooks Post of the American Legion in New York in inviting into its membership sixteen Americans of Japanese descent whose names a companion post in Oregon expunged from its records in a moment of super-patriotism.

The members of the New York Post are living up to the finest ideals of the American Legion in stepping forth so courageously in defense of their comrades in arms.

Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, S.D.
December 6, 1944

Un-American

The Iron Cross for the most spectacularly un-American act of the war should go to the American Legion post of Hood River, Ore. It earned this distinction by erasing from its county war memorial the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry who are now serving in the United States army.

The Legionnaires in Hood River who promoted this act are Americans in name but not in spirit. They should be given an elementary course in the principles of common decency and basic Americanism.

Journal, Milwaukee, Wis.
December 5, 1944

An Un-American Act

There is nothing very American about that American Legion post in the Hood River valley of Oregon which removed from its war memorial the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the United States army. Some of these men are overseas and at the battle fronts.

We are sure this is not in the spirit of the legion as a whole, and we hope the national organization will do something about it, even though it does try to leave its posts as autonomous as possible.

This matter involves the future of the legion, which wants to bring the boys of this war into its organization. Well, they are not fighting for the kind of thing the Hood River post has done. Ask any one of them who comes back. He'll tell you America's racial prejudices must be corrected. He is not likely to come into any organization which, because of such prejudice, erases the names of loyal Americans—whatever their color or their ancestry—from its rolls.

Press, Grand Rapids, Mich.
December 9, 1944

THEY ARE ALSO AMERICANS.

Americans of Japanese ancestry served their country well in the first World war. Yet since we have been fighting Japan some American Legion posts on the west coast have expelled Japanese-American veterans of that war from their membership. In a California town the names of Nisei who died for their country in 1917-18 have been chiseled from a veterans' monument.

Such hysterical outbursts of race prejudice are a discredit to an organization which was set up as an exponent of Americanism and has a record of many fine achievements in that field. Regrettably, the legion on the west coast seems to have aligned itself with that sector of public opinion which has shown the most unrelenting bitterness toward Japanese-Americans, regardless of their proved loyalty and vallant service to their country.

Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore.
December 12, 1944

"HOOD RIVER JAP PROBLEM"

Up in Hood River, the Legion post has removed from its community honor roll the names of men of Japanese origin who are serving in the armed forces of the United States. That is not patriotism but prejudice and it is carrying prejudice much too far. However, the sentiment of one post does not reflect the sentiment of the entire Legion, nor are we willing to believe that the action of one group represents the feeling of the entire community.

Tribune, Lewiston, Idaho
December 4, 1944

No Place For Them?

One has often read of the exploits of the American soldiers of Japanese descent in their own military units, particularly on the Italian front. They are excellent soldiers; they make of the wearing of the uniform a special opportunity for the demonstration of their love of country. It is said that the battle casualties of the Japanese-Americans have been especially heavy because of their determined efforts to prove their devotion to the nation of which they are citizens.

It is a strange kind of Americanism which would exclude any loyal American from residence in this land on the sole ground of race or ancestry. What will the Japanese-Americans who are fighting, bleeding and dying for their country on the battlefronts think when they are told their homeland wants them not?

THIS WORLD TODAY

By ROYCE BRIER

HOOD RIVER is a small town on the Columbia River fifty miles east of Portland in a smiling and beautiful orchard country. If you have had occasion in more expansive days to drive up the Columbia River Highway, you will remember the countryside, but possibly not the town, for it is like any other small and prosperous American agricultural community.

During the Old War it contributed its due quota of young men to the fight on the ancient German will to power, and these are now in late middle age, now substantial townsmen and in some cases leaders of the civic life. Some of them are members of the American Legion posts which dot America in large cities and small, taking part in the local and national problems confronting the nation, as is their right and their duty.

From the Hood River region in the past three years have gone sixteen American citizens of the Japanese race into the armed forces raised to fight again the ancient German will to power. Because simultaneously we were compelled to fight an equally ancient Japanese will to power, these Japanese-American soldiers have been used sparingly in the Pacific, usually for intelligence purposes, and the bulk of them have been assigned to the war on the Germans.

Several thousand have been fighting on Italian soil for over a year, and have made an extraordinarily good record. We are not told whether the sixteen from Hood River have been in Italy, but it may be presumed some of them have seen combat service there.

Originally the names of these men, with their white compatriots, were installed on the county memorial of the kind usually in the keeping of the American Legion post in small American communities.

A Small Oregon Town, 16 Names And the Ideals That Are America

About two months ago the Hood River post voted to erase these Japanese names from the memorial.

It is not probable this was the unanimous will of the Hood River post, or represents the unanimous will of the citizens of Hood River. But it was deliberative, and without doubt is the majority will of the post. The other day the effacement of the names was actually accomplished, the announcement made by Commander Jess Edington, of the post.

In this connection the Associated Press office in New York sent the following dispatch yesterday: "Sixteen American soldiers of Japanese ancestry have been invited to become members of the Captain Belvedere Brooks Post, No. 450, American Legion, after the war. Post officials took the action because they said they felt a 'black eye' was given the Legion by the Hood River Post . . ."

It is therefore apparent that the American Legion, as an organization of men who sacrificed for their country in their youth and who are dedicated to maintain its integrity and its institutions, will not give unanimous assent to the kind of action taken by the Hood River post. On the contrary, it is apparent that there are members who will oppose this kind of action as damaging to the purposes and ideals of the American Legion.

And this is a good sign, for if the American Legion is to become an instrument for the furtherance of prejudices impairing our fundamental law and our professed ideals of republican government, then its function as a patriotic, constructive and far-seeing institution in our American scheme will be lost.

Now, the larger Japanese question is one developing great heat on the Pacific Coast these days. There are all grades of opinion on it, all legal in a free country so long as it does not act in defiance of law, or advocate such defiance. An opinion on the constitutional aspects of the

question was expressed here recently. But let's stick to this Hood River manifestation of it, and see if we can discover what it means in bed-rock terms.

These Legion men in Hood River who voted to erase the Japanese names were once put in jeopardy of their lives in opposing an enemy of the United States. For this they claimed and still claim honor, and it was and is due them, as it is due all men who fight for their country since Pericles so nobly put the case in Athens 2400 years ago.

But now they deny a like honor to sixteen men who, in the vicissitudes of history, happen to have been put in the same jeopardy of their lives in opposing the selfsame enemy of the United States. They deny it because they are overcome by their prejudices, because the sixteen have a brownish pigment in their skins, because of several related prejudices having nothing to do with the integrity and destiny of the United State in war.

All right, let's still stick to Hood River, and skip all the cosmic legalities for the present piece. You can whip up a Grade-A argument on it anywhere, anytime, and most of us are a little foggy on the finer points.

But most of us know in a general way, as our grandfathers did, what this country is about. That's why we've got it. Most of us insist it requires a reasonably cool faith in the national integrity and destiny, a struggle to subordinate natural prejudice and personal welfare to the long-range public welfare, and a tolerable fair-play as between all who live on our soil and subscribe to our way.

It is submitted here that the Hood River Post of the American Legion has jumped the American track in this instance.

December 14, 1944

PM, New York, N. Y.
December 14, 1944

A Nomination for the Award For Most Contemptible Deed

By FRANK SULLIVAN

No matter what new act of plain or fancy meanness the remaining days of 1944 may bring forth, we doubt if anything can happen to take from the Hood River, Oregon, Post of the American Legion the award for Most Contemptible Deed of the Year.



A recent news dispatch states that the Hood River Post has erased from the County War Memorial the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the U. S. armed forces, many of the 16 being on duty at the battlefield in Europe.

Have the national officers of the American Legion done anything to expel these simian disgraces to the Legion's honor from its ranks, and return them to membership in the gang they are best fitted by, temperament, namely, the Ku Klux Klan? Have the Oregon State officials, or the Federal officials in Oregon, taken any steps to force these yahoos to account for their traitorous insult to the uniform of the U. S. A.?

For the honor of the State of Oregon we should think the Governor would immediately have sent military force to the spot where that desecrated memorial stands and restore the names of those American soldiers. Perhaps he has. If he hasn't, then the Federal Government ought to see that it is done. No great force would be necessary. The mongrels capable of performing such a deed are sure to be cowards who would turn tail the moment they were faced by a single decent American, man woman or child. If the insult to these American soldiers is not repaired now, we predict it will be repaired with a vengeance when Oregon soldiers return home from Europe and hear about it; Oregon soldiers who will have fought in the same armies as these Americans of Japanese ancestry and will know of their courage and loyalty.

Herald & News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
December 21, 1944

Today's Roundup

By MALCOLM EPLEY

THE prevailing tolerance of the American people is a shining light in this dreary world.

Consider the case of the Hood River American Legion post incident. After the post erased the names of Japanese-American soldiers from its honor rolls, the whole country was swept with indignation. Most newspapers in Oregon, and many elsewhere, commented adversely, and many organizations adopted disapproving resolutions.

So great was the criticism that the Hood River post rescinded its action insofar as it applies to Japanese-American soldiers who renounce the citizenship of Japan.

Surely, this was an example of good will—not only on the part of the many who formed the disapproving public opinion, but on the part of the Hood River Legionnaires, no doubt believing their purpose was justified, were willing to retreat from it in the cause of tolerance.



EPLEY

Post, Washington, D.C.
December 13, 1944

Herald & News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
December 7, 1944

Letters To The Editor

Communications must carry writer's name and address, though pen names are permitted at the editor's discretion. Letters should be held to not more than 200 words. They are subject to condensation.

Legion Action

Several days ago a small A. P. found to some extent in most of us. dispatch appeared in The Post reporting that the Hood River (Oregon) Post of the American Legion had erased the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the United States Army from its county war memorial, although many of the soldiers are serving overseas.

The action of this American Legion Post may seem unimportant in comparison with the "big" news on the front pages, but actually it is the whole war in microcosm. The parallel with events in Germany in the early '30s is too close to be comfortable. Surely the one thing that any literate person must have learned in the past 10 years is that when any man loses his freedom, all of us lose a little of ours.

Any sort of discrimination against fellow Americans purely on racial grounds is so reprehensible as to make our proclamations of "democracy" hypocritical. And that such discrimination should come from an American Legion post is even further to be deplored. Were there any sort of charge or suspicion of disloyalty against these soldiers, the situation would be different. But when men are facing death in the bitter Italian winter, this action by the Legion post is little better than a stab in the back. This is the only country which most Japanese Americans have ever known, and they are as loyal to it as they are allowed to be.

It has been said that a Nation turns into the thing it is fighting. We are fighting fascism on a global scale, but what will it avail us to gain the military victory if we allow fascism to triumph at home? Fascism is insidious and it makes its appeal to the streak of snobbishness and dislike of anything different from ourselves which is

It is almost unnecessary to mention the use which the German and Japanese radios will make of this unfortunate action by legionnaires. It would reassure some of us if the Legion commander would enunciate Legion policy in regard to Americans of Japanese descent.

I might mention that I am the daughter of a legionnaire and the wife of a serviceman overseas. I am quite sure that my husband is fighting for all Americans, not just those of Caucasian origin.

JEAN CONLEY,
Alexandria, Va., Dec. 6.

PM, New York, N. Y.
December 20, 1944

Contemptible Act

Dear Editor:

I hope your readers will not hesitate to express to the Hood River Post of the American Legion their amazement and contempt about the recent action of that Post, which was reported by Frank Sullivan.

I lived in Germany during the first five years of the Hitler regime, but I have not learned one instance in which the Nazis erased the name of Jews from their war memorials. Nationalists in America complain if one compares their actions with those of fascists elsewhere; they call it "hitting below the belt." Yet, one cannot help feeling that the erasing of the names of 16 American citizens of Japanese ancestry from a war memorial at Hood River, Oregon, by a Legion post which dares call itself American has been one of the most undemocratic acts one can imagine, one of which any ambitious Nazi chieftain could have been proud of

New York

HANS LAMM

NEED FOR GREATNESS

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore., (To the Editor)—I read the article in Saturday night's paper in regard to the action of the American Legion post of Hood River in removing the names of soldiers of Japanese ancestry from their memorial list. It gave me a feeling of utter and absolute disgust at anything so unprincipled and small from an organization of its size.

Surely these boys that are fighting side by side with the rest of our brave defenders have already passed the acid test by renouncing their Japanese blood and if they are not entitled to the same gratitude and appreciation as the others, they should have never been allowed to enter the services of the United States.

Personally, I have never cared for the Japanese as a race, and I think it a great mistake that they were ever allowed to enter this country at all, but I do think it is beneath us to use cheap, despicable tricks in an attempt to cover our own neglect, conceit and bigotry. Had we been the wise, far-seeing nation that we prided ourselves upon, we would never have been in our present situation.

I have two sons overseas, one of them at the front in France. They are of German decent and if this is to be the order of things, I'm beginning to wonder how soon it will be until they are not recognized as true Americans.

Now, we are having to prove to the world that we are great. All right, let us be great! In everything, our way of thinking, our actions and our convictions and loyalty, and last, but not least, our fairness. Let us be so great that we have no need to be petty.

Sincerely yours,
EDITH CALPITTS,
930 Prospect St.

Times, New York, N. Y.
December 11, 1944

Hood River Action Criticized

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

An AP dispatch in THE NEW YORK TIMES of Dec. 3 stated that the Hood River (Ore.) Post of the American Legion had erased the names of sixteen Americans of Japanese ancestry from the county war memorial. The secretarial council of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America has requested that I convey to you its feeling that this action is both un-Christian and un-American.

The purpose of a war memorial is to honor those who have died to preserve American freedom and the American way of life. Such honor should be conferred without regard to race, color or religious creed. Evidently those responsible for this action have not heard of the Presidential citation awarded to the 100th Battalion for fighting in Italy. This battalion was composed largely of Americans of Japanese descent. The citation read in part: "The fortitude and intrepidity displayed by the officers and men of the 100th Infantry Battalion reflect the finest traditions of the Army of the United States." The Army record of other Americans of Japanese ancestry has been equally impressive.

It is hoped that other posts of the American Legion will take effective steps against such displays of racial intolerance, and that the citizens of Hood River, on sober second thought, will not rob their own community of an honor bought with loyal American blood.

JOE J. MICKLE,

New York, Dec. 6, 1944.

Times, New York, N. Y.
December 26, 1944

Racial Action Is Condemned

Japanese Ban by Hood River (Ore.) Post Regarded as Anti-American

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Having been close to the Americans of Japanese ancestry, I have seen them taken from their homes and herded together in the relocation centers, objects of suspicion and distrust, scorned by thousands of their fellow-Americans. These people who helped build America, who worked shoulder to shoulder with Saxons, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, French, Poles, Irish, Scotch and all the other peoples, came together here as free men to build this citadel of freedom.

I have seen these people so confused and bewildered by circumstances that for a while they did not know where to turn. Then, when they understood the reason for their Government's action, they thought the problem through. All but 18,000 of them kept their heads and resurrected the American dream in their hearts, set themselves against the tide of public prejudice, and by that action proved their trust in the ideals upon which this nation was founded and now stands secure.

Those men who joined the armed forces were clear on the issues. They went to battle to prove their loyalty to the American way as it blazed forth from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. They marched with free Americans to stop the destruction of human liberties by the fascist war machines.

The action of the Hood River (Ore.) Post of the American Legion has opened an artery in embattled America. Today a man's race has been placed above a man's honor, devotion, even if he proves his honesty in death on the foe's sword's point.

Today we are all Americans. Tomorrow in their blindness these Legionnaires would make us Germans, Italians, Englishmen, Frenchmen and Jews. Tomorrow there would be no Americans and no America. They have desecrated the honor of our citizen army. They have cheapened the sacrifice of American dead.

GERALD RICHARDSON,
Associate Editor, The Protestant.
New York, Dec. 22, 1944.

Oregonian, Portland, Ore.
December 9, 1944

Japanese Problem

To the Editor: Congratulations on your fine editorial "Our Japanese Problem," in The Sunday Oregonian. Yours is a level-headed commentary on the action of the Hood River American Legion in removing names of Japanese-American soldiers from the county war memorial and threatening Japanese return after the war.

Such attitudes of racial supremacy, with an underlying economic motivation, are out of place in a nation fighting for democracy for all. What fine material for the propaganda bureaus of Germany and Japan! And is such action fair to those Japanese-American boys of Hood River fighting with their white neighbors in the Italian and Pacific theaters?

As good Americans we must place our national goals above such dangerous prejudices. If "international good will begins over the backyard fence," as some American writer has said, let us start building the better world of the future in our own neighborhoods. By treating members of our minority groups as respected members of the community instead of second-class citizens, some of our majority group might discover that our minorities are really eager to live up to the "American way of life."

ROBERT J. MILLER,
7410 S. E. Division street.

HOOD RIVER *Answers*

Siskiyou Daily News, Yreka, Calif.
December 20, 1944

LEGION POST DEFENDS ACT AGAINST JAPS

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 20, (U.P.)—The Hood River Post of the American Legion expunged the names of 16 Japanese-Americans from the post war honor roll "because we have every good reason to believe that they are citizens of Japan while claiming citizenship in this country," post officials explained today.

After a meeting last night in which the tumultuous issue was discussed, the post issued a statement denying that economic interests were involved in the action.

The statement pointed out that not all Japanese names were removed from the roster and said that the post "would be proud to replace the names of those Japanese on our honor roll now serving in the armies of the United States when and if they or a relative will make an authenticated written statement that they have renounced their Japanese citizenship."

The post further questioned the wisdom of permitting Japanese to return to the Pacific Coast at this time and demanded to know why the governors of the three Pacific Coast states were not consulted in the move to return them.

The statement declared that West Coast citizens should refrain from violence and pointed to the post's pledge to uphold law and order.

Oregon Journal, Portland, Ore.
December 23, 1944

Hood River Ads Ask Japanese Not to Return

HOOD RIVER, Dec. 23.—Returning Japanese to Hood River county were addressed Friday in quarter-page advertisements in Hood River newspapers, urging them for their best interests not to return. The notices were paid for by the local post of the American Legion.

The statement in full read: "Let us face this issue squarely. Under the war department's recent ruling you will soon be permitted to return to this county. Certain incidents have already occurred that indicate the temper of the citizens of this county.

"Public records show that there are about 25 or 30 families out of some 600 Japanese who have not already sold their property in Hood River county. We strongly urge these to dispose of their holdings.

"If you desire assistance from this post in disposing of your land we pledge ourselves to see that you get a square deal.

"If you do return we also pledge that to the best of our ability we will uphold law and order and will countenance no violence.

"In this program we ask the support of the citizens of this county."

Hood River Unabashed By Its Anti-Nisei Action

But Other Parts Of State Aroused by Slur On Soldiers

Special Correspondence

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 30.—The nationwide resentment over the action by the Hood River post of the American Legion in removing the names of 16 Japanese-American servicemen from the "Roll of Honor" it had set up for the county has failed to disturb this agricultural community of 3500.

The post's conduct caused "some dissatisfaction when it first happened," John Travis, editor of the weekly Hood River County Sun said, "but subsequent events and explanations by the post have changed this opinion generally."

"People thought at first that the Legion had attacked the problem from the wrong end," Travis wrote, "but they're saying now that maybe the means is worth the end in drawing attention to what Hood River people consider a peculiarly local problem."

Post's Excuse

The Hood River post has maintained in public statements that its action involving the 16 Japanese-American servicemen was based not on racial or economic grounds, but because it has evidence that most of the 300 American-born Japanese who lived in Hood River county in 1940 accepted dual citizenship and remained loyal to the Japanese Emperor even after Pearl Harbor.

The Hood River Ministerial Assn. has taken no action, public or otherwise, in condemnation of the Legion. Neither has any other group which might be expected to oppose the Legion move.

There has been plenty of reaction, however, in Oregon communities outside of Hood River. The letters columns of the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal* in Portland have been filled with letters on the subject.

Action Condemned

The Rev. Joseph P. Clancy, chaplain of Portland Post No. 1, American Legion, in a letter to the *Oregonian* in which he told of the death of one of his parishioners, a

Japanese, from a high explosive shell in Italy referred to the Hood River post as "a moribund twig of the most influential organization in the United States — the American Legion . . ."

The Portland Council of Churches and the Portland branch of the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People both have formally condemned the Hood River action.

The *Oregonian* in an editorial decrying both the Hood River action and formation of a group at Gresham, agricultural community near Portland, known as Oregon Anti-Japanese, Inc., said:

"These groups . . . are playing on war-inspired hatred of the enemy to eliminate an economic minority which long has been a disturbing factor in agriculture. They reveal a basic community weakness which has not been solved."

Democracy First

The *Oregonian* advised its readers before taking part in any anti-Japanese movement "to examine his deepest beliefs in democracy; to balance his immediate economic desires and his social prejudices against the fundamental concepts of liberty and fair play which have made this nation great . . ."

The Hood River Legion post, with the general backing of other citizens, is determined that the Japanese shall not return to the county, at least not in numbers. It has pledged itself, however, to countenance no violence if the Japanese do return.

A warning to former Japanese residents not to return was published in quarter page advertisements in Hood River newspapers of Dec. 24.

Herald, Bellingham, Wash.
Dec. 20, 1944

HOOD RIVER LEGION REPLACES JAPS

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 20.—(P)
—The Hood River American Legion post yielded today to demands that it replace names of Japanese-American soldiers erased from its honor roll—provided they prove loyalty.

Attributing its action to suspicion of dual citizenship, the post declared it would reinscribe the name of every soldier furnishing an authenticated statement that he "has renounced Japanese citizenship."

The Hood River post's 800-word resolution came simultaneously with other indications that Oregon was resigning itself to return of the Japanese.

PROMISE PROTECTION

Police officials pledged protection to returning Japanese-Americans; and the Portland city council voted to issue business licenses to them just as in prewar days.

C. G. Schneider, Gresham attorney and charter member of Oregon Anti-Japanese, Inc.—an organization formed to ban Nisei from the West—announced "they are American citizens and you can't do anything about them."

He proposed, however, that Japanese aliens be scattered over the country rather than resettled in the West during the war period.

Herald & News, Klamath Falls, Ore.
December 20, 1944

Hood River Post Replaces Names on Legion Honor Roll

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 20
(P)—This American Legion post yielded today to demands that it replace names of Japanese-American soldiers erased from its honor roll — provided they prove loyalty.

Attributing its action to belief in dual citizenship, the post declared it would reinscribe the name of every soldier furnishing an authenticated statement that he "has renounced Japanese citizenship."

Resigned to Return

The Hood River post's 800-word resolution came simultaneously with other indications that Oregon was resigning itself to return of the Japanese.

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He proposed, however, that Japanese aliens be scattered over the country rather than resettled in the west during the war period.

The Hood River American Legion, while promising to help retain "law and order," reiterated its opposition to Japanese-Americans' return. Declaring its stand was not based on economic factors, the post added:

"Why not wait until the war is won? Will these Japanese be allowed to oust war workers from their homes, and perhaps work on our national defense projects, shipyards, etc.?"



AMERICAN LEGION

HOLLYWOOD WORLD WAR II

POST 591

Editor: William E. Kent
1206 North Flores Street
Hollywood 46, Calif.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION! BULLETIN OF THE AMERICANISM COMMITTEE

NUMBER 2
DECEMBER 1944

"The people of a country are the only safe guardians of their own rights, and are the only instrument which can be used for their destruction. Our Liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves — that too of a people with a certain degree of instruction." *Thomas Jefferson.*

From a frieze made of quotations from his writings in the Jefferson Room in the Congressional Library.

It was this quotation from Jefferson's writings which was on our mind when we decided to publish this bulletin for our comrades of Post 591. This is now the second issue. The first issue (# 1) was distributed to those comrades who attended the meeting on November 14th, 1944. The first issue contained the ideas of General George C. Marshall on post-war military training and his opinions on the type of the future peace-time U.S. Army as expressed by him in War Department Circular # 347. We still have a limited number of copies left and will be glad to mail them to those comrades who are interested.

This, the second issue of " For Your Information " will be mailed to all our comrades . Hereafter the bulletin will be distributed again only to those who attend the regular meetings but of course if anybody wishes to receive the bulletin by mail we will be glad to send it to him if he mails us a selfaddressed envelope with a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ stamp on it. It is obvious that we cannot defray the expenses of mailing, and we are sure that our comrades will understand.

We would also be very glad if those who are interested would tell us what they think of our idea. Naturally we invite criticism provided it is not anonymous as we just bought a G I garbage can for anonymous letters. We also welcome contributions from our comrades and of course also suggestions for future issues.

Again we repeat that the expenses of this bulletin including the cost of mailing will not be paid out of Post funds but will be born 100% by the members of the Americanism Committee of Post 591.

Chairman: Wm. E. Kent. Members: Carl F. Gould, Wm. H. James, Leo L. Shibley, Wm. B. Holmes, David I. Craw, Mike Primock

Program of the Americanism Committee.

Inasmuch as a number of comrades have not received copies of our Americanism program we would like to reprint the program in full as follows:

- 1) The Post vigorously upholds the Constitution of the United States of America and of the American Legion and opposes all individuals and organizations who, under the disguise of party politics or false patriotism try to spread defeatism, pacifism, isolationism and racial and religious discord.
- 2) The Post endorses the G.I. Bill of Rights to its fullest extent and recognizes the problem of post-war rehabilitation of ex-servicemen as one of the paramount problems facing the American Legion and the nation in general.
- 3) The Post believes that it is essential to the welfare of the USA to preserve unity among the United Nations and condemns all efforts by individuals, organizations or parties to spread mistrust among the American people against their allies in World War II.
- 4) The Post considers it a vital duty to enlighten the public on the subject of foreign affairs so that the public can properly understand important issues to be decided by our representatives in Congress. Only an enlightened public should influence the decisions to be made.
- 5) The Post expresses full confidence in the ability of the Federal Government and the FBI to segregate disloyal Japanese from loyal Japanese who are American citizens. The Post insists on the deportation of disloyal Japanese and all other persons who have been shown to be disloyal to the USA or loyal to an enemy nation. The question of the return of loyal Japanese-Americans should be left to the discretion of the US Army, the Federal Government and the Congress of the USA. In view of the fact that Nisei soldiers have won honors on the battlefield it is necessary to re-affirm our adherence to the " Bill of Rights " of the Constitution of the United States which provides for protection of these men.
- 6) The Post favors the establishment of a fair, impartial and non-partisan Congressional Committee for the purpose of investigating activities inimical to the welfare of the USA and to enable Congress to pass proper laws for the protection of the USA and the principles of the democratic form of government.
- 7) The Post endorses General George C. Marshall's opinion in regard to peacetime military training and supports the " Citizen - Army " tradition.

- 8) The Post believes that it is essential to the welfare of the USA to promote an understanding between labor and capital, and therefore opposes attempts from the outside to draw the American Legion into controversies between Labor and Employer organizations
- 9) The Post endorses the resolution passed by the National Convention of the American Legion in 1944 regarding post-war association of nations to curb aggression.
- 10) The Post opposes all attempts to stir up competition and controversies between the American Legion and other veteran organizations.

The above program was drawn up by comrade Wm.E. Kent and presented in form of a recommendation to the Americanism Committee. It was passed by the executive committee on October 17th, 1944.

Fifth Column by mail.

Using the mail to defraud the American people through propaganda is not a new trick. Henry Hoke in his best seller "Black Mail" warns to be on guard against phoney mail used for divisive and disruptive purposes.

This is the scheme recently exposed in California. A so-called "Mothers" group initiated a neat little pacifist and isolationist program. This mothers group is composed of one single individual who happens to be neither a mother nor even a woman but just a plain man by the name of William E. Gearhart an attorney of San Francisco and Burlingame. "Mother" Gearhart called himself the "Mothers, Sisters and Wives of the USA" and maintained headquarters in an office building in San Francisco.

Gearhart in his letter scheme quoted President Roosevelt's solemn promise not to send our boys into foreign wars. The deadly struggle in which the USA is now involved is called a "foreign war" by the "one man" mothers group. According to Gearhart the President provoked the Japanese to the point of opening hostilities in the Pacific by supplying arms to the Chinese, and similarly provoked Germany to attack our ships by sending aid to Great-Britain. In his opinion the USA has no interest in the Far-East nor in Europe. He thinks the Chinese and Japanese should be left to fight it out among themselves and the Europeans should similarly be left to their own devices.

"Mother" Gearhart's letters were received by women named as next of kin of servicemen listed as killed or wounded in the official casualty lists. The letter offered to send copies of this "decisive" missile to anyone for a fee. Gearhart denied that casualty lists were the sources of his mailing list however, the curious fact remains that letters which were turned over to the authorities by women who received them were addressed to people whose names appeared in casualty lists as relatives of servicemen, killed or wounded. Gearhart culled his addresses from the files of newspapers of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore etc. and used to spend whole afternoons in the public library addressing envelopes right from the lists.

District Attorney Edmund S. Brown of San Francisco investigated and Gearhart beat a quick retreat. Of course his letters have been scattered all over the USA and there'll surely be others of the same state of mind who are going to take up where he left off.

Therefore watch for phoney mail, and if you obtain knowledge of similar schemes contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Room 911, 510 South Spring Street, Los Angeles 13, Calif. Telephone: Madison 7241

The Sedition Trial in Washington, D.C.

For reasons which we do not understand the newspapers on the West-Coast report very little or nothing about the trial in Washington, D.C. with Chief Justice Edward C. Risher presiding and Federal attorney O. John Rogge as the prosecutor. The more important Eastern papers cover the trial with greater regularity. Since a good proportion of the defendants come from the West-Coast we feel that we too ought to be informed, and therefore it might be well to report on the trial as it stands now.

There are twenty-six women and men on trial, accused of a conspiracy to undermine the morale of our armed forces. Serious as the charges are one cannot escape the feeling that the sweater of a certain motion picture actress has received more attention than this trial. In fact it is more serious than the charge itself implies, for during the course of the trial it was revealed that some of the defendants planned to set up a Nazi-Fascist form of government in the U.S.A.

Ever intent on finding something dramatic that would make for colorful copy, the majority of Washington correspondents concentrate on reporting the circuslike sidelights of the trial while the meat of the story usually remains untold. Well, the trial is no circus! In fact it is difficult not to draw a parallel between the early trials of Hitler's Brownshirts before Hitler came to power during the years of 1930 - 1933. In those days Nazi-hoodlums upon their arraignment in court usually started to throw the court into confusion with an incredible display of hilarity which was designed to undermine the dignity of the court. Similar tactics were followed by some of the accused in the Washington sedition trial.

Some of the accused are very well known characters who have appeared frequently in the revelations Carlson's "Underground" and Henry Hoke's "Black Mail". We find Mr. Pelley of the Silver-Shirts, Franz K. Perenz (Los Angeles) Ellis O. Jones (Los Angeles) Kunze the national leader of the German Bund and his Sub-Leader Schwinn of Los Angeles, Elizabeth Dilling of "the Red Network" and many others.

The trial is now in its eighth month and prosecutor O. John Rogge has put in evidence over 1,000 documents bearing directly upon the plot. At the beginning of the trial it was said that Rogge would use 200 witnesses. Thus far only 38 have taken the stand and still expected are further revelations on the enemy's strategic devices to employ American citizens in the carrying out of the "Divide and Conquer" technique.

On the defense bench sit men and women some of whom were born in Germany and who have become American citizens. However, the majority of the defendants are native Americans who in the past have sneered at Democracy and praised the Nazi form of government.

At the end of October Dr. Hermann Rauschning, a former Nazi himself who was once very close to Hitler testified for the prosecution. His testimony lasted four hours. It is symptomatic for the tactics of the defendants that during this period no less than 189 objections were entered. There were 29 diverse motions, five arguments between opposing counsels and four incidents which the presiding judge referred to as "speeches, and not motions". When Dr. Rauschning took the stand every defense attorney was on his feet to register his protest.

All we know is that when this trial closes the transcript of the proceedings will constitute an excellent source for material on the Fifth Column technique in the USA. It will also show the behavior of American citizens under fire who have rendered valuable service to the enemy, some of them unknowingly, but most of them conscious of what they were doing.

The Americanism Committee is in possession of full weekly reports on the trial, and if any of our comrades are interested in the material we will be glad to make it available.

Since the above article was written Justice Eicher has died. There will probably be a new trial. The original indictments however, still stand.

Wounded Nisei Reported Shoved Out of Shop

POSTON (Ariz.) Nov. 11. (AP)—The War Relocation Authority today reported a crippled Japanese-American Army private wearing many service ribbons, had been ejected from a civilian barber shop near the W.R.A. center because of the owner's objection to his ancestry.

Andy Hale, the barber, acknowledged he had ordered the soldier Thursday not to come into his shop but denied shoving or forcing the infantryman. The W.R.A. said the veteran, walking with a crutch, had been shoved from the establishment.

Sign Warns Japs

Hale, father of three sons in the armed services, said a sign on the front of his Parker (Ariz.) shop reads: "Japs keep out. you rat."

"I don't want none of their business," Hale asserted. "They might close me up but I sure as hell won't work on a Jap."

Hale, in answer to a question, said it made no difference to him whether the Japanese-Americans were civilians or soldiers. "They look alike to me," he said.

Wounded in Italy

Mrs. Pauline Brown, reports officer for the W.R.A. center, said the soldier was Pvt. Raymond Matsuda, 29, former resident of Hawaii, who was shot in the knee on the Italian front July 22.

Matsuda, Mrs. Brown related, was wearing seven Army ribbons and badges, including the combat infantryman's badge and the Purple Heart.

He served two years overseas, she reported, with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an outstanding unit on the Italian front.

Mrs. Brown said Matsuda came to visit friends here. He has been at the Army's Hammond General Hospital at Modesto, Cal.

Somehow we felt a bit sick in the stomach when we read this dispatch from the Associated Press. We think it is our duty to bring this matter to the attention of our comrades because it has a direct bearing on the whole American-Japanese question.

Let's give this thing a few seconds of sober consideration. We don't want to get too emotional about the incident which at best involves a backwoods barber who doesn't know any better. But we as Legionaires and Americans do, and that's what we are driving at.

This is the way we feel about the whole question which we expressed in particular in point #5 of the Americanism program of Post 591:

We know that America has become a great country by living up to a philosophy of "Fair Play". We don't care whether an American citizen is black, yellow or white, and we don't care ~~XXXX~~ where he or his parents came from. All we do know is that he is entitled to equal justice. An American can be punished for a crime or misconduct but never for race or ancestry.

Now then, we on the Pacific Coast are faced with a practical application of this belief! American citizens of Japanese extraction are being permitted by the U.S. Army to return to California. We also know that their return is resented by some Americans in this State but it remains to be seen whether the hatred of these Americans is stronger than their love for the Constitution of the USA which after all embraces our American way of life.

The Constitution declares very clearly that no State can "deny-- the equal protection of the laws" nor can it "abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens".

And we Legionaires upon opening our meetings declare that "for God and Country we associate ourselves together --- to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America". Let's be honest and realize that if we mean what we proclaim so enthusiastically we must protect the rights of all citizens, regardless of their national extraction or race, and that includes American citizens of Japanese extraction.

News Item: Saturday, Nov. 25th, 1944

Twentytwo American soldiers of Japanese ancestry from the Western United States were reported killed, seventyone wounded and six missing in action on the French front, according to War Department information conveyed to next of kin, the Pacific Citizen learned this week.

All of these casualties, the majority of whom are from California, were presumed to be members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a part of the 36th Division now fighting in the Seventh Army of General Alexander Patch on the Southern sector of the Western Front in France.

Germany.

To refresh your memory! Germany declared war on us on December 8th, 1941 and not vice versa as some Isolationist - Pacifist propagandists are now trying to make us believe.

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The highest popular vote Hitler ever got when there was a free election in Germany was 37%. That was in January 1933. Then Hitler got to power and four months later Germany had another election. The boys got busy stuffed the ballot boxes and yet Hitler got only 43%. How then did Hitler and his Nazis get into power? The reasons are manifold but what few people remember is that Germany had no less than 38 political parties, and those party representatives who did not vote the Nazi-way in the Reichstag were simply arrested and put away in concentration camps. However, we would do well not to assume that the non-Nazi voters of 1933 (about 50% of the electorate) are still non-Nazi or even anti-Nazi. The Gestapo rule of the last twelve years has effectively stifled any opposition and what underground movements may have existed prior to Germany's entry into the war in 1939 were destroyed when most active men were taken into the army. It is also well to remember that the young men and women in Germany between the ages of 18-30 have never known anything else but Nazi doctrines. The average German boy or girl starts - or one should rather say "used to start" - thinking for himself at about the age of fifteen. It is therefore obvious that men or women up to the age of about 35 for the past fifteen years have never known anything about Democracy or for that matter about "Fair Play".

These are the facts which we must consider when we read that General Eisenhower in his orders to AMG insists on complete destruction of the very last vestiges of Nazism in the administration of occupied German territories.

★ Marquis Childs

WASHINGTON. — It's hard for many of us here to realize the cost of the victories that are rolling up. If it doesn't hit near us, then we read the good news of advances and triumphs and never see the list of casualties in a less conspicuous column.

When the reality is evoked in the loss of someone known and loved, then it suddenly strikes home. The other day it came to our neighborhood, which happens to be a peculiarly close and friendly neighborhood.

Word came that the boy next door had been killed in Italy. While he was several years older than our children, they all played together and were in and out of our place; and we knew him and felt a deep affection for him.

His name was Walter Shepard. He was a grand boy, friendly and eager and gay. He loved animals and was wonderful with them, training horses with patience and skill, and riding and jumping as though he'd been born on a horse.

Walt was in the infantry, a private first class. As he moved up the Italian peninsula the letters he sent back home began to show a new maturity. He was learning so much so fast.

When he first got to Italy, the poverty of the people and the hardships they endured, particularly the women, shocked him. It was strange and foreign. He wrote that he had seen an old woman trying to carry a big trunk on her back. He wrote that most people had no shoes even though it was cold in the winter. To his father, who is an official in the government, he said:

"Papa, I wish you would try to do something for these people."

It was the natural reaction of a boy from a comfortable American home, a boy with a generous spirit, an American spirit. He had never known there were places in the world

where old women carried trunks on their backs and where kids went without shoes in the winter.

On the day he was killed he wrote a letter to his family which reached them the day before they were notified by the war department of his death. I don't think Walt Shepard was given to expressing his inmost thoughts any more than other American boys with a natural reserve and a suspicion of sentiment. But he put into that

letter the essence of what he had learned. He wrote:

"If I live I will come home knowing life is a very unstable thing, and that it really pays to lead the best life you know how while you are here. Men off the front, I believe, have much greater considerations for other men's wants, needs and desires than they did before they went up. They know how to pray and to live with God in their hearts."

For all his fineness and his intelligence, I don't think Walt was the exception. I think, in fact, he is the rule. At his death, at 21, he was part of a generation that has shown the most remarkable maturity and patience and forbearance in the face of the mistakes of their elders. To think there were people who doubted this generation! Who talked scornfully about jitterbugs!

In some ways we at home have done well, in other ways not so well. We have provided the weapons. We have not, most of us, learned the lessons of the men who have had to use the weapons.

Somehow I think we had better learn, and quickly, some of their wisdom. We had better study that lesson for fear that we'll not speak their language when they come back. They're going to distrust the shoddy speech, the smooth words, the half promises, the double talk, that all too often those of us who sit snugly—and sometimes even smugly—here at home are guilty of.

"If I live I will come home knowing life is a very unstable thing . . ."

Deaths reported by the navy to date are 21,433 with 9655 missing. Deaths reported by the army are 37,237 and 39,311 missing. Those are not figures. Those are the boys next door, loved and cherished, full of eager life and wonder and curiosity and compassion.

From time to time we run into civilians and even World War I veterans who complain that our boys don't know what they are fighting for. Maybe we ought to admit that G.I. Joe is not always very articulate about "what we are fighting for". But somehow we have a feeling that he does know, that he has an instinctive understanding, an understanding that does not manifest itself by shouting or flagwaving. Maybe it's this way: Once told what the score is G.I. Joe tackles the job of fighting like any dirty chore that has to be done and gotten over with. Maybe it's just inconceivable to him that he could live under any other form of government than Democracy.

Walter Shepard was one of those boys, and we are grateful to the Los Angeles Daily News and the United Features Syndicate, Inc. for their permission to reprint this article which appeared on July 29th, 1944.

! Truth and the possession of facts is a weapon as much as submarines, tanks, bazookas and bombers. Carry both of them with you just as you used to lug your rifle and tin helmet along. They are your weapons as a Legionaire in your fight for Americanism ! !

We wish all our comrades and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !

Our thoughts are with our buddies in the Army, Navy and Marine Corps who are still fighting all over the world !

1400
Comm. in
American
Principles

1055-31



AMERICAN LEGION

HOLLYWOOD WORLD WAR II
POST 591

ADDRESS YOUR REPLY TO:

WILLIAM F. SCHNEIDER, Commander
1164 North St. Andrews Place
Hollywood 38, California
Telephone GRanite 7561

2035 NORTH HIGHLAND AVENUE
HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIF.

Post 591, American Legion, Hollywood World War II, on January 9th, 1945, unanimously adopted the following

RESOLUTION

Whereas, we as members of the American Legion, are pledged to support the Constitution of our country and

Whereas, we consider the guaranty effected by Article 14 of the Constitution to be of great importance to us in the maintenance of our democratic ideals and

Whereas, recently there has been much controversy and agitation in the Western States and particularly in California attacking the rights of American citizens of Japanese descent and

Whereas, affected by these unjust attacks are many American citizens who have served in our Armed Forces not only in World War I but are still serving in World War II, many of them having received citations and commendations for valor beyond the call of duty and

Whereas, among this falsely attacked group are loyal American veterans who have served and are serving actively and patriotically as American Legionnaires and

Whereas, the order of evacuation issued by the U. S. Army has now been vacated and

Whereas, we are aware of the fact that disloyal Japanese and such Americans of Japanese descent who are suspect will be kept in custody of the government with a view toward deportation and de-naturalization after the war and

Whereas, the American Legion has full confidence in the judgment of our military authorities and

Whereas, there have been grave assaults upon the inherent rights of fellow Americans and

Whereas, there is now being waged a persistent campaign of intolerance, prejudice and hatred against them and

Whereas, there is cause for grave suspicion that certain elements are waging this campaign behind the cloak of false patriotism although their only true consideration concerns their selfish economic advantage:

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the members of Post 591, American Legion, Hollywood, World War II, Department of California, do hereby declare:

1. We, the members of this Post, condemn any discrimination of whatsoever type against any American citizen based on the stand that he or she is of Japanese or any other racial descent.
2. We, as veterans of World War II, have been fighting for the ideals of and principals guaranteed by the U. S. Constitution and are much concerned over the actions of certain groups and individuals who are attacking these very ideals for which we have been fighting.
3. We strongly condemn any efforts to establish a false distinction among American citizens based on race, color or religious creed, such distinction being a complete violation of the constitutional provision that there be no such distinction established among American citizens.
4. We therefore condemn the action of the Hood River Post of the American Legion in effacing the names of American soldiers fighting overseas from their honor roster, as a shameful act which discredits and humiliates the name of the American Legion.
5. We urge all comrades of our Post and all other American Legion Posts and all citizens who have the welfare of the nation at heart to safeguard the constitutional rights of all Americans regardless of race, color and creed.

GIs in the Pacific Say: This Is An Anti-Fascist War

(This is an editorial from the Midpacifican, the armed forces' newspaper in the Central Pacific area, published at Honolulu. The Midpacifican is written and edited by servicemen.)

Three dispatches just came in from Army News Service.

Two will make you proud.

One will make you angry.

The first, datelined Washington, reveals that a single AJA (Americans of Japanese ancestry) division in Italy was awarded 1,000 Purple Hearts. The second, datelined France, reports how the "lost battalion" in the Saint Dies area was rescued by American soldiers of Japanese ancestry who fought their way through to the trapped men.

The third, datelined Poston, Ariz., tells how a crippled AJA was ejected from a barbershop because the proprietor didn't like his ancestry. The GI was Pvt. Raymond Matsuda, 29, from Hawaii. He had served two years with the 442nd Combat Team in Italy. He wears seven campaign ribbons and decorations, including the Purple Heart.

The action of one ignorant American brings shame to all of us.

His ignorance is dangerous. It stabs at the heart of the things for which we fight.

GIs who kill Japanese on Pacific battlefronts can tell you why they feel friendship for the AJAs fighting in Italy. They're brother Americans.

GIs who kill Nazis know they continue to like and respect German Americans now fighting at their side in Europe.

We don't make war on people because of the color of their skin, or hair, or the shape of their faces or the nationality of their fathers and mothers.

We fight for an idea.

We kill fascists because it's our idea that people from every race and of every tongue should keep on living in our country as good neighbors.

We kill fascists because they think their race or blood makes them better than other people.

We fight for our idea because it is the cement that holds democracy together. We fight against the fascist idea because it is the poison that holds our enemies together.

GIs know that the only difference between our enemies and our friends is what goes on in their minds.

The ignorant American from Arizona is one of a few rotten apples in the big barrel of America. His thinking does not reflect the way America thinks.

He probably doesn't even realize he thinks like our enemies.

But he does.

Misguided people, such as he, parrot the racial ideas of the Nazis and the Japs.

As long as they do, they constitute a menace to our country.

It would be foolish for any GI to feel that fascism will be wiped out with the defeat of Germany and Japan.

The job will not be done until all Americans are educated to think and act like Americans.

That's our job, too.



JAPANESE-AMERICAN JOINS LEGION—Harley M. Oka (left), 28, a Japanese-American who received a medical discharge from the Army, is congratulated by Commander William F. Schneider after joining Hollywood, Cal., Post No. 591 of the American Legion, composed entirely of World War II veterans. Kingsley Morgan (center), second vice-commander, said the post was the first in the Nation to admit a Japanese-American member. (A. P. Wire Photo.)

Mother of Air Corps Hero Hits Gardena Discrimination

LOS ANGELES — A mother of an American airman, killed last fall in combat over Germany, asked her son's friends at a memorial service on Dec. 29 to honor all who fell for democracy, regardless of race.

The Air Corps officer was Lieut. Maurice Levine, and his friends of Lodge 141 of the International Workers' Order had gathered to honor his memory at services held at Odd Fellows hall.

Rising to speak of her son, Mrs. Sophie Levine, declared:

"Since my son died, we are gathered here to honor him. But in the city of Gardena, another American boy gave his life fighting the Germans, and his home town will not even allow his name to be put on the roll of honor. His mother is denied the privilege of meeting with her boy's friends, like this. That boy, Kiyoshi Muranaga, was an American of Japanese ancestry, decorated for bravery after he died. I want that mother to know that other Americans feel toward her boy just as they do toward mine."

RESOLUTION UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY
HOLLYWOOD WORLD WAR II POST 591, AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA
AT ITS REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 9, 1945
2035 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood 28, California

WHEREAS, we as members of the American Legion are pledged to support the Constitution of our country and

WHEREAS, we consider the guaranty effected by Article 14 of the Constitution to be of great importance to us in the maintenance of our democratic ideals and

WHEREAS, recently there has been much controversy and agitation in the western states and particularly in California attacking the rights of American citizens of Japanese descent and

WHEREAS, affected by these unjust attacks are many American citizens who have served in our armed forces, not only in World War I but are still serving in World War II, many of them having received citations and commendations for valor beyond the call of duty and

WHEREAS, among this falsely attacked group are loyal American veterans who have served and are serving actively and patriotically as American Legionnaires and

WHEREAS, the order of evacuation issued by the U. S. Army has now been vacated and

WHEREAS, we are aware of the fact that disloyal Japanese and such Americans of Japanese descent who are suspect, will be kept in custody of the Government with a view toward deportation and de-naturalization after the war and

WHEREAS, the American Legion has full confidence in the judgement of our military authorities and

WHEREAS, there have been grave assaults upon the inherent rights of fellow Americans and

(more)

2-RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, there is now being waged a persistent campaign of intolerance, prejudice and hatred against them and

WHEREAS, there is cause for grave suspicion that certain elements are waging this campaign behind the cloak of false patriotism although their only true consideration concerns their selfish economic advantage,

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, the members of Post 591 American Legion, Hollywood, World War II, Department of California, hereby declare:

1. WE, the members of this Post condemn any discrimination of whatsoever type against any American citizen based on the stand that he or she is of Japanese or any other racial descent.
2. WE, as veterans of World War II have been fighting for the ideals of and principals guaranteed by the U. S. Constitution and are much concerned over the actions of certain groups and individuals who are attacking these very ideals for which we have been fighting.
3. WE, strongly condemn any efforts to establish a false distinction among American citizens based on race, color or religious creed, such distinctions being a complete violation of the constitutional provision that there be no such distinction established among American citizens.
4. WE, therefore, condemn the action of the Hood River Post of the American Legion in effacing the names of American soldiers fighting overseas from their honor roster as a shameful act which discredits and humiliates the name of the American Legion.
5. WE, urge all comrades of our Post and all other American Legion Posts and all citizens who have the welfare of the nation at heart, to safeguard the constitutional rights of all Americans regardless of race, color and creed.

Department of the Interior
War Relocation Authority
Room 202, Sheldon Bldg.
461 Market Street
San Francisco 5, California
Douglas 8173

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

By unanimous vote of members of American Legion Post 591, Hollywood, Harley M. Oka became the first Japanese American veteran of World War II to be accepted into a West Coast Legion post, R. B. Cozzens, Assistant Director of the War Relocation Authority, was informed today.

At the same time that Post 591 accepted Oka, in a strongly worded resolution, it condemned "the action of the Hood River Post of the American Legion in effacing the names of American soldiers fighting overseas from its honor roster as a shameful act which discredits and humiliates the name of the American Legion" and further condemned discrimination of any kind against any American citizen that is "based on the stand that he or she is of Japanese or any other racial descent."

Legionnaire Oka was born in Santa Ana 28 years ago, received his schooling at Huntington Beach and Woodbury Business College, Los Angeles. He volunteered and entered the Army after Pearl Harbor and served until December 14, 1944 when he received his honorable discharge. He has been in California since last December 27 but his parents are still at the Colorado River Relocation Center, Poston, Ariz.

Oka has two brothers serving with the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team of the Seventh Army.

The resolution, drawn by William E. Kent, chairman of the Post's Americanization Committee, Leo L. Shibley and Milton Luban, pointed out that "There is cause for grave suspicion that certain elements are waging this campaign behind the cloak of false patriotism although their only true consideration concerns their selfish economic advantage."

(more)

The resolution added that "We are aware of the fact that disloyal Japanese and such Americans of Japanese descent who are suspect will be kept in custody of the Government with a view toward deportation and denaturalization after the war" but that "The American Legion has full confidence in the judgment of our military authorities."

The resolution concluded: "We urge all comrades of our post and all other American Legion Posts and all citizens who have the welfare of the Nation at heart to safeguard the constitutional rights of all Americans regardless of race, color and creed."

Commander of Post 591 is William F. Schneider and the Adjutant is Chapman A. Colvin. Shibley, who helped draw the resolution, is re-entering the Army for additional service.

The post meets at 2035 North Highland Avenue, Hollywood.

(Captain Belvidere Brooks Post No. 450, New York, unanimously voted to invite the 16 Japanese American soldiers whose names were erased at Hood River to become members of the post after the war while other Legion Posts, organizations and individuals took issue with the Hood River Post's action which Secretary of War Stimson labeled "unworthy discrimination."

(At Omaha, Nebraska, Corporal Tachio John Ando, recently given a medical discharge from the Army after serving in the Caribbean area, was made a member of American Legion Post No. 1.)

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Text of American Legion Protest on Racial Discrimination

Following is the text of a resolution recently adopted by Northfield Post No. 84 of the American Legion (Northfield, Minnesota) and endorsed by Third district convention in Fari-bault Sunday, June 20, 1943.

Whereas, the American Legion has as one of its basic principles tolerance for all creeds and races, and,

Whereas, at its national convention in 1942 it accepted as one of its war aims the following statement: "We condemn religious prejudices, racial or national antagonisms as weapons of our enemies," and,

Whereas, there appeared in the official publication, the American Legion Magazine, for June, 1943, an article entitled "Japs in Our Yard," by one Frederick G. Murray, M.D., which urged, among other proposals, that native-born American citizens of Japanese descent be relocated on islands in the Pacific ocean—in direct violation of our constitutional guarantees—and further urged this not as a military measure but as a social, political, and economic policy.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we, Northfield Post No. 84, American Legion, do vigorously protest against our National magazine being used to foster race hatred in violation of our own constitution and the Constitution of the United States, and do most urgently request that the national officers in charge of the publication of the American Legion Magazine be directed to print a retraction of the afore-mentioned article, which is in direct opposition to the adopted policy of the American Legion.

Be it further resolved, that our delegates to the district and state conventions be instructed to introduce and promote passage of this resolution or one similar in import, upon afore-mentioned convention.

Be it further resolved, that all possible publicity be given this resolution in order that no unfavorable criticism be directed toward individual Legion members or local posts because of this flagrant violation of the basic principles of our organization and our country.

ARTHUR S. HOUSTON,
Post Commander

CHAUNCEY M. LARSEN,
Incoming Commander

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS
COMMITTEE:

*EVERETT D. PHELPS
VINCENT R. HUNT
ANDREW MELDAHL

*Address all correspondence to Mr. Phelps.

For authoritative information on the entire Japanese-American question, consult the following: Harper's Magazine, September and October, 1942, and June, 1943; also the Tolan report on the congressional investigation of Japanese-American migration.



Text of American Legion Protest on Racial Discrimination

Following is the text of a resolution that originated with Northfield Post No. 84, was adopted by the Third District convention of June 20, 1943, and on Aug. 21, 1943, was passed by the State convention of the American Legion, Department of Minnesota.

This resolution is being circulated by the Northfield Post No. 84. The text:

Whereas, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees equal protection, under the law, to all persons irrespective of race, color, or creed, and

Whereas, one of the cardinal principles of the American Legion is its support of the Constitution of the United States, and

Whereas, at its National convention in 1942, the American Legion accepted as one of its war aims the following statement: "We condemn religious prejudices, racial or national antagonisms as weapons of our enemies," and

Whereas, there appeared in the official publication, the American Legion Magazine, for June, 1943, an article entitled "Japs In Our Yard," by one Frederick G. Murray, M.D., which urged, among other proposals, that native-born American citizens of Japanese descent, without regard of proved loyalty or good character, be re-located on islands in the Pacific ocean—in direct violation of our constitutional guarantees—and urged this, not as a military measure but as a social, political, and economic policy.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we, the Department of Minnesota, the American Legion, do vigorously protest against our National magazine being used to foster race discrimination and hatred, in violation of the constitution of the American Legion and the Constitution of the United States.

Be it further resolved, that the officials in charge of the publication of both the American Legion Magazine and the National Legionnaire, be instructed that it shall be their policy not to permit the publication of such articles as urge or advocate policies in conflict with the basic principles of the American Legion, and

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be submitted to the National Legion Publications commission at the National convention at Omaha, for adoption by said commission, and

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be submitted to the National Legionnaire for publication in the first available issue.

For authoritative information and correct answers to the distortions of fact, half-truths and deliberate misstatements being circulated, consult the following:

HARPER'S MAGAZINE, September and October, 1942, and June, 1943

TOLAN REPORT of Congressional hearings on Defense Migration
CHRISTIAN CENTURY, series of articles beginning Aug. 11, 1943,
by Galen M. Fisher

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY, Washington, D. C., the agency created by the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, to relocate loyal Japanese citizens and law-abiding aliens.

ARTHUR S. HOUSTON,
Post Commander

CHAUNCEY M. LARSEN,
Incoming Commander

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS
COMMITTEE:

*EVERETT D. PHELPS
VINCENT R. HUNT
ANDREW MELDAHL

*Address all correspondence to Mr. Phelps.

Legion Post's Japanese Ban Angers GI's at the Front

By **CLINTON B. CONGER**
United Press Staff Writer

WITH THE U. S. 7TH ARMY, ON
THE WESTERN FRONT, Dec. 30.—

Hundreds of veteran American soldiers were indignant tonight over an item in the Army Newspaper Stars and Stripes, which said that an American Legion Post in Hood River, Ore., had advised Americans of Japanese ancestry to sell any property they own and leave town.

The dispatch, which moved dozens of GI's to prepare to write letters

of protest to President Roosevelt and Congressmen, said the Legion post had advertised in local newspapers that citizens of Japanese ancestry were unwanted.

There was violent vocal reaction among doughboys of Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's original divisions—the 36th and 45th—who know the gallant record of the 442nd Infantry regiment, composed mostly of loyal Japanese-Americans, and with which the 36th Division fought in Italy.

Reaction was particularly vituperative against the Legion post's ac-

tion, among the first battalion of the 141st Regiment of the 36th Division.

This battalion just two months ago today was rescued from a German trap near Bruyeres by Japanese-American troops who slashed through German lines to the isolated battalion at great cost.

There were 81 men on that encircled hilltop when they were rescued and 23 of those same men still are with the company, including Lt. Joseph Kimble, Scranton, Pa., and Sgt. Hiler Hull, San Antonio, Tex.

Hull already has started writing a letter. Kimble said he also would write one but was undecided whether to address it to President Roosevelt, some Congressman, or the Legion Post in Hood River.

Kimble called in four other veterans who were rescued on the hill, Sgt. Enrique Garcia, Brownsville, Tex.; T-Sgt. Clyde E. Armstrong, Farmers, Ky.; Pfc. Virgil Lindell, Billings, Mont., and Pvt. Edwin J. Krukowski, Chicago.

"Those boys deserve a hell of a lot more than the men sitting back in that Oregon town who don't

want them around," one of them observed, "and we feel pretty lousy having to fight for the rights and liberties of people who do something like that to these Japanese-Americans fighting over here."

Another said his father belonged to the American Legion but he "won't when he gets my letter."

One said he was of German descent but that didn't make him an unwanted enemy and that the same should apply to a person of Japanese descent.

(or more news about Japanese evacuees see Pag 4.)

Chronicle
12/31/44

Tolerant Legion Post

Heartening indeed, in the fight for tolerance, is the action of Hollywood American Legion Post 591, made up of World War II veterans, in affirming the right of Japanese-American service men to become members. The post over-ruled an effort of District Commander Dick Horton to bar Harley M. Oka, who has an honorable medical discharge.

Its action is in happy contrast to that of a Hood River, Ore., post that not only banned Japanese-American veterans, but erased their names from an honor roll.

We believe a majority of Legionnaires are fully aware that the thing we are fighting for in this war is preservation of the rights of the individual citizen against tyranny of government or mobs.

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Transportation Problem?

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THE CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE

... patriotic, civil
... and military exercises.

John R. Lechner, Legion Member, Is Censured by Executive Committeemen

John R. Lechner, executive director of Americanism Educational League, and who also is a member of the American Legion, Department of California, was censured by unanimous vote of the Legion's Department Executive Committee at its December meeting.

Lechner, who is the author of a pamphlet on the Japanese question, that has been distributed by his organization, appeared recently before Congressmen, Government officials, newspapermen and others in Washington; D. C., and represented, it was charged, that he had made the trip at the request of the American Legion, whose committee on the Japanese problem he was directing. He held himself out as representing the Legion under resolutions adopted by the Department of California and ratified by the national organization.

Such representations were un-

authorized and in flagrant violation of written notice from our then Department Commander, Leon Happell, that in the event a representative from the Americanism Educational League went to Washington, D. C., or elsewhere, for the purpose of testifying on the Japanese question, it should be plainly stated that he was speaking for that organization and not for the American Legion, for the reason that the Legion has a National Legislative Committee and full time staff in Washington to represent its more than one million members.

Rosters

Several weeks ago posts were asked by Department Headquarters to at once send in estimates as to the number of annual Rosters they would require for 1944, and the printing order was made to conform to the advance estimate. A limited number because

A LEGIONNAIRE

JANUARY 15, 1944

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